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# [***In ‘Prima Facie,’ Jodie Comer Finds Her Light***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:680J-5TX1-JBG3-64DS-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1775 words

**Byline:** Alexis Soloski

**Highlight:** The one-woman show, coming to Broadway, is the “Killing Eve” star’s first major stage role. She dared herself to do it.

**Body**

The one-woman show, coming to Broadway, is the “Killing Eve” star’s first major stage role. She dared herself to do it.

Until last year, the actress [*Jodie Comer*](https://www.instagram.com/jodiemcomer/?hl=en) hadn’t performed onstage since high school. Comer, 30, a native of Liverpool, England, who began her career as a teenager, hadn’t gone to drama school. She hadn’t studied voice or movement. Her comfort was in the close-up, the medium shot. She knew how to make her face still and her voice quiet, and to let the camera do the rest. The theater directors she auditioned for didn’t trust that she could fill a stage.

“It kind of felt unattainable,” she said.

But she is filling one now. On Broadway, at the John Golden Theater on West 45th Street, her face is emblazoned above the marquee, twice. The art for the Olivier Award-winning [*“Prima Facie”*](https://primafacieplay.com/) — an intimate and harrowing monodrama about a woman contending with the fallout of a sexual assault — shows Comer bathed in pink tones, serene, in a barrister’s wig, her eyes closed; it also shows her washed in blue, screaming. Opening on April 23, the play, which Comer first performed in London last year, runs 100 minutes. She is alone onstage for all of them. It’s the theatrical equivalent of being shoved down a mountain the first time you put on skis, or off a high dive before you have even learned to swim.

Comer put it a little differently. “I pushed myself,” she said.

This was on a Sunday morning in late March, at an out-of-the way table at a West Village cafe. Comer, buoyed by the London-to-New York time change, had arrived early, chipper and casual in jeans and a fisherman’s sweater. (Casual, but not entirely anonymous: The reservation was in my name, yet a waiter had already brought a plate of complimentary pastries.) A plastic clip held her hair away from her face.

[*About that face:*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/28/style/beauty-skin-care-jodie-comer-on-her-killer-beauty-regimen.html) Comer has wide-set eyes, full lips and an impossible milk-and-roses complexion. She looks like a Botticelli goddess who has stepped out of the canvas and into some cute ankle boots. And yet, if you have seen her previous work — the action comedy [*“Free Guy,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/12/movies/free-guy-review.html) the action drama [*“The Last Duel,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/13/movies/the-last-duel-review.html) the crusading BBC film [*“Help”*](https://www.channel4.com/programmes/help) and, most significantly, the queer assassin fever dream [*“Killing Eve”*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/killing-eve) — you will know that her beauty is usually the least interesting thing about her. That prettiness is a mask she can remove at will, exposing something weirder, spikier, wilder beneath.

“It’s like Jodie didn’t get the memo that she is staggeringly beautiful,” Shawn Levy, who directed “Free Guy,” told me. “Jodie is uninterested in relying on her physical appearance.”

Unlike many beautiful actresses, Comer has mostly avoided wife, girlfriend and love-interest parts — and their inherent limitations. “From early on, my characters were quite nuanced or multifaceted,” she said. “I was probably very lucky that that’s where I started. Once people see you in that light, they latch on to that.”

At the cafe, the morning sun showed her as friendly, unassuming almost, until she began to speak about her work. Then, behind those wide eyes, something like lightning flashed.

“Jodie is extraordinarily powerful,” Shannon Murphy, a director who worked closely with her on “Killing Eve,” told me. “People aren’t just going to cast her as the girl next door. Because it’s a waste.”

And yet, the role that Comer plays in “Prima Facie” is very much a girl next door, which lends the show much of its heartbreak and force. Written by Suzie Miller, an Australian attorney turned playwright, and directed by Justin Martin (“The Jungle”), also Australian, “Prima Facie” centers on Tessa Ensler, a promising barrister who has transcended her ***working-class*** origins and accent. When she finds herself the victim of a sexual assault, a crime whose accused perpetrators she had often defended, Tessa’s poise and selfhood collapse. In this play, the reality and violence of the assault is never in doubt. That it should happen to a woman like Comer’s Tessa — so pretty, so assertive, so canny — means that it could happen to anyone.

“Prima Facie” debuted in Sydney in 2019, starring the Australian actress Sheridan Harbridge. When Miller and Martin knew that they wanted to take it to London, they began throwing around the names of English actresses. Martin suggested Comer. Miller said no. She had seen Comer on “Killing Eve,” as [*the mercurial assassin Villanelle*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/05/arts/television/killing-eve-villanelle-jodie-comer.html), who is Russian-born and Russian-accented. Comer’s Emmy Award-winning command of the role was so absolute that Miller assumed that Comer was actually Russian. Once Martin gently corrected her, a script was sent.

It reached Comer early in Britain’s lockdown, in Liverpool, where she was living with her parents. It spoke to her directly, and at volume. She had several friends who had undergone versions of Tessa’s experience. And the professional challenge was as serious as it was undeniable.

“I was so fearful of it. I knew if I said no to it, it would be purely because of that,” Comer said. “But there was a part of myself deep down that believed I could do it, and I was interested in how I was going to get to that point.”

That fear powered her initial approach to the role. “She gets scared,” Martin said. “But her way of dealing with it is to throw herself into it.”

Comer discovered theater in her teens. “I got into it because I enjoyed it. It made me happy. I don’t think that’s ever changed,” she said. A teacher put her forward for a radio drama, which led to an agent and to occasional television appearances. After graduation, she worked at a supermarket checkout and at a bar to make ends meet. Her idea of luxury was being able to make a living from acting only. Her first major break came seven years ago, when she was cast as the lead in “Thirteen,” a BBC drama about a woman who escapes from long captivity. Even then, Comer couldn’t land a stage role.

But the recognition that “Killing Eve” brought changed all that. For Martin and for James Bierman, lead producer on “Prima Facie,” her lack of theater experience was never a problem. They offered her the resources — voice lessons, movement sessions — and the rehearsal time that she would need.

Comer has always been an intuitive actor. The challenge, she found, was to take that intuition and extend it outward so that it reached the last row of the balcony. “Like, how do I emote from the top of my head to the tip of my toes?” she said.

Rehearsals, which began early in 2022, were rigorous, as was Comer’s research. She spoke to barristers, to police officers, to a high-court judge. She visited a police station and attended a hearing. She had herself fitted for a wig. What would a woman like Tessa wear, she wanted to know. What would she eat? How would she sit, stand and speak? In watching some of the women barristers at work, Comer felt an immediate connection.

“There were elements of it that felt like theater: the costumes, the cues, the rehearsal of the lines,” she said.

Television and film sets provide elaborate, realistic environments. Especially if the projects are shot on location. Theater is a more symbolic space, a conjuration of lights and plywood, which offered Comer a kind of freedom. In that glow, she could experiment, she could play. “What theater really sparked in me was that curiosity and sense of imagination,” she said with all the eagerness of a recent convert. Onstage there was no armor, no safety, no ability to stop and take it again, particularly in the scene in which Comer, alone on the floor of the stage, depicts the assault.

Miller was convinced, even during rehearsals. “She is magnificent onstage; she’s a theater animal,” she said of Comer on a recent video call. “She’s the character. She’s there.”

But after years of performing on television and film, Comer hadn’t known how a live audience would respond. Her anxiety remained up until the first curtain and perhaps even after. “I was actually quite consumed by fear,” she said. “I didn’t really come up for air.”

She recalled that, toward the end of the first preview in London, she heard a woman in the orchestra crying. “It was the most guttural cry,” Comer said. “It spread around the theater. It was like the audience were giving each other this unspoken permission to feel whatever was coming up for them.”

Stephen Graham, an actor who worked with a teenage Comer on “Good Cop” and then again on “Help,” saw “Prima Facie” in London and wept through it, admiring “the beauty and the subtlety and the nuance and the craftsmanship that went into that performance,” he said.

I didn’t see it in London, but I watched it a few weeks ago, on video, via a National Theater Live performance capture. Her craftsmanship was apparent from the first few minutes. Look at Comer in a robe, I thought to myself. Look how good she is. Then the character seemed to take her over. Absorbed in the story, I forgot about Comer, forgot about her beauty, and thought only of Tessa.

Miller had noticed this, too. “You don’t look at her and go, ‘There’s a beautiful woman crying.’ You go, ‘There’s a devastated woman crying,’” she said.

Over breakfast, Comer had said that despite her leading lady facade, she understands herself as a character actress, someone who wants to disappear into a part, even though or especially because she can’t even disappear into a Village cafe. “I’d love to get to a point where I play a role where I don’t recognize myself,” she said.

“Prima Facie” began as a personal challenge, a dare almost. Could she manage alone onstage for all that time? Could she pull off the scene changes and the radical shifts in emotion? But it has become about something more.

Women waited for her at the stage door every night in London, telling her that their experiences mirrored Tessa’s or that they were considering careers in law to support women like her. By vanishing into Tessa, she has given these women a way to recognize themselves. That image near the marquee? It’s her face, doubly exposed, but it’s also a mosaic composed of photos of women who submitted their pictures and stories. That’s what Comer wants: to feel part of something bigger than herself, to feel some greater purpose is working through her.

“It’s those moments where you step out of your way when you feel the most fulfilled,” she said.

PHOTOS: Jodie Comer, above, plays a barrister contending with the fallout of a sexual assault in “Prima Facie,” bottom. She first performed the role last year in London. In her breakthrough part in the TV series “Killing Eve,” below, Comer was a wily assassin pursued by an investigator played by Sandra Oh, right. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SABRINA SANTIAGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; BBC AMERICA; HELEN MURRAY) This article appeared in print on page AR6.

**Load-Date:** June 14, 2023

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[***This Manhattan Park Was Once a Gem. Now It’s a ‘No Man’s Land.’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XR-KCW1-JBG3-6186-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1693 words

**Byline:** Winnie Hu

**Highlight:** A decades-long fight to reopen a park house, once a thriving community center in a ***working-class*** neighborhood, has taken on new urgency during the pandemic.

**Body**

There was always something to do at the red brick park house with the big inviting archways.

Children huddled around chess and checker boards when the playgrounds and basketball courts were rained out. They played Ping-Pong, learned to whittle in a wood shop and watched movies with their friends.

This was more than 40 years ago.

“The kids really had nowhere to play,” said Bob Humber, 86, who was a youth worker in the 1970s. “They had no other place. They loved that place.”

But that was before city park officials quietly converted the brick building — which had thrived as a community center for the Lower East Side as part of Sara D. Roosevelt Park — to storage space for equipment and supplies. It is unclear exactly when that happened.

These days, it looks like a fortress with partly boarded-up windows in a sketchy section of the park where people sell and use K2 and other illegal drugs. Behind the building, an outdoor area with benches and spray showers to cool off on summer days sits empty after being temporarily fenced off to deter illicit activities.

The loss of the park house illustrates the challenges in a long-running struggle by residents and community groups to save a narrow sliver of urban parkland that straddles Manhattan’s Lower East Side and Chinatown neighborhoods. Built by city officials in 1934 as an urban renewal project to bring relief to families in squalid tenements, the park has become a catch basin for the city’s crime and drug problems and homeless crisis.

“This building is a dead space right now because it’s only for the toilet paper and the paint in there,” said Melissa Aase, the chief executive officer of [*University Settlement*](https://www.universitysettlement.org/), a nonprofit that runs education and social service programs. “In a city that is becoming more and more dense, every possible welcoming space is needed to enhance the community.”

Reopening the park house would create “an anchor of safety” at a time when many residents are concerned about crime by introducing programming and bringing in more visitors, said K Webster, the president of the [*Sara D. Roosevelt Park Coalition*](https://sdrpc.mkgarden.org/). “The only way we know to make a park safe again is to actively use it,” she said.

It is a strategy that worked for another Manhattan park. A full roster of activities — including movie nights, concerts, dancing and ice skating — helped transform [*Bryant Park*](https://bryantpark.org/) from a deserted, crime-ridden patch in the 1990s into one of the city’s premier green spaces, said Dan Biederman, the president of the Bryant Park Corporation, a nonprofit.

But city park officials have been unwilling to turn over the park house — which sits next to Stanton Street — until they can find an alternate storage place.

“The Stanton Street building is a key distribution center for supplies and tools serving parks throughout Manhattan on a daily basis,” said Megan Moriarty, a spokeswoman for the city’s Department of Parks and Recreation. “We are actively working on identifying a viable alternative location for this distribution center; any future public use will be determined at a later date.”

The fight over the park house comes as the pandemic has [*laid bare the inequities*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/nyregion/nyc-parks-access-governors-island.html) of city life. Many poor New Yorkers have limited access to the city’s sprawling network of more than 1,700 parks, playgrounds and recreation facilities, which has become more important than ever for physical and mental health.

A campaign led by New Yorkers for Parks, an advocacy group, has called for increasing parks funding to 1 percent of the city’s budget, or roughly $1 billion. It rose to $624 million in this year’s budget, with a spokesman for Mayor Eric Adams calling it [*“a down payment”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/27/nyregion/421a-tax-break-subsidy-ny.html) on the 1 percent goal.

The decline of Sara D. Roosevelt Park is an example of “many decades in the making of what happens to a park when you don’t provide the resources to operate and maintain it,” said Adam Ganser, the executive director of New Yorkers for Parks.

It serves a ***working-class*** area squeezed in between new high-rent neighborhoods and upscale development projects. The median household income around the park was $69,202 annually compared with $89,812 for Manhattan, according to a census analysis by [*Social Explorer*](https://www.socialexplorer.com/), a research company.

As stretches of the park have become desolate and beaten-down, many families and older people have stayed away. Frances Brown, 40, pushed her son’s stroller past drug users shooting up. They went to a playground near the Stanton house a handful of times last year until they found human feces there. “Never again,” she said.

Fencing to close off problem spots has taken away more park space. “It seems to be totally counterproductive because the park is made for people — and it subverts that purpose,” said Tom Wolf, an art history professor whose loft overlooks the park.

Fears about the safety of the park flared last year after a[*bike delivery worker*](https://nypost.com/2021/10/17/killer-sits-next-to-deliveryman-before-deadly-stabbing-video/) was fatally stabbed there. Concerns about anti-Asian violence in the area also increased after [*a woman was stabbed to death in her apartment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/13/nyregion/murder-chinatown-nyc.html) across from the park in February by a [*homeless man*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/14/nyregion/suspect-christina-yuna-lee-murder.html).

There have been 51 major crimes — including one murder, nine felony assaults and 12 robberies — reported in Sara D. Roosevelt Park since 2019, according to an analysis of police data by [*OpenTheBooks.com*](https://www.openthebooks.com/), a nonprofit. Last year alone, the park had 17 crimes, ranking 11th among parks citywide.

One organization, Audubon New York, suspended a plan last year to plant a garden in the park after a program manager cited concerns about the safety of its staff members and volunteers.

The problems have spilled out to surrounding blocks. People have vandalized buildings and aggressively threatened store workers and customers. A wine bar has found drugs, needles and knives hidden in its planters.

An acupuncture clinic across from the park ended up relocating to the Union Square area because of safety concerns. “It’s just a no man’s land in a lot of ways,” said Nini Mai, 40, its founder.

It was not always like that.

In 1934, the dedication ceremony for Sara D. Roosevelt Park, which included a [*cannon salute,*](https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/sara-d-roosevelt-park/history) was [*attended by thousands and broadcast over the radio from Maine to Virginia*](https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/sara-d-roosevelt-park/dailyplant/21899). The site had been intended for low-cost housing but was later turned over for [*“playgrounds and resting places for mothers and children*](https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/sara-d-roosevelt-park/history).”

City officials [*insisted on naming the park for the mother of Franklin D. Roosevelt*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1934/03/14/95037169.html?pageNumber=21), then president, though she tried to decline the honor, saying that she [*“wished to stay in the background.”*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1934/03/13/94501924.html?pageNumber=26)

There were separate playgrounds for boys and girls, two wading pools, a roller skating rink and four park houses. Stanton was a field house. A [*singing contest there in 1939*](https://www.nytimes.com/1939/08/20/archives/young-singers-selected-six-are-chosen-to-represent-manhattan-in.html?searchResultPosition=67) drew 30 children.

By the 1980s, however, Sara D. Roosevelt Park had become overrun by drugs, crime and prostitution. Local residents banded together to pick up trash and drug needles from playgrounds. They transformed a weed-strewn lawn into a lush garden.

It worked, for a while. Then the park started slipping again. Many residents and business owners are frustrated that they do not get more help from the parks department. “It gets neglected,” said Alysha Lewis, a former chairwoman of the local community board. “The parks department really treats it like it’s a stepchild.”

Sandra Dupal, who owns a bakery, offered in 2017 to pay for a kiosk to sell sandwiches and snacks so that more people could enjoy the park. She never got an answer from park officials. “The park has untapped potential,” she said.

City park officials said that they had made $11.4 million in improvements to the park since 2005 and that they had plans for $21 million more in projects, including the reconstruction of a playground. They have worked with other city agencies to bring homeless-outreach teams and medical vans to the area. They said they would also look into concession possibilities.

“We are committed to improving and caring for the park’s many features and facilities for New Yorkers of all ages to enjoy,” Ms. Moriarty said.

Only three of the original park houses are still standing. They have public bathrooms, which are accessible from the outside. The other two houses are used for park operations, including a communications hub and a substation for a parks enforcement patrol. All the buildings should be turned over to the community, advocates say, but they asked for Stanton first partly because that section is in bad shape.

Adrian Benepe, a former city parks commissioner, said that park officials had limited options in finding other storage in space-starved Manhattan. “I don’t believe it’s a question of will or money,” he said. “It’s a question of logistics.”

But Ms. Webster and other advocates say that it is an equity issue, and that the Stanton house should not be used to support other Manhattan parks, including larger parks with far more resources.

In recent years, a grass-roots campaign has generated many ideas for the park house. Community center. Bike repair station. Swimming pool. Students at the Pratt Institute [*worked on designs that reimagined what it could look like*](https://sdrpc.mkgarden.org/pratt-institute-of-interior-design-students-re-imagine-the-stanton-building-for-community-use/).

Reynaldo Belen, 20, who recently graduated from a high school across from the park, said it should be used to bring people together. “That could kind of stop some of the violence in the area,” he said. “You don’t shoot someone you know or see all the time.”

Back when park officials started moving supplies into the park house, Mr. Humber, the former youth worker, said he was told it was only temporary. He has been demanding that the park house be returned to the community ever since.

“I’ve been fighting for this building for so long,” he said. “I’m hoping that I’m still alive when they open it.”

PHOTOS: Above, a recent view of Sara D. Roosevelt Park on the Lower East Side. Left. the dedication ceremony for the park in 1934. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BENJAMIN NORMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION, VIA NEW YORK CITY MUNICIPAL ARCHIVES); Above, Bob Humber, who worked with young people out of the park house in the 1970s. Center left, another view of the park. Center right, K Webster, the president of the Sara D. Roosevelt Park Coalition. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AHMED GABER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; AHMED GABER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***How to Hand Out Billions in Climate Subsidies? Very Carefully.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:673D-F281-JBG3-63XR-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** CLIMATE

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**Byline:** Lisa Friedman

**Highlight:** John Podesta, the White House aide overseeing new tax credits, said rules were expected to be in place within months. Avoiding waste and fraud is a priority.

**Body**

John Podesta, the White House aide overseeing new tax credits, said rules were expected to be in place within months. Avoiding waste and fraud is a priority.

WASHINGTON — John Podesta, President Biden’s clean energy adviser, said the administration was working to ensure that a record $370 billion in new federal subsidies for electric vehicles, wind farms, batteries and other clean energy technologies is spent properly and avoids waste and abuse.

Mr. Podesta said the White House would issue tax code guidelines by early next year to speed the delivery of the money, and was meeting with inspectors general from across the federal government to get advice on ways to safeguard against fraud.

“It’s always better to have a lock on the barn door than to go chase the horse once it’s out,” he said in an interview.

The internal watchdog at the Department of Energy, one of several agencies that is receiving an influx of money [*under the Inflation Reduction Act*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/16/business/biden-climate-tax-inflation-reduction.html), has already [*warned*](https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2022-11/DOE-OIG-23-08.pdf) that her office does not have enough resources to properly monitor all the programs that will be created.

Under the new law, the Department of Energy budget will grow from $45.3 billion to more than $100 billion in funds and $336 billion in loan authority. Another new law, the CHIPS and Science Act, will pump an additional $30.5 billion into the department.

Republicans, who will take control of the House in January, have suggested that they will investigate the Biden administration’s handling of the flood of tax rebates, loans and incentives under the landmark climate and tax law.

Mr. Podesta, who is responsible for overseeing the disbursement of the money, said complex rules expected from the Internal Revenue Service and other agencies would clarify who qualifies for various incentives and how the money will be doled out.

The federal dollars will be consequential to unleashing trillions of dollars in private sector energy investments, he said.

“I’ve spent a fair amount of time listening to people who are anxious to invest in the United States as a result of this legislation, and are preparing business plans, assuming that those tax credits will have certainty,” Mr. Podesta said. He said the agencies were “on track” and would begin to issue official guidance “by the end of the year and early next year.”

On Thursday the White House made public a [*guidebook meant to help companies and consumers*](https://int.nyt.com/data/documenttools/inflation-reduction-act-guidebook/778d1d7ffd51c454/full.pdf) as well as state, local and tribal governments navigate the new law. Mr. Podesta said his aim was to create a road map that would especially help communities that disproportionately face pollution and climate hazards to take full advantage of the tax incentives.

The guidebook breaks down the approximately two dozen tax provisions by agency and area of investment, like electricity, domestic manufacturing, energy development on tribal lands and the deployment of clean vehicles.

“Our challenge is to ensure that these programs are stood up, particularly given the fact that two-thirds of the support for clean energy is coming through the tax code,” Mr. Podesta said.

As the White House works to turn the new law into reality, the stakes are high. President Biden has promised to cut United States greenhouse gas emissions at least 50 percent below 2005 levels by the end of this decade, a target aimed at keeping rising global temperatures on a trajectory that would most likely avoid the most catastrophic consequences of climate change.

The ability to meet that goal depends on how quickly the new law helps shift the American economy away from coal, oil and gas and toward wind, solar and other cleaner energy sources. It also will require new federal regulations to further cut emissions from power plants and vehicles, which Mr. Podesta said would be issued “very soon.”

The administration is under pressure to move quickly. It has just two years left to prove its theory that a low-carbon America can also create jobs and turn a profit.

“John’s biggest challenge is to prove to ***working class*** voters who have gone increasingly Republican that clean energy can bring them economic and consumer benefits, not just cut emissions,” said Paul Bledsoe, a former climate aide in the Clinton administration who now works at the Progressive Policy Institute, a think tank.

“There’s still a perception of a lot of these technologies as elitist,” Mr. Bledsoe added, saying the Biden administration must “reach the average American where they live and work” by things like ensuring apartments have adequate electric vehicle charging stations, or rural areas see new jobs in solar production.

Battles are already brewing. This week Senator Joe Manchin III, Democrat of West Virginia, warned Janet Yellen, the Treasury secretary, against a “broad interpretation” of the law’s electric vehicle tax credit. Mr. Manchin has said that could benefit foreign automakers. The law includes a provision inserted by Mr. Manchin that requires electric vehicles to be assembled in North America and use batteries made with minerals from allied nations in order to qualify for the $7,500 credit to consumers.

Another tension is around how quickly energy projects can be built. Mr. Podesta called the current pace of permitting and building solar and wind farms and the necessary transmission lines a “huge challenge” and “one of the things that keeps me up a little bit at night.”

But plans to speed up the permitting process are mired in politics. The Senate is expected to vote Thursday on a proposal by Mr. Manchin to overhaul environmental permitting. But while President Biden and Democratic leadership support the plan, progressive Democrats argue it will lead to more fossil fuel development and oppose it. Republicans generally favor permitting reform but some are nevertheless withholding support to deprive Mr. Manchin of a legislative victory.

Heather Reams, president of the Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions Forum, a clean energy group that works closely with Republican lawmakers, said the new law has the potential to benefit and win over conservative America, but stalemates on issues like permitting reform hurt.

“A lot of the money going out the door is going to benefit red states,” Ms. Reams noted.

Meanwhile Republicans, none of whom voted for the new climate law, seem intent on slowing down its implementation.

Representative Cathy McMorris Rogers, a Washington Republican who is likely to chair the House Energy and Commerce Committee in January, has said she [*plans to investigate*](https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/news/ec-republicans-vow-strict-oversight-over-massive-doe-loan-guarantee-program/) the billions of new dollars that will flow from the Department of Energy’s loan office. About a decade ago that office under the Obama administration issued $500 million to Solyndra, a solar company that filed for bankruptcy two years after receiving the loan. Ms. Rogers has called the new climate law “Solyndra on steroids.”

“They’ll try to find the one loan that for whatever reason goes bad, and my guess is there will be a big hunt for that on the House side,” Mr. Podesta said. But he dismissed the threat of hearings as an effort among Republicans to “rerun the last playbook” and “gum up the works” — a move he insisted would fail.

“We have the law on our side, we have the investment portfolio on our side and we’ll go ahead and implement the program,” he said.

This article appeared in print on page A18.

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[***The Long Game***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6908-DHG1-DXY4-X1RY-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Kurt Soller, Luis Alberto Rodriguez and Carlos Nazario

**Body**

Though the singer has maintained a strict line between her music and her private life, she's leveraging her personal passions in a bid to become a media mogul.

LET'S GET THIS out of the way: Dua Lipa is finishing her third album. It's due for release in 2024 and, despite the trend of musicians announcing and delaying records for years, Lipa will almost certainly meet her deadline. It's funny to think of a pop star -- or any successful young artist -- as just another striving professional. But at 27, Lipa has already become the kind of multihyphenate entrepreneur who not only finishes her assignments on time but discusses strategy and efficiency with the clarity of a company founder delivering a TED Talk. ''If I wasn't as organized as I am, I would be a mess right now,'' she says when we meet one drizzly May afternoon in London. The singer had asked one of her favorite restaurants, Sushi on Jones, hidden on the second floor of a King's Cross concert venue, to open before dinner so we could have the place to ourselves, then arrived 10 minutes early to make sure everything was as planned.

A lot happened in March 2020, so you probably won't recall that Lipa's second album, ''Future Nostalgia,'' leaked at the beginning of the lockdowns, denying her the precise rollout she'd spent many months finessing, postponing her international tour . . . and unintentionally cementing her as the leading pop star of the pandemic. Her barrage of shimmery singles -- music for ''dance crying,'' as she describes it -- later established her as the only female artist with two albums that have surpassed 10 billion streams on Spotify.

The next record will still be pop, she says, lest her ''fans have a meltdown.'' She doesn't want to ''alienate'' them, although she's developing a new sound that may be informed less by the house and disco beats beneath songs like ''Physical'' and ''Hallucinate'' than by 1970s-era psychedelia. She's working with a smaller group of songwriting collaborators, supposedly including Kevin Parker of the Australian psych-rock band Tame Impala, a rumor she all but confirms by denying: ''I don't know what you're talking about,'' she says, then looks away and laughs a little. Lipa's dressed -- almost studiously -- in pop star-off-duty drag: Ugg slip-ons, baggy white jeans, an old Elton John T-shirt, a few diamond-encrusted hoops in each ear.

She can come across as guarded, a little aloof, cool but not necessarily cold, which could be the way she's been her whole life -- or the result of having become globally famous during a period of deep isolation. She lacks the impulse, so common among people her age, to make unnecessary small talk or feign friendliness in order to appear likable. Instead, she remains assiduously on message, implying several times that she feels that journalists are usually trying to trap her or tease out information before she's ready to share it. ''Especially being in the public eye, someone's always waiting for you to trip or fail or whatever,'' she tells me. During our meal, which was arranged to last 90 minutes and ends exactly on time, ''whatever'' is one of the words she uses most, in a way that makes her sound wary of having to narrativize her own life.

But she's particularly taciturn about the forthcoming album because it's still in development -- a process that's ''insular and exciting,'' she says, even if ''you have no idea what the reaction is going to be once it's out, so there's this nervous feeling'' -- but also because there's so much else she prepared to discuss today: not herself, not the music, but the other elements comprising Lipa's unusual plan for longevity, something she's been working toward since she was 5, when she used to lead her classmates in schoolyard dance routines.

AFTER HER TOUR concluded last November, Lipa arrived in London and began focusing on several non-music projects, as well as cooking and relaxing in the house she's renovating in North London, near where she was raised by a pair of Albanian immigrants, Dukagjin and Anesa Lipa. They'd fled Kosovo in 1992, during the conflicts in the region, then eventually returned to Pristina, the capital; four years after that, they let their eldest daughter (Dua, whose name means ''love'' in Albanian) move back to England by herself when she was 15, where she briefly modeled and began to pursue music: Two years later, after appearing in a 2013 commercial for ''The X Factor,'' she signed with Ben Mawson, Lana Del Rey's manager.

Here in London -- where her parents, younger brother (Gjin, 17) and sister (Rina, 22, an up-and-coming model) also live again -- she enjoys eating vegetable samosas at Gymkhana and drinking orange wine at Westerns Laundry. Among her friends, who predate her fame and, she says, ''ignore me in my own kitchen,'' she's the one who plans birthday dinners and trips. Many of these restaurants and destinations end up in Service95, the arts and culture newsletter she launched in February of last year after wanting a place to write about the bakeries, bookstores and other venues she'd been keeping lists of since she was a teenager.

On the Covers

She's currently recording a third season of her podcast, ''Dua Lipa: At Your Service,'' an accompaniment to Service95, for which Lipa interviews fellow artists like the singer Billie Eilish and the actor Dan Levy; queer activists like Brandon Wolf, who fights for gun reform after having survived the 2016 shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Fla.; and writers like Min Jin Lee and Esther Perel (as well as Hanya Yanagihara, this magazine's editor in chief). She finishes each conversation by asking for a list of recommendations, whether that's Los Angeles restaurants (Levy) or activists to follow (Wolf); her hope, she says, is to be of service to her readers and listeners, many of whom were likely born around 1995, when she was, hence the name. Earlier this summer, she created a Service95 book club; Douglas Stuart's ''Shuggie Bain'' (2020), a gay coming-of-age story set in ***working-class*** Glasgow, was her first pick. Lipa also released a fashion collection that she co-designed with Donatella Versace, full of butterfly-print bikinis and floral stretch dresses. Its theme was La Vacanza, Italian for ''vacation,'' mirroring Lipa's dominant, if slightly ironic, aesthetic on Instagram, where it looks like all she ever does is relax by a pool.

Not long after, she'd appear as a mermaid in Greta Gerwig's ''Barbie,'' a fitting acting debut, given that it's based on a doll who's a former teenage fashion model and, in a single afternoon, bounces between her many demanding professions. ''I don't even want to show you my phone, because I'm embarrassed about it, but it's really down to the minute: where I'm going, what I'm doing,'' Lipa tells me, then opens her calendar app, frowns and eventually turns the screen in my direction. ''Wake up, glam, prep for podcast,'' she says, scrolling through a day of appointments. ''I have to watch 'Succession,' so I've got to schedule that,'' she adds, pointing at the 7 p.m. slot, which is also when she'll eat dinner. She even plans her showers, wherever she can fit them in. ''For as long as I'm having fun, I'm going to keep making music,'' she says. ''But why can't I do other things that I love, too?''

IF THE DREAM of pop stardom is far-fetched for all but a few, the musical aspect of Lipa's empire is, oddly, the least unique thing about it: With her husky voice and relatably imperfect dance moves, she releases catchy, inspirational who-needs-men anthems in collaboration with some of the world's greatest audio minds and businesspeople. All of them have chosen to put millions of dollars into manufacturing and promoting her earwormy singles not only because she's talented and beautiful and has good sonic instincts but also because she is -- unlike most of her predecessors and peers -- admittedly, almost defiantly, not sloppy. ''I've probably spent more time waiting for artists to show up in the studio than I have working with artists,'' says Mark Ronson, the 47-year-old record producer who has made two singles with Lipa, including ''Dance the Night'' from this summer. ''If she's two minutes late -- literally, if it's 12:02 -- there's a text: 'Sorry, running five minutes late.' That's not superstar behavior, you know? She still works with the mind-set that she hasn't [made it] yet.'' Lipa's particularly good at editing, he adds, at tediously working and reworking a chorus or melody. She's comfortable making decisions quickly and multitasking: Sometimes while she's onstage doing her choreography, she says, she's also thinking about what she's going to eat afterward.

Pop, like all genres of creative expression, is more commercialized than ever. The musicians themselves are making less and less money, and those who grew up listening to artists like Britney Spears, Whitney Houston and Amy Winehouse (whom Lipa's soulful raspiness sometimes summons) have clearly internalized the tragic lessons of those lives and careers. As women in a field driven by sex appeal -- it's no accident that Lipa announced her book club with some swimsuit selfies -- they learn early on that people are constantly trying to use them. The smart ones, then, become alert to opportunities to diversify their portfolios and work their way to a kind of moguldom that outlasts radio trends. They grapple with the fact that popular music is a cat-and-mouse game, in which singers must switch up their sound often (while never straying too far from their original persona); refrain from releasing records too frequently so that their fans don't get bored; and yet recognize, even then, that the audience and the industry might still discard them once they're in their 30s.

Rihanna, who hasn't released an album since 2016, has her multibillion-dollar Fenty Beauty line; Ariana Grande will soon star as Glinda in Universal's ''Wicked'' juggernaut. Lipa, who has filed trademarks for merchandise including cosmetics and will appear next year in the spy film ''Argylle,'' has made inroads in both of those directions; watching her and her cohorts' shared trajectory, you get the sense that they're expanding into other realms as early and as widely as they can, in part to guarantee their ubiquity but also to ensure against obsolescence. But with her multipronged pursuits (most of which fall under the banner of Service95, ''the ultimate cultural concierge,'' according to its tag line), Lipa's approach is distinct in that she's leading with ideas and information, not products, curating culture in addition to contributing to it. What began as a minimally designed newsletter created with a few former magazine editors -- the issues are free and the first one featured short pieces about South African house music and the Irish disability advocate and writer Sinéad Burke -- has since grown to accommodate YouTube cooking videos, live book talks with authors (hosted by Lipa) and reported series dedicated to such topics as men's mental health and the spiking crisis in London, where young people are unknowingly being drugged by strangers at bars.

Service95 represents who Lipa is ''behind closed doors,'' she says, a space where discussions around trans liberation are as common as those about jewelry and yoga. Though she's a young, ambitious millennial, the content reflects the very Gen Z belief that all art and culture must be motivated by social justice and that all artists must talk about their ethics and values (at least those deemed palatably progressive) in all contexts and environments. ''My intention is never to be political ... but there's a political bent to my existence,'' Lipa says. ''The easiest thing you can do is just hide away and not have an opinion about anything.'' The singer is nevertheless cautious about how she lets her contributors use this microphone. She knows she's the one who would face repercussions if a problem arose, so she approves every story herself and leads weekly editorial meetings. If it continues to grow, Service95 might one day replace the glossy, feminist-leaning fashion magazines of the 2000s; right now, it's reminiscent of the chatty, lo-fi publications that the aughts-era blogger Tavi Gevinson offered young fans with ''Rookie'' before becoming an actress.

''I think it's a marketing tool: How confessional can you be?'' she says. ''I also don't put so much of my life out there for people to dig into the music in this weird, analytical way.''

Lipa, however, has taken the reverse course: Rather than amassing enough access and power within media to eventually jettison the industry for something more glamorous, she's using her celebrity to expose her readers to everything she's witnessing from her perch. ''The world is really big, and maybe things don't get to your [corner], so it's a way of bringing everything together,'' she says. This is a canny strategy, for it implies that Lipa's a normal woman who just hustled her way into an abnormally charmed life while somehow staying grounded. It also makes her seem generous, despite the occasional tone-deaf moment, as when she wrote last November that she ''saves up'' to go shopping at Amore, the Tokyo vintage luxury handbag emporium.

Among famous women turned media mavens, a category that has recently grown to include the talk show hosts Drew Barrymore and Kelly Clarkson, Lipa's closest analog might be Gwyneth Paltrow, although Goop is much larger and more lucrative than Service95. Lipa won't share audience metrics, but she does plan to bring some readers together at a forthcoming event series that will focus on food, wine and books. (''Like Oprah?'' I ask, but she shrugs off the comparison: ''We don't really have Oprah [in London].'') She's more inspired by Reese Witherspoon, the actress best known for playing Type A go-getters like Tracy Flick in ''Election'' (1999) who later became one of the first celebrities to launch her own book club, partly to create a pipeline of women-centered stories that her company could option for film and television. Maybe Lipa will do something like that, she tells me, but she hasn't thought of a model ''to base Service95 on, which is cool because then it can be its own thing,'' she adds, sounding like the content executive she's becoming. ''I've found being in the media this way very encouraging.''

She is, after all, a woman about whom many things have been written who now gets to write the story herself. In the newsletter, this takes the form of a short, paragraph-long editor's letter. But on the podcast, the third season of which is now running weekly in partnership with the BBC, Lipa's more present. Before speaking with each of her guests in conversations that can last an hour or longer, she says she does four or five days of research; Lisa Taddeo, a 43-year-old journalist who published the nonfiction sex narrative ''Three Women'' in 2019, told me the singer was among the most natural interviewers she's talked to, ''impeccably prepared, yet off book in the most conversational way.'' What Lipa's doing is different than journalism, though, if only because, as she admits, she avoids bringing up anything that might make her interviewees uncomfortable. She typically deflects inquiries about herself in favor of gathering advice from her subjects, who seem to open up in these conversations; it's easy to forget that they're speaking with another artist rather than any other geekily inquisitive host.

Last September, Monica Lewinsky went on the show, where she discussed the Clinton sex scandal and how she recovered from her despair. She was nearly ''publicly humiliated to death,'' she says, after which Lipa lets out a heavy sigh. ''Something that really struck me was how feminists agonized over you,'' Lipa responds. ''Whether you were using your own agency. Were you a victim? And I really wonder how this has evolved, and how this experience has defined your own relationship with the feminist movement because, for me, it completely blew me away that feminism then isn't how we know it now, and maybe abuse of power wasn't at the top of the list.''

''It was your generation,'' Lewinsky later reminds her, ''that insisted on re-evaluating my story.'' After their conversation, Lipa decided that the interviews in the third season should each be dedicated to a single topic, much like Lewinsky's was centered on shame and healing. For the first episode, which premiered in June, the singer made what felt like a self-referential gambit: She invited on the English YouTuber Amelia Dimoldenberg, the host of the series ''Chicken Shop Date'' -- in which she awkwardly interviews actresses like Jennifer Lawrence and Keke Palmer in a fast-food restaurant -- to discuss ''how to grow your empire and build your brand,'' as Lipa says in her editor's note announcing the episode. Dimoldenberg's advice: ''Especially for women ... you feel like you have to please everyone, you have to come across a certain type of way where you're not being a diva,'' to which Lipa murmurs in agreement. ''Believe in your idea,'' Dimoldenberg adds. ''That's the most important thing.''

EVEN IF LIPA can do all of this, the question remains: Why? Obviously, she could fill her days just being a massively successful musician. But a few weeks after our lunch, she tells me over the phone that she would be ''doing a disservice'' to herself if she weren't ''exploring all the things [she] loved and wanted to share.'' It's similar to other explanations she's given me: She likes ''being thrown into the deep end'' and acquiring new skills, above all those that are ''aligned'' with her ''activism and love of reading.'' She's been interested in media since high school, especially after her father got a master's degree in journalism when he returned to Kosovo. (He became her manager last year after she parted ways with Mawson.) She wants to honor the sacrifices her parents made; these various gigs satisfy ''what's maybe the immigrant mentality ... this thing I have in my head where I know that, if I don't work hard enough, the rug could just be pulled from under my feet.'' If the music stops bringing in audiences, maybe these other enterprises will.

She never says that last part; she probably never would. She also doesn't say what I think is the real answer, which is this: Anyone who works in media can tell you that there's no better way to lead the conversation without ever having to actually talk about yourself. While Lipa's editorial initiative may seem like an act of self-exposure, it's in fact one of self-protection -- it allows her to connect regularly with her audience by sharing her favorite Spanish wine, the public art installations she enjoyed visiting in rural Japan, the causes or activists or artists she cares about. Sharing a lifestyle, however, is different than sharing a life.

During the rare instances when she has to address something more intimate, her own outlets are the ideal way to disseminate the message. After DaBaby, a rapper featured on a remix of her song ''Levitating,'' was videotaped making homophobic comments at a 2021 music festival, Lipa wrote a statement on Instagram, where she has 88.6 million followers, renouncing him and encouraging her fans to fight the stigma around H.I.V./AIDS. That sort of direct communication ''was something artists didn't have before,'' she says. ''Whatever was said about you in the press, that was it: That's who you are.''

In 2021, an organization founded by the American Orthodox rabbi Shmuley Boteach ran a full-page ad in The New York Times accusing Lipa of antisemitism after she defended Palestinian human rights. Her representatives asked the paper's leaders to apologize, but they didn't. For more than two years, Lipa has turned down all coverage opportunities in The Times. Then she convinced Dean Baquet, the newspaper's former executive editor, to come on her podcast last December. When she brought up the controversy, he had little to say about the company's decisions (he still works here), explaining the church-and-state divisions between editorial and advertising departments. To her, the exchange went as anticipated: ''It was enough for me to voice it to the guy at the top,'' and she could then move on from something that had bothered her for years.

All these decisions are hers to make, of course -- she owes the public no more or no less than she chooses. Still, it's interesting, novel even, to watch a celebrity build a brand off her own interests and obsessions, rather than allow her private life to become an interest and obsession of others. Since the dawn of Madonna, we've expected pop stars (and indeed all female artists) to bare all -- to reference their mental health struggles (Lady Gaga) or their partners' cheating scandals (Beyoncé) -- only to judge and punish them for doing so. Lipa refuses to engage on that level. Her music, too, avoids the strange dissonance of other female artists (Taylor Swift; Adele) who've achieved success by exposing everyday secrets and sadnesses, only to find themselves stuck looping those same narratives now that their lives aren't so relatable. Lipa won't sing about those kinds of Easter eggs: ''I think it's a marketing tool: How confessional can you be?'' she says. ''I also don't put so much of my life out there for people to dig into the music in this weird, analytical way.''

The next album will be ''more personal,'' she offers, but that's not why she's doing it. Two days before we'd met for sushi, Lipa had been rewatching ''How Can You Mend a Broken Heart,'' the 2020 documentary about the Bee Gees, ''just bawling my eyes out,'' she says, with her boyfriend, Romain Gavras, a 42-year-old French Greek film director. (Tellingly, her relationship with Gavras is the only thing her publicist asked that I not bring up myself.) In the film, someone talks about ''music that just makes your body feel good,'' she explains. ''Those are the songs I get attached to -- that's the kind of feeling I want to convey.'' Already, she's proved herself adept as a singer in conjuring those sorts of sensations. But as she keeps talking, I notice that the ordinary gesture of recommending a film I haven't seen is making her feel good, too. ''You should definitely watch it,'' she says, interrupting her thoughts about her own music. ''It's amazing. I cry every time.''

Hair by Rio Sreedharan. Makeup by Samantha Lau. Set design by Afra Zamara for Second Name. Production: Farago Projects. Manicurist: Michelle Humphrey for LMC Worldwide. Photo assistants: Daniel Rodriguez Serrato, Enzo Farrugia, Hermine Werner. Set designer's assistants: Tatyana Rutherston, Viola Vitali, Oualid Boudrar. Tailor: Sabrina Gomis Vallée. Stylist's assistants: Martí Serra, Alexis Landolfi, Anna Castellano

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/07/t-magazine/dua-lipa-service95.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/07/t-magazine/dua-lipa-service95.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The pop star Dua Lipa, photographed in Paris on May 25, 2023, wears a Gucci coat (with brooch), $12,900, pants, $5,200, sunglasses, $695, and shoes, $1,250, gucci.com

andSkims bra, $34, skims.com. Alaïa dress, $3,320, and scarf, $4,090, maison-alaia.com/us

Skims bra

Stuart Weitzman shoes, $495, stuartweitzman.com

her own earrings

and stylist's own underwear. Hair by Rio Sreedharan for the Wall Group. Makeup by Samantha Lau. Set design by Afra Zamara for Second Name. Production: Farago projects. MANICURIST: MICHELLE HUMPHREY for LMC WORLDWIDE. Photo assistants: DANIEL RODRIGUEZ SERRATO, ENZO FARRUGIA, HERMINE WERNER. SET DESIGNER's ASSISTANTS: TATYANA RUTHERSTON, VIOLA VITALI, OUALID BOUDRAR. TAILOR: SABRINA GOMIS VALLÉE. Stylist's assistants: MARTí SERRA, ALEXIS LANDOLFI, ANNA CASTELLANO (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUIS ALBERTO RODRIGUEZ

STYLED BY CARLOS NAZARIO) This article appeared in print on page M2123, M2124, M2125, M2126, M2127.

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[***The Woman Shaking Up Italian Politics (No, Not the New Prime Minister); the Saturday Profile***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67P6-M1R1-JBG3-61RG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Jason Horowitz

**Highlight:** Daughter of Italian and Jewish American parents, Elly Schlein wants to remake the center-left opposition to Giorgia Meloni, if only her party can survive it.

**Body**

Daughter of Italian and Jewish American parents, Elly Schlein wants to remake the center-left opposition to Giorgia Meloni, if only her party can survive it.

ROME — Growing up in Switzerland, Elly Schlein felt a little lost.

“I was the black sheep. Because my brother and sister seemed to be more sure of what they would do,” the politician recalled. She watched Italian neorealist cinema and American comedies, played Philip Glass on the piano, pet her dwarf bunny named after Freddie Mercury, listened to the Cranberries and ultimately got involved in her school’s politics. “It took a lot more time for me to find my way,” she said.

Last weekend, Ms. Schlein, 37, found her way into the center of the debate about the future of the European left when she stunned the liberal establishment and reordered Italy’s political landscape by winning a primary election to become the first woman to lead the country’s center-left Democratic Party. She is promising, she said in her new office headquarters on Wednesday, to “change deeply” a party in the midst of an identity crisis.

It is hard to embody change in Italy more than Ms. Schlein.

A woman in a relationship with a woman, she is the daughter of a Jewish American father; granddaughter of an Italian antifascist partisan; proud native of Lugano, Switzerland; former volunteer for Barack Obama; collaborator on an award-winning documentary about Albanian refugees; fan of “Naked Gun” movies; shredder of Green Day chords on her electric guitar; and fervent progressive eager to make common international cause with “A.O.C.,” Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Democrat of New York.

With her election, Ms. Schlein has catapulted Italy, which long seemed a Country for Old Men, into markedly different territory. A female opposition leader now is pitted against the first female prime minister, the right-wing nationalist Giorgia Meloni.

“It’s a different scenario now,” said Ms. Schlein, who had the professorial air of her professor parents as she leafed through newspapers. “And an interesting one, because I’ve always said that we don’t need just a female leadership. We need a feminist leadership.”

The two women could hardly be more different. Ms. Meloni, who called Ms. Schlein to congratulate her, was raised by a single mother in a ***working-class*** neighborhood of Rome, was a youth activist in post-Fascist parties and came to prominence on an anti-migrant, Italy-first platform. Her battle cry: “I’m Giorgia, I’m a woman, I’m a mother, I’m a Christian!”

Ms. Schlein — who has Italian, Swiss and American passports — said she didn’t understand how being “a woman, a mother and a Christian helps Italians to pay their bills.” She added: “I am a woman. I love another woman. I am not a mother, but I am not less of a woman for this.”

She argued that Ms. Meloni represented an ideology that viewed women merely for their reproductive and child-rearing roles. Ms. Meloni has “never described herself as an antifascist,” Ms. Schlein said, arguing that she instead threw red meat to her base with “inhuman” and “illegal” policies making it harder to save migrants at sea.

Such liberal red meat is likely to sate the base of progressives and young voters that Ms. Schlein brought into the Democratic Party fold in last Sunday’s primary. But it did little for the left in the election Ms. Meloni won easily in September. Ms. Schlein’s party now has about half the support of Ms. Meloni’s.

Moderate critics within Ms. Schlein’s own deeply divided party fear that she will fold its big tent by forfeiting the political center, driving the party to the far left, gutting it of its reputation for sober competence, and blending it with — or feeding it to — the reinvigorated, populist Five Star Movement.

But Ms. Schlein is not convinced that denizens of an Italian middle even exist. “Where are they today?” she asked in her perfect English, noting that “when somebody had tried to represent them with new political options, it never went really well.” Instead, she saw the way forward as making “clear who we want to represent” — struggling Italians.

She said she would spread “environmentalist and feminist” solutions to endemic Italian problems such as female unemployment and inequality in “clearly a patriarchal country.” She would make amends for “the mistakes made in the past,” especially during the leadership of former Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, which led her to quit the Democratic Party nearly a decade ago.

She would reintroduce labor protections, tax the rich, reconnect with trade unions, invest in a greener economy and push for gay and immigrant rights. This week, she visited the site of a deadly shipwreck of migrants in Calabria and effectively interrogated Ms. Meloni’s interior minister for appearing to blame the victims.

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But Giuseppe Conte, the leader of Five Star, which has demonstrated a strong illiberal streak over recent years, was the prime minister who signed off on the crackdown of migrant rescue ships at sea. He has emerged as Italy’s main opponent to Ms. Meloni’s vow to keep sending weapons to Ukraine.

Five Star’s position on Ukraine, Ms. Schlein said, “I don’t agree on.” She described her party as wholly supportive of Ukraine against the “criminal invasion” by Russia and noted it had voted to send arms over the next year, because “it’s necessary now.”

Supporters of Ukraine, however, worry about Ms. Schlein’s ongoing commitment because of her talk of being a “pacifist” and what some consider her naïve argument that Europe somehow needed to convince China to force Russia to end the war.

But she said she feels a personal connection to Ukraine. Her grandfather was from Ukraine, she said, and after he emigrated to the United States, eventually settling in Elizabeth, N.J., his family back home was almost certainly wiped out in the Holocaust. Her Italian grandfather, who eventually became a Socialist lawmaker, refused to wear the “black shirts of the Fascists” during his graduation and “was an antifascist lawyer” who, she said, would “defend Jews in trials.”

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Ms. Schlein was herself not raised Jewish, though she called herself “particularly proud” of her Jewish ancestry. In a friendly [*interview*](https://www.tpi.it/politica/elly-schlein-pd-vinco-io-lo-dicono-i-numeri-intervista-20230203976802/) during the campaign, she told an Italian website that her last name and pronounced nose, what she considers her defining physical feature, attracted odious anti-Semitic attacks. But, she noted, the nose was not Jewish, but “typically Etruscan.”

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Ms. Schlein said addressing such injustices drew her into politics. A star pupil in her Lugano high school, she said, she wanted to take her talents to Italy, “because I’ve always felt that this country, the country of my mother, has strong potential that only needs to be freed.”

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“Well,” she said. “We’ll see.”

PHOTOS: Lugano, Switzerland, where Ms. Schlein grew up. She is the daughter of a Jewish American father and an Italian mother, holding Italian, Swiss and U.S. passports. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREA WYNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); The Colosseum lit up in the colors of the Ukrainian flag. Ms. Schlein described her Democratic Party as standing against the “criminal invasion” by Russia. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERTO MONALDO/LAPRESSE, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS); Supporters of Giorgia Meloni in September. She became Italy’s first female prime minister weeks later. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GIANNI CIPRIANO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MASSIMO BERRUTI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A4.

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[***Making History, and Vowing to Remake the Italian Left***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67P6-M4B1-JBG3-61SR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Jason Horowitz

**Body**

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''I was the black sheep. Because my brother and sister seemed to be more sure of what they would do,'' the politician recalled. She watched Italian neorealist cinema and American comedies, played Philip Glass on the piano, pet her dwarf bunny named after Freddie Mercury, listened to the Cranberries and ultimately got involved in her school's politics. ''It took a lot more time for me to find my way,'' she said.

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**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Lugano, Switzerland, where Ms. Schlein grew up. She is the daughter of a Jewish American father and an Italian mother, holding Italian, Swiss and U.S. passports. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREA WYNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

The Colosseum lit up in the colors of the Ukrainian flag. Ms. Schlein described her Democratic Party as standing against the ''criminal invasion'' by Russia. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERTO MONALDO/LAPRESSE, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

Supporters of Giorgia Meloni in September. She became Italy's first female prime minister weeks later. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GIANNI CIPRIANO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MASSIMO BERRUTI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A4.

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[***Critics Say Race Report In Britain Ignores Biases***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62BH-D1K1-JBG3-61PV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Mark Landler and Stephen Castle

**Body**

The government report, while acknowledging enduring racism, said Britain provided a model for other white-majority countries on issues of race. Critics accused it of ignoring racial injustice in the country.

LONDON -- British cities echoed last year with the cries of Black Lives Matter protesters, demanding a racial reckoning in Britain similar to that convulsing the United States in the wake of multiple killings of Black Americans by the police.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Boris Johnson responded by releasing a government-commissioned report on the state of racial discrimination in Britain that concluded that the country ''should be regarded as a model for other white-majority countries.'' The backlash was swift and scathing.

Critics accused the Conservative government of whitewashing racial injustice by arguing that discrimination is more a result of socio-economic disparities than skin color. By discouraging use of the term institutional racism, they said, the report sought to turn back the clock on how Britons talk about race.

While the document, compiled by a 10-member Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, acknowledged the enduring nature of racism -- ''graffiti on someone's business, violence in the street or prejudice in the labor market'' -- it came to an upbeat conclusion about the progress of British society as a whole.

''Put simply, we no longer see a Britain where the system is deliberately rigged against ethnic minorities,'' the report said. ''Too often 'racism' is the catch all explanation and can be simply implicitly accepted rather than explicitly examined.''

Among its most prominent assertions is that among low-income groups, ethnic minorities -- South Asians and Black Africans -- consistently outperform ***working-class*** white people in school examinations. Only children from Black Caribbean families perform worse than white people. That finding is not new, scholars said, but it bolsters the case that race is not the biggest obstacle to educational attainment.

For some critics, the findings seemed calculated to buttress Mr. Johnson's political agenda, which seeks to ''level up'' prosperity between wealthy London and the white, ***working-class*** strongholds in the Midlands and the north. While the commission is independent, and all but one of its members are ethnic minorities, critics said they were chosen because their views generally align with that agenda.

''The argument is that the real victims of racism are the white ***working class***,'' said Kehinde Andrews, a professor of Black Studies at Birmingham City University. ''The reason they have asked these Black and brown people to do this report is to legitimize their position.''

The findings are ''so brazen it's ridiculous,'' Professor Andrews said, adding, ''white academics couldn't get away with saying this.''

Defenders of the report, however, say it moves the debate over race to more objective ground, marshaling statistics to puncture what they call popular myths about racial discrimination in British society. It makes sensible recommendations, like abandoning the widely-used acronym B.A.M.E. -- Black, Asian and minority ethnic -- which it says does not account for the divergent experiences of different ethnic groups.

Racial disadvantage ''is real but not generally caused by white racism,'' the author David Goodhart wrote in an essay for his think tank, Policy Exchange. ''There can be racial disadvantage without racists because of a legacy of distrust and lack of opportunity in the past.''

Mr. Goodhart, whose latest book, ''Head, Hand, Heart,'' explores alienation and the roots of populism, said the report was compiled by veterans of the racial struggles of the 1970s and 1980s, who are, in effect, saying to the young Black Lives Matter protesters, ''Our experience has taught us that you do not pass on the baton of progress by cleaving to a fatalistic account that insists nothing has changed.''

Race has been recurring issue in Britain in the last year. It surfaced recently in the interview that Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, gave Oprah Winfrey, when Meghan, a biracial American former actress, claimed that members of the royal family worried about the skin color of her unborn child.

Mr. Johnson set up the commission after protests in London and other cities inspired by those in the United States following the killing of George Floyd by a police officer in Minneapolis. To chair it, he chose Tony Sewell, an educational consultant and son of Jamaican immigrants, who worked for the prime minister when he was mayor of London.

The report opposed the tactics of those protesters, including pulling down the statue of a notorious 17th-century slave trader, Edward Colston, in Bristol. Critics faulted its advocacy of a ''new story'' about the slave trade, one that focused less on the suffering it caused and more on how ''culturally African people transformed themselves into a remodeled African/Britain.''

A Labour Party lawmaker, Zarah Sultana, wrote on Twitter that ''an attempt to put positive spin on the slave trade -- one of the most monstrous crimes in human history -- is sickening.'' The report, she said, was a ''disgraceful sham.''

Even worse to critics, the 257-page document is presented as a successor to the highly influential Macpherson Report, which grew out of an inquiry into the racially motivated killing of a Black teenager, Stephen Lawrence, in 1993. That document found evidence of institutional racism in the botched investigation of the crime, a provocative new concept that transformed the debate over racism in Britain.

With hate crimes being reported to the police at a greater rate, the new report argues that the term institutional racism should no longer be used so liberally and without evidence to support it -- a subtle point that critics say is nonetheless damaging.

''Reverting to the idea that we're going to focus on racism only as overt hostility and hatred takes us back to the more simplistic ways we talked about racism,'' said Matthew Ryder, a lawyer who worked on racial issues as a deputy mayor of London. ''It undoes the progress we've made in the last 20 years in this country.''

Even before its release, critics complained that the report's conclusions were handed to selected journalists before publication as part of a media strategy shaped more by politics than a desire to expand the discourse over race.

Afzal Khan, a Labour lawmaker, said the document was ''based on a Conservative ideology that seeks to place the blame on individuals rather than addressing its root cause'' and was a ''blatant and transparent attempt to kick start a culture war.'' The report came out against programs, like unconscious bias training for employees, which are often targeted by critics on the right.

There was also criticism from David Lammy, another Labour lawmaker and the author of a 2017 study on how the criminal justice system treated minorities. Mr. Johnson's approach to the Black Lives Matter movement had ''let an entire generation of young white and Black British people down, Mr. Lammy said on LBC, a talk-radio station on which he recently debated patiently with a caller who argued that his Afro-Caribbean heritage meant he could not be considered English.

''This report could have been a turning point and a moment to come together,'' Mr. Lammy said. ''Instead, it has chosen to divide us once more and keep us debating the existence of racism rather than doing anything about it.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/31/world/europe/britain-racism.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/31/world/europe/britain-racism.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Prime Minister Boris Johnson set up the commission on race after Black Lives Matter protests in London and other cities last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDY RAIN/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

**Load-Date:** April 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Brooklyn Hospitals Hit By a Fierce Cyberattack, Taking Computers Offline***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:672Y-0671-JBG3-6073-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 17

**Length:** 1228 words

**Byline:** By Sarah Maslin Nir, Joseph Goldstein and Sharon Otterman

**Body**

Since late November, medical professionals have been using pen and paper as experts work to get the facilities fully back online.

A Brooklyn hospital group that serves patients in some of New York's poorest neighborhoods has been battling the consequences of a cyberattack that forced some critical services offline.

The group, One Brooklyn Health, was hit by the attack in late November, officials confirmed. Now, even as cybersecurity experts work to get its three hospitals fully back online, doctors and nurses are forced to rely on methods most hospitals left behind in the 1990s: pen-and-paper patient care.

LaRay Brown, the chief executive officer of One Brooklyn Health -- which includes Interfaith Medical Center, Brookdale Hospital Medical Center and Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center -- said that the hospitals were working with security experts to remediate the problems, which at one point shut down all-important hospital work stations through which health care providers access medical records, order prescriptions and fill in patient charts.

''One Brooklyn Health has made considerable progress in our investigation and remediation process in response to a cybersecurity incident we detected in late November,'' Ms. Brown said in an emailed statement over the weekend. ''In the meantime, all of our hospitals and facilities are open, and we continue to provide care for our patients using well-established downtime procedures for which our clinicians and administrators are extensively trained.''

It has not been disclosed whether this was a ransomware attack, in which the hackers demanded payment. The F.B.I. declined to comment on the case, citing its policy of not discussing ongoing investigations. Other public safety agencies did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The New York State Department of Health said it was working with the hospitals to ensure patient safety but declined to comment further.

The cyberattack was reported earlier by The City.

Scheena Iyande Tannis, a critical care nurse at Brookdale for the past 17 years, said that the electronic medical system there had been down for several weeks, pushing her to turn to methods she first learned in the days before the hospital had electronic medical records.

''My day-to-day has changed a little bit, just re-familiarizing yourself with the paperwork that is needed, but the actual care of the patient remains the same, because patients present, disease processes present, as they always have,'' Ms. Tannis said. ''And I'm an experienced nurse that grew up in critical care using the paper charting.''

In an interview, a hospital employee who works in inpatient psychiatry at Interfaith said that the cyberattack required his unit to create new workarounds: Hard-copy patient records now must be carried by hand to the unit. He said that the ability to provide care had not changed, but noted that lab results now took longer. The hospital employee requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak about the hack.

Another staff member, at Brookdale, said diagnostic imaging had to be sent out, because it could not be done in-house. ''A lot of things are taking a long time, we are doing our best and trying to adapt,'' he said.

Brookdale is located in Brownsville, a predominantly Black neighborhood in Brooklyn where the poverty rate is twice the citywide rate. The neighborhood's skyline is dominated by public housing towers including the Woodson Houses, Tilden Houses and Seth Low Houses.

Brookdale and other such safety-net hospitals, which primarily take care of poor and ***working-class*** patients, were quickly overwhelmed during the deadly first wave of the coronavirus pandemic in the spring of 2020. Patients in the surrounding neighborhood have a higher incidence of chronic health conditions, including obesity and hypertension, both of which made Covid-19 more deadly. The hospitals were also understaffed.

Approximately 2,500 Covid-19 patients were admitted by One Brooklyn Health hospitals in the spring and summer of 2020. One-third, or 831 of them, died, the system said.

Ms. Tannis, the critical care nurse, cited that experience as girding her for the inconveniences of the cyberattack. ''I made it through many a battle,'' she said. ''This is more like a hiccup rather than a battle.''

Since 2017, there have been more than 3,600 local, tribal and state governments across the country targeted by ransomware hackers, according to the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center, an organization that seeks to enhance the cybersecurity posture of the United States.

One Brooklyn Health is among several prominent institutions in the region dealing with cyberattacks. For weeks this fall, the government of Suffolk County was forced largely offline by a malicious ransomware attack. And on Friday, the Metropolitan Opera announced plans to work around a cyberattack that paralyzed its website and box office: It is selling $50 tickets to some performances on a site run by Lincoln Center.

Hospitals are increasingly a favorite target of hackers. A wave of cyberattacks hit about a dozen hospitals in the fall of 2020, disrupting care. In one Vermont hospital, nurses had to turn away chemotherapy patients. At Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, in Brooklyn, a ransomware attack in October 2020 left the hospital staff relying on pen, paper, and a lot of elevator rides to transmit information, the hospital's chief executive, Ramón Rodriguez, recalled in an interview. And in April, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued a warning to health care providers that a particularly aggressive hacking gang was targeting them.

John Riggi, the national adviser for cybersecurity and risk at the American Hospital Association, noted that data theft and ransomware attacks have only accelerated in the months since the start of the pandemic.

''As we raced to care for the waves of Covid-19 patients and save lives, hospitals and health systems made greater use of network and internet-connected technologies, cloud-based services and remote third parties,'' Mr. Riggi said in a statement. ''This helped ease the effect of severe work force shortages and increase clinical and business efficiencies. However, this also increased our digital 'attack surface.'''

Foreign-based hackers quickly took advantage of hospitals' increased risk exposure, he said.

At One Brooklyn Health, administrators said that workarounds are in place that have allowed operations to continue relatively smoothly, and after taking the hospital's network offline in an effort to contain the intrusion, many services have been restored.

One Brooklyn Health grew out of a longstanding state effort to consolidate struggling hospitals in central Brooklyn. Brookdale is the largest of the hospitals, although Interfaith is one of the largest providers of inpatient psychiatry in Brooklyn, with more than 120 beds allocated for behavioral health.

The hospitals largely serve Medicaid and Medicare patients and lose millions of dollars each year because of low reimbursement rates. The unpaid chairman of the board of One Brooklyn Health, however, is Alexander Rovt, a billionaire real estate investor and Democratic donor who made his fortune in the fertilizer business.

Liam Stack contributed reporting.Liam Stack contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/12/nyregion/brooklyn-hospital-cyberattack.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/12/nyregion/brooklyn-hospital-cyberattack.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Interfaith Medical Center in Brooklyn is part of the One Brooklyn Health system, where a cyberattack has taken some critical services offline. The cybersecurity incident happened in November. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A17.

**Load-Date:** December 13, 2022

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[***Saving Chinatown, While Also Making It Their Own***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:696N-19P1-DXY4-X0MD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 19, 2023 Tuesday 17:54 EST

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**Section:** T-MAGAZINE

**Length:** 5095 words

**Byline:** Ligaya Mishan and David Chow

**Highlight:** A younger generation of Asian Americans are fighting to keep the history and culture of the Manhattan neighborhood alive — and for the very idea of what an ethnic enclave can be.

**Body**

SOME NIGHTS, IN her bedroom in a former tenement in downtown Manhattan, the fashion designer [*Sandy Liang*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/09/style/sandy-liang-baggu.html) can hear the strains of “Happy Birthday” filtering up through the floorboards from [*Congee Village*](https://congeenyc.com/), the restaurant that her father opened in 1996, when she was 5. So many times she’s listened to the waiters sing those bars, on her birthday and her brother’s, year after year, every milestone celebrated in that fantastical dining room tricked out with fake trees. Back then, the address was just outside of Chinatown, which emerged in the 1870s within the predominantly Irish and later Italian Five Points slum, at the bracket of Bayard, Mott and Pell Streets. The New York Times [*first mentions the neighborhood by name in 1880*](https://www.nytimes.com/1880/03/06/archives/the-chinese-in-newyork-how-they-live-and-make-moneygood-wages-and.html), coolly noting that a few property owners in the area refused to take Chinese tenants, while others demanded rents “considerably above those paid by Christians.” These days, depending on whom you ask, the neighborhood sprawls from Delancey Street down to Chambers Street, west to Broadway and east as far as the river.

In Liang’s childhood memory of the restaurant’s early days on Allen Street just below Delancey, there weren’t a lot of Chinese in that part of the Lower East Side yet. Her family lived in Bayside, Queens, but most weekends her mother trekked across the bridge into Chinatown for groceries, and Liang slept over at her grandparents’ apartment on Rivington Street. Like many Chinese-born women who came to the United States after immigration reform in the 1960s, Liang’s paw paw, or maternal grandmother, worked at one of the neighborhood’s garment factories, which by the early ’80s numbered around 500 and employed more than 20,000 women, some making only $9 or $10 a day despite the federally mandated minimum wage of $3.35 an hour. On June 24, 1982, nearly a decade before Liang was born, almost all of those women walked off the job and took to the streets, wearing paper caps [*signaling their allegiance to*](https://www.nytimes.com/1982/07/16/nyregion/the-city-garment-workers-rally-in-chinatown.html) International Ladies’ Garment Workers Union Local 23-25, to protest employers who were threatening to cut wages and pull benefits.

Now Liang, 32, is the one who makes clothes. In 2020, she [*opened a boutique*](https://www.sandyliang.info/pages/store) a few blocks south of Congee Village. Nothing is crowded here, nothing loud. Winky separates — a gingham top with dangling garters, a demi-bra in power-suit gray — hang from a sinuous metal rack across from shelves of giant flower scrunchies edged in eyelet, and satin Mary Janes whose blunted toes evoke ballet shoes. The price tags wouldn’t be out of place in SoHo or up on Madison Avenue. But there’s a blithe mix-and-match sensibility to Liang’s line that collapses the distance between It girl and Chinatown grandma — sometimes literally: A shearling coat [*modeled by her paw paw*](https://www.oprahdaily.com/style/a23553236/fashion-sandy-liang-chinese-culture/) in 2018 wound up a few years later on a magazine editor in the rebooted TV series “Gossip Girl.” For Liang, who once presented her designs at Congee Village amid plates of fried rice and chow fun, there is no contradiction. There is simply biography.

In some ways, this is the story of Manhattan’s Chinatown, too: born in another era and yet urgently of this one, old and new at once, ever in flux and yet somehow timeless, if only in the mind. Where so much of New York has submitted to the demands of capital and so many blocks have been transformed into mere real estate, this pocket of prized downtown squeezed between SoHo and TriBeCa, two of the most expensive neighborhoods in the city, has to date mostly resisted wholesale demolition and development (owing in part to the concentration of property in the hands of civic associations formed to govern the neighborhood in the late 1800s and organized by family or village ties). It has even expanded into new territory, subsuming all but three blocks of Little Italy, as well as the historically Jewish section of the Lower East Side. (The original Chinatown, to the west, was settled by those with origins in Guangdong Province, who speak Cantonese; more recent immigrants, from Fujian Province and speaking Mandarin and Fujianese, have staked a claim to the east.) As other quarters in Manhattan have started to change in character (Washington Heights, whose Dominican population has declined; Harlem, [*no longer majority Black*](https://nytimes.com/2010/01/06/nyregion/06harlem.html)) — with both the departure of the young people raised there and the arrival of outsiders in search of cheaper rents or the aura of cool that comes with living on an imagined fringe — Chinatown has remained recognizably Chinatown.

But whose Chinatown? For tourists looking for an easily accessible exotic within an American city, there is the Chinatown of myth and surfaces, of paper lanterns and dragons, stone lions and ceramic lucky cats waving their paws, dumplings and noodles. That these items have genuine cultural value does not rescue them from the reductiveness of an outsider’s gaze. Indeed, as long as there have been Chinatowns, enterprising vendors within these communities have consciously played to non-Chinese tastes, exaggerating and diluting cultural differences as needed, as with the tempering of dishes (and the creation of almost entirely new ones) for curious but still fairly timid Western palates. The result, paradoxically, is that tourists find in Chinatown not a new world, to be learned in its particulars, but a variation on a theme, in which one noodle shop stands in for all noodle shops and one Chinatown for all Chinatowns, across the country and the world.

Even for many American-born Chinese, who may honor Chinatown less as a specific address than as a testament to immigrant adaptability and resilience and a metaphorical marker of origins regardless of whether their ancestors passed through it, the neighborhood is essentially a place to visit — to come for dim sum on weekends, like tourists. Today Manhattan’s Chinatown has been surpassed in size by Chinatowns in Flushing, Queens, and Sunset Park, Brooklyn. A [*2022 city report*](https://www.nyc.gov/assets/sbs/downloads/pdf/neighborhoods/avenyc-cdna-chinatown.pdf), drawing on census statistics for tracts that approximate the neighborhood’s physical plant, puts the total population at 57,159, of which 34,295 (60 percent) are of Asian descent.

At the same time, a number of young Chinese Americans are choosing, like Liang, to anchor themselves in the neighborhood, a reversal of traditional patterns of assimilation, in which the children of immigrants tend to leave crowded urban ethnic enclaves for the expansiveness of suburbia. Some have family here: Vic Lee, 33, of the nonprofit organization [*Welcome to Chinatown*](https://welcometochinatown.com/), has a tattoo on her elbow of a rice bowl with the number 135, a homage to her grandmother’s longtime address, 135 Eldridge Street. Others are newcomers, drawn perhaps out of a desire to reconnect with the culture of their forebears or wanting the comfort of the familiar — the food they ate as children; the sound of the language their grandparents spoke; the greetings and mild scoldings from the elders they meet on the street, whom they call aunties and uncles — or for a sense, however inchoate, of belonging. The filmmaker [*Connor Sen Warnick*](https://connorwarnick.com/), 27, moved to Chinatown a year and a half ago, to a railroad apartment with the shower in the kitchen, because, he says, “in other spaces, I was always reminded that I was Asian and overlooked or misunderstood.”

It is the simplest kind of freedom, to feel at one with your surroundings; to be able to melt into the crowd. The California-born architect Dong-Ping Wong, 43, of [*Food New York*](https://food-newyork.com/), opened an office in 2018 at the western end of East Broadway, a part of Chinatown where few tourists wander. “Here I can not feel foreign,” he says. “I can disappear.”

UNDER THE QING dynasty (1644-1911), Chinese imperial subjects were discouraged or outright prohibited from going overseas. But the First Opium War, which ended in 1842 with the British forcing China into trade concessions, sapped the empire’s power, and people in the southern coastal province of Guangdong — home to the only port in China that was open to Westerners — felt emboldened to seek opportunities in America. They were greeted as usurpers of jobs and, in the West, then still a lawless frontier, many were brutalized and massacred.

An ethnic enclave within a city was not so much a choice as a necessity, then, for protection, and because discrimination made it nearly impossible to rent and find work elsewhere. In the United States, immigrant neighborhoods have typically functioned as liminal spaces, way stations for nascent Americans en route to a less conspicuous life. But while Irish, German and, later, Southern and Eastern European immigrants were eventually folded into mainstream white America (the descendants of Western and Northern European colonialists), for the Chinese there was no path to assimilation; they were viewed as forever foreign, a notion that, as Wong points out, persists to this day.

In 1882, Congress passed the [*Chinese Exclusion Act*](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Chinese-Exclusion-Act), strictly limiting Chinese immigration for the next six decades. (It was not repealed until 1943, after China had become the United States’ ally in World War II.) Manhattan’s Chinatown grew nevertheless, albeit with a dramatically skewed gender ratio: Because the Page Act of 1875 had effectively banned Chinese women from entering the country (ostensibly to curtail human trafficking and prostitution, although likely an underlying motive was to prevent Chinese immigrants from having children on American soil), by 1900 Chinatown was home to 7,028 men but only 142 women — a ratio of nearly 50 to 1, according to research by the Hong Kong-based historian Xinyang Wang. The neighborhood didn’t approach gender parity until the 1970s, after national origin quotas for immigration were abolished.

For some, it can be difficult to distinguish Chinatown as a historic site from the living neighborhood of today. “People think of Chinatown as this place they just go to or used to go to — but people live here,” Rochelle Kwan, 30, who collects oral histories for the nonprofit organization [*Think!Chinatown*](https://www.thinkchinatown.org/), says. “I’m one of them.”

TO AN OUTSIDE observer, Chinatown is at once vivid and invisible. You walk the streets, past the park with Cantopop from tinny radios lilting over thunked basketballs, the twang of a qinqin (plucked lute) and the sly murmur of xiangqi (Chinese chess) masters and aunties playing cards; past cooks in peaked hats on smoke break and street vendors by the Manhattan Bridge ever proclaiming, waving at orange-clawed crabs nestled in baskets, boxes of Ritz crackers, green beans spilled on newspaper, hot pink dragon fruit and musky little globes of longan hiding sweet, translucent flesh; past funeral supply shops and ginseng specialists, racks of red roasted ducks with shatter-ready skin and glassy-eyed fish over ice, grinding vans and buses destined for Virginia Beach; past restaurants whose kitchens seethe with the constant crackling static of food dropped in hot oil and industrial woks that roar like airplanes gunning to take flight; past decaying tenements riddled with faulty wiring, so quick to start fires, and doors that lead to warrens of carved-up rooms, some of them homes shared for decades by multiple generations, some crammed with cots wall to wall, rented out in eight-hour shifts by new immigrants with nowhere else to rest; past other doors, unmarked, that might conceal makeshift mahjong parlors for illegal gambling and karaoke dens up murkily lit stairs where blonde brides-to-be belt out Journey’s “Don’t Stop Believin’” while Chinatown uncles roll dice at the bar.

Even if you try to look closer, deeper, it is difficult not to fall into the trap of travelogue. And yet the energy of the streets is arguably a large part of what makes Chinatown Chinatown: a neighborhood that is as fully alive, as fully itself, in its public spaces as in its private ones. The population density alters the relationship of inside and outside. Kwan lives in a small apartment and thus spends much of her time outdoors, “hanging out with the uncles, saying hi to the fruit vendors,” she says. In an area where, for many, a commute to work or a foray for groceries might be a matter of a few blocks, the most prosaic of encounters, repeated day after day — the hellos exchanged with someone you don’t quite know, the consultations with shopkeepers on what’s freshest that morning — can offer a promise of connection. The band [*Chanpan*](https://www.instagram.com/chanpanmusic/) (the 26-year-old twins Lance and Matthew Tran on guitar and drums, and the 24-year-old singer Grace Dumdaw) started out busking on Confucius Plaza and were then recruited to perform at the wedding of the publicist [*Gia Kuan*](https://www.giakuan.com/), 36, whose office is on Hester Street.

The architect Dominic Leong, 45, wonders to what extent nostalgia for the neighborhood is often the projection of a romanticized Chineseness, as opposed to actual engagement with its residents. (He and his older brother, Chris, who are mixed-race Asian Americans of Chinese and Hawaiian descent, moved their firm, [*Leong Leong*](https://archive.nytimes.com/tmagazine.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/10/19/asked-answered-leong-leong/), to an office on the Bowery in 2010.) What is a neighborhood, after all, but the people who inhabit it? Leong notes that one of Chinatown’s distinctive characteristics is the presence of the elderly and the insistence on family as an extended unit, with many lives — and time periods lived through — under one roof.

Filial piety, a Confucian virtue, is sometimes misunderstood as mere obedience and passive acceptance of the wisdom of one’s ancestors, when in fact it can be the expression of a profound empathy, in which the self is not sublimated but enlarged. In 2016, Mei Lum, now 32, abandoned plans for graduate studies in international development [*in order to keep Wing on Wo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/09/nyregion/family-shop-in-chinatown-stays-in-family-wing-on-wo-co.html), the shop her great-great-grandfather opened on Mott Street in 1890, from closing. (Once a general store, it now specializes in porcelain.) For her, the decision to stay rather than leave — to choose the path her elders had taken as her own — was a radical act, and a step toward better “understanding my cultural identity and myself,” she says. The same year, hoping to hark back to the store’s early days as a community hub where residents could share news and pool resources, she launched the [*W.O.W. Project*](https://www.wowprojectnyc.org/) to encourage connections between youth and elders and support local artists. Now, amid the shop’s array of porcelain, she stocks zines like Alien Sketchbook by Yao Xiao and Dear Allie by Anson Lin, whose third issue promises “tasty pictures, bittersweet story.”

That sort of quiet renewal from within is happening throughout the neighborhood. Across from Wing on Wo, red stairs dip under the sidewalk to reveal the subterranean [*Wo Hop*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/07/dining/reviews/07dinbriefs.html), in operation since 1938, a canteen for Chinese American standbys like egg foo yong and duck lo mein. (A slightly newer sister restaurant is upstairs; each setting has its partisans.) In 2020, two years after David Leung, 58, became the majority owner — his father and grandfather had worked there for years — his daughter, Chelsea, then 16, helped him give new life to the restaurant’s [*Instagram account*](https://www.instagram.com/wohop17/?hl=en), highlighting its crimson barbecue ribs and limited-edition Lunar New Year T-shirts. Down on East Broadway, the former Cantonese opera star Winnie Mui, now 83, presides — with the help of her son, Teddy, 44, and daughter, Jaime, 47 — over a [*reincarnation of Winnie’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/02/style/winnies-karaoke-bar-chinatown.html), the belovedly anarchic karaoke bar she ran from 1987 to 2014 on Bayard Street.

There are mavericks, too. On an otherwise blank block of Division Street, [*Paul Eng*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/06/nyregion/the-heir-to-a-tofu-dynasty-finally-learns-to-make-tofu.html), 56, a former guitarist in the ’90s grunge band Piss Factory, has revived his family’s tofu shop, Fong On, first opened on Mott in 1933, as a bright, streamlined storefront with swan-necked iron lamps and a bar of ready-to-go sweet-sour-chewy toppings like grass jelly and mung beans to gild tofu pudding, i.e., extra-soft tofu. [*Soft Swerve*](https://www.softswervenyc.com/), down the street from Congee Village, whirls up cones of hojicha and black sesame ice cream; the owners, Jason Liu, 36, whose family ran a laundromat in the neighborhood for 20 years, and Michael Tsang, 35, met in middle school at the Manhattan Academy of Technology, then located at P.S. 2 on Henry Street. A few blocks over on Chrystie Street, Cantonese salt-and-pepper chicken with scallion-flecked Southern-style biscuits issues from the kitchen at [*Potluck Club*](https://thepotluckclubny.com/), opened by friends, now all in their 30s, three of whom attended P.S. 124 Yung Wing (named after the first Chinese student to graduate from a North American university, in 1854).

Sometimes elders in the neighborhood look askance at these innovations. But “we’re not trying to rebrand Chinatown,” Kimberly Ho, 38, a partner in Potluck Club and the granddaughter of the original owners of [*Great N.Y. Noodletown*](https://www.greatnewyorknoodletown.com/), is quick to say. “We just want to create a true representation of us as American-born Chinese.”

AT THE ONSET of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the streets of Chinatown went silent. Even before the city issued a shelter-in-place order, people from other parts of town, who account for nearly 80 percent of the patronage of Chinatown businesses, started shunning the area, falsely identifying the virus, which originated in China, with those of Chinese descent living and working in the neighborhood. According to [*an impact study overseen last year by Welcome to Chinatown*](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e6fafa57e34847ae52727f1/t/62ec129f77cea60abfdebc1c/1659638436816/Welcome+to+Chinatown_Impact+Study_2022.pdf), from 2019 to 2021, the neighborhood sustained a 57 percent drop in visits to stores and restaurants and a 26 percent loss in jobs (compared to 14 percent citywide). “For the first time, I realized, ‘I can’t take what I grew up with for granted,’” Liang says.

Storefronts were sealed behind rolled-down metal shutters. Some never rolled back up. Or when they did, there were different, non-Asian owners, who sometimes kept the old signage, with Chinese characters, which had the uneasy effect of reducing to mere décor the lives unspooled there: the people who had struggled to keep that small business — and, by proxy, the neighborhood — alive.

With the pandemic came [*physical attacks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/nyregion/asian-hate-crimes-attacks-ny.html) on people of Asian descent. The New York Police Department documented 28 incidents in 2020 and another 129 through early December 2021, while nationally in the same time period 10,905 incidents were [*reported to the coalition Stop AAPI Hate*](https://stopaapihate.org/2022/03/04/national-report-through-december-31-2021/). (A.A.P.I. stands for Asian American and Pacific Islander.) To hostile eyes, any Asian, whether Chinese or not, could be a target. In this moment of crisis, Manhattan’s Chinatown, with its historic significance, became a point of solidarity for Asian Americans. Donations flooded in from across the country to organizations such as Welcome to Chinatown and [*Send Chinatown Love*](https://www.sendchinatownlove.com/), both founded in March 2020. Their early efforts included supporting hard-hit local restaurants, many of which were cash only and had no internet presence, by purchasing meals that were then delivered to frontline workers and New Yorkers in need. (Welcome to Chinatown’s founders, Vic Lee and Jennifer Tam, 34, picked up and delivered the food themselves, earning the trust of restaurant owners despite, Lee says, “our very basic Cantonese.”)

Chinatown is still here. But the threats of erasure that preceded the pandemic have only intensified in its wake. Construction sites trumpet luxury condos in progress; the city is proceeding with plans to build what may be the world’s tallest jail, despite fierce community pushback. Then there are more insidious encroachments: nouvelle coffee shops, stark white art galleries. “They think they’re bringing culture to the neighborhood,” Lum says. “They’re not acknowledging the rich cultural fabric that was already here.” In the past decade, a mostly non-Asian group of artists, models, skaters, podcasters and other downtown personalities has laid claim to the cluster of blocks near the intersection of Canal and Division Streets, which some call [*Dimes Square*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/style/matthew-gasda-dimes-square.html), after the organic-leaning cafe on one block that serves bergamot pancakes and seaweed burgers. Perhaps they’ve come to this ***working-class*** neighborhood hoping for some kind of authenticity, increasingly elusive in today’s homogenized, corporate Manhattan. Whatever the motives, the result was that rents went up and a boutique hotel moved in. In today’s New York, there is nothing so cool that it can’t be mainstreamed and monetized. Inevitably the co-opters get co-opted.

But young Chinese Americans who are relatively new to the neighborhood must also reckon with the possibility that they, too, are contributing to the displacement of Chinatown residents; as Leong says, “We’re Chinese, but young professionals, paying more rent than previous inhabitants.” On East Broadway under the Manhattan Bridge, the upper floor of an old indoor mall has in the past few years turned into a mini-SoHo of high-end furniture galleries and shops selling reproductions of ’60s-era leather overcoats and ersatz Nike socks with the tag line “Just, don’t.” Wong, who works down the street, feels conflicted about the transformation. “I am that exact hipster market,” he admits with a laugh. Even Lee, who spent every Sunday of her childhood here at her grandmother’s apartment, says, “My identity as a Chinese American does not change the fact that I am also a gentrifier.”

How to be in the neighborhood and not exploit it? Some have set themselves the task of truly knowing Chinatown, becoming scholars of its past. Warnick consulted local elders in making his forthcoming film, “Characters Disappearing,” whose protagonist is a leader of the 1970s radical group [*I Wor Kuen*](https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-1a/iwk-history.htm), kin to the Black Panthers and the Young Lords. This fall, Lulu Yao Gioiello, 30, whose annual [*Far-Near book series*](https://far-near.media/) features work by writers from Asia and the diaspora as a corrective to media misrepresentation, is opening a community art space on Canal Street modeled in spirit after the 16-by-16-foot room under Elizabeth Street rented in 1970 by the artist-activist collective Basement Workshop, where they grappled with questions of Asian American identity while lobbying for better jobs, health care and resources for the neighborhood.

Implicit in this is a rebuke to a city that increasingly appears to exist only for the elite. Since 2015, [*Chinatown Art Brigade*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/18/arts/design/asian-american-artists-activism.html), founded by Betty Yu, 45, ManSee Kong, 42, and Tomie Arai, 74, has drawn attention to tenants’ rights with large-scale nocturnal light projections of messages like “Don’t call Chinatown the ‘last frontier’” and “Who did you displace when you opened your gallery?” An exhibition this past spring from the fictional [*Canal Street Research Association*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/30/arts/design/bootlegs-art-canal-street.html) — a project by the artists Ming Lin, who grew up on Walker Street, and Alex Tatarsky, both 34, collaborators under the name Shanzhai Lyric — investigated a [*2008 police raid*](https://archive.nytimes.com/cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/02/26/city-raids-counterfeit-triangle-shutting-32-storefronts/) on Chinatown vendors selling counterfeit luxury goods and how the city privileges corporate commerce over the kind of informal economies that help many of its inhabitants stay afloat.

Kwan has bypassed the regular economy altogether in amassing, through word of mouth, an enormous archive of vintage Chinese records, spanning 78s from the 1920s to Cantopop CDs from the early 2000s. When people give her records, they tell her stories — about the soundtrack at their family’s laundromat, the songs they taught themselves on the piano or the raucous karaoke parties in their parents’ living rooms. These stories, like the oral histories she collects, shouldn’t just be filed away, she argues: “A lot of our work is trying to get out of that nostalgic museum mind-set.” Instead, she brings the music back to the streets, D.J.ing at Think!Chinatown’s summertime block parties at Mott and Mosco Streets and night markets on Forsyth Plaza, lighting up the Manhattan Bridge.

WHOSE CHINATOWN? WHOSE city? A neighborhood can be mobilized as a political force, as in 1975 when almost all of Chinatown’s shops closed and thousands of residents [*marched on City Hall*](https://nytimes.com/1975/05/20/archives/thousands-in-chinatown-march-in-police-protest-report-to-city-hall.html) to protest police brutality, and with more recent actions decrying the new mega-jail. But to have political power requires a sense of solidarity, which in turn relies on the many small encounters and gestures that make up a district’s daily life. To be in Chinatown — whether as a descendant of multiple generations or as one in an influx of hundreds of newcomers each year, both immigrants and those born in the United States — means being part of Chinatown, on the ground, committed to its continuing.

On one level, this may be as straightforward as supporting longstanding local businesses. During the pandemic, when indoor dining was banned, the Vietnamese American fashion stylist Beverly Nguyen, 33, started buying housewares from local restaurant-supply stores — bamboo-handled spider ladles, steam baskets, woks — to help them offload inventory, then reselling the goods in her pop-up shop, [*Beverly’s*](https://www.instagram.com/beverlys.shop/) (soon opening at a more permanent address on Orchard Street, across from Liang’s boutique), arranging them alongside artisanal extra-virgin olive oil and handblown glasses and making customers from outside the neighborhood see what might appear as merely utilitarian objects in a new light.

The 37-year-old Korean American chef Sam Yoo, who cooked at [*Momofuku Ko*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/14/dining/restaurant-review-momofuku-ko-east-village.html) (tasting menu: $280 per person), chose to open a more populist restaurant, [*Golden Diner*](https://www.goldendinerny.com/), on Madison Street in 2019. “It was very important for me to have true locals come in,” he says. The ingredients reflect his attention to the neighborhood: Golden Diner’s burger comes on a sesame scallion bun from [*Fay Da Bakery*](https://fayda.com/), a chain started on Centre Street in 1991 by Han Chou, now 65 and working alongside his son James, 33; and Yoo orders seafood from Aqua Best on Grand Street, whose owners, Steven and Freeman Wong, 44 and 47, took over a business first built up by their widowed single mother in the 1980s, and dishware from KK Discount on Mulberry Street, opened in 1990 and still run by Ken Li, 73, and his wife, Vicky.

Others are trying to find ways to go beyond commercial interactions. In 2018, the staff of Food New York ran a radio station for a month out of an empty East Broadway storefront, airing interviews with people in the arts. “We wanted it to be heard by Chinatown kids: that you can make a living doing creative work,” says Wong, the firm’s founding director. The company has also hosted [*mahjong tournaments*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/19/t-magazine/mahjong-club-chinatown-tournament.html) in its office and, last fall, in the shuttered 88 Palace dim sum parlor as a fund-raiser for Welcome to Chinatown. No previous knowledge of mahjong is required. The hope, he says, is to bring people to the neighborhood who might otherwise have ventured there only to eat, and to inspire greater engagement with Chinese culture.

There is fragility in some of these efforts. When Lucy Yu, 28, opened [*Yu and Me Books*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/10/books/bookstores-diversity-pandemic.html) in 2021 in a former funeral-supply store on Mulberry Street, stocking books that showcase stories by immigrants and writers of color, she hoped that it would be a place where people could “not just shop but sit, breathe, have conversations.” Then, on the Fourth of July, [*a fire*](https://ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/human-interest/2023/07/11/yu-and-me-books-figures-out-next-steps-after-a-fire-destroyed-the-store-on-fourth-of-july) started in the apartment upstairs — a hazard of the neighborhood, where a disturbing number of blazes in recent years have caused displacement, financial devastation and, in some cases, multiple deaths. Smoke engulfed the store. Firefighters had to break through the upstairs windows with axes, and water from the hoses seeped down, destroying the books. The ceiling collapsed. Yu was told that repairs would take at least a year, and no insurance money would come through for months.

The same day, Sandy Truong, 31, and Daniel Lam, 33, were awakened by a phone call. Someone had thrown a cinder block through the glass front door of their coffee shop on Henry Street, [*Dreamers*](https://www.instagram.com/dreamers.nyc/), and snatched the cash register. They had met a few years before, working at a senior care center on Canal Street. When an organic cafe appeared on the corner, the seniors got nervous. “ ‘It’s not for us,’ they said,” Lam recalls. So the couple decided to open a more welcoming place. “We try really hard not to be too cool,” Lam says. “Not transactional,” Truong adds. They make sure there is always someone on duty who speaks Chinese and, alongside lattes, offer ling-mut, a tonic of lemon and honey found at Chinatown bakeries, here given fizz with a splash of sparkling water and chia seeds.

The fire at Yu and Me, the break-in at Dreamers: These are reminders that Chinatown is still vulnerable, still part of a larger, uneasy city with its own strains and complaints, its crumbling infrastructure and inadequate safety net. But it is nothing new to Chinatown to have to make do — to look to one’s own to survive. Two days after the fire, Yu set up a GoFundMe to cover staff wages, replace equipment and inventory and rent pop-up space while the store is being gut renovated. Within four hours, she’d received enough donations to hit her goal of $150,000; today her recovery fund stands at more than $360,000 and, earlier this month, she opened a temporary outlet at the Market Line on Delancey Street.

For Lam and Truong, the break-in was a setback, but not the end. They had planned to host a Fourth of July barbecue, that ultimate American tradition, on the sidewalk outside the coffee shop. Instead of calling it off, they invited half the neighborhood. “We had to reclaim the day,” Lam says. And while friends from down the block helped them sweep away the glass and board up the door, the grill popped and hissed, throwing sparks, like the fireworks spilling over the East River in shattered chandeliers.

PHOTOS: Some of the young creative people revitalizing Manhattan’s Chinatown, including, from left, the boutique owner Beverly Nguyen; the restaurateur and chef Sam Yoo; the ceramics seller Mei Lum; the filmmaker Connor Sen Warnick; the coffee- shop co-owner Daniel Lam; the fashion designer Sandy Liang; the ice cream maker Michael Tsang; Lam’s business partner, Sandy Truong; and Tsang’s business partner, Jason Liu. They were photographed at Golden Diner, Yoo’s restaurant, on Aug. 6, 2023. Opposite: the corner of Doyers and Pell Streets in the middle of the neighborhood, which was established about 150 years ago.; Above: the railroad apartment that Warnick moved into last year and, opposite, the painted stairwell of his walk-up building.; The interior of Soft Swerve, an ice cream shop that sells Asian-influenced flavors like ube and strawberry lychee, which Liu and Tsang, childhood friends from the neighborhood, opened on Allen Street in 2016.; Shelves full of Chinese porcelain sold at Wing on Wo, a Mott Street boutique that Lum took over seven years ago — her great-great- grandfather first opened it as a general store in 1890. Opposite: the view from Warnick’s rooftop overlooking Canal and Mulberry Streets. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID CHOW) This article appeared in print on page M2142, M2143, M2144, M2145, M2146, M2147, M2148, M2149.

**Load-Date:** September 24, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Cyberattack Hits Brooklyn Hospitals That Serve Poor New Yorkers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:672T-02S1-JBG3-6000-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1266 words

**Byline:** Sarah Maslin Nir, Joseph Goldstein and Sharon Otterman

**Highlight:** Since late November, medical professionals have been using pen and paper as experts work to get the facilities fully back online.

**Body**

Since late November, medical professionals have been using pen and paper as experts work to get the facilities fully back online.

A Brooklyn hospital group that serves patients in some of New York’s poorest neighborhoods has been battling the consequences of a cyberattack that forced some critical services offline.

The group, One Brooklyn Health, was hit by the attack in late November, officials confirmed. Now, even as cybersecurity experts work to get its three hospitals fully back online, doctors and nurses are forced to rely on methods most hospitals left behind in the 1990s: pen-and-paper patient care.

LaRay Brown, the chief executive officer of One Brooklyn Health — which includes Interfaith Medical Center, Brookdale Hospital Medical Center and Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center — said that the hospitals were working with security experts to remediate the problems, which at one point shut down all-important hospital work stations through which health care providers access medical records, order prescriptions and fill in patient charts.

“One Brooklyn Health has made considerable progress in our investigation and remediation process in response to a cybersecurity incident we detected in late November,” Ms. Brown said in an emailed statement over the weekend. “In the meantime, all of our hospitals and facilities are open, and we continue to provide care for our patients using well-established downtime procedures for which our clinicians and administrators are extensively trained.”

It has not been disclosed whether this was a ransomware attack, in which the hackers demanded payment. The F.B.I. declined to comment on the case, citing its policy of not discussing ongoing investigations. Other public safety agencies did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The New York State Department of Health said it was working with the hospitals to ensure patient safety but declined to comment further.

The cyberattack was reported earlier by [*The City.*](https://www.thecity.nyc/2022/11/25/23478350/one-brooklyn-health-system-offline-kingsbrook-brookdale-interfaith-hospitals)

Scheena Iyande Tannis, a critical care nurse at Brookdale for the past 17 years, said that the electronic medical system there had been down for several weeks, pushing her to turn to methods she first learned in the days before the hospital had electronic medical records.

“My day-to-day has changed a little bit, just re-familiarizing yourself with the paperwork that is needed, but the actual care of the patient remains the same, because patients present, disease processes present, as they always have,” Ms. Tannis said. “And I’m an experienced nurse that grew up in critical care using the paper charting.”

In an interview, a hospital employee who works in inpatient psychiatry at Interfaith said that the cyberattack required his unit to create new workarounds: Hard-copy patient records now must be carried by hand to the unit. He said that the ability to provide care had not changed, but noted that lab results now took longer. The hospital employee requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak about the hack.

Another staff member, at Brookdale, said diagnostic imaging had to be sent out, because it could not be done in-house. “A lot of things are taking a long time, we are doing our best and trying to adapt,” he said.

Brookdale is located in Brownsville, a predominantly Black neighborhood in Brooklyn where the poverty rate is [*twice the citywide rate*](https://furmancenter.org/neighborhoods/view/brownsville). The neighborhood’s skyline is dominated by public housing towers including the Woodson Houses, Tilden Houses and Seth Low Houses.

Brookdale and other such safety-net hospitals, which primarily take care of poor and ***working-class*** patients, [*were quickly overwhelmed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/nyregion/Coronavirus-hospitals.html) during the deadly first wave of the coronavirus pandemic in the spring of 2020. Patients in the surrounding neighborhood have a higher incidence of chronic health conditions, including obesity and hypertension, both of which made Covid-19 more deadly. The hospitals were also understaffed.

Approximately 2,500 Covid-19 patients were admitted by One Brooklyn Health hospitals in the spring and summer of 2020. One-third, or 831 of them, died, the system said.

Ms. Tannis, the critical care nurse, cited that experience as girding her for the inconveniences of the cyberattack. “I made it through many a battle,” she said. “This is more like a hiccup rather than a battle.”

Since 2017, there have been more than 3,600 local, tribal and state governments across the country targeted by ransomware hackers, according to the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center, an organization that seeks to enhance the cybersecurity posture of the United States.

One Brooklyn Health is among several prominent institutions in the region dealing with cyberattacks. For weeks this fall, [*the government of Suffolk County was forced largely offline*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/28/nyregion/suffolk-county-cyber-attack.html)by a malicious ransomware attack. And on Friday, [*the Metropolitan Opera*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/09/arts/music/met-opera-cyberattack-tickets.html) announced plans to work around a cyberattack that paralyzed its website and box office: It is selling $50 tickets to some performances on [*a site run by Lincoln Center*](https://www.lincolncenter.org/lincoln-center-at-home/page/met-opera-ticket-sales).

Hospitals are increasingly a favorite target of hackers. A wave of cyberattacks hit about [*a dozen hospitals in the fall of 2020*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/26/us/hospital-cyber-attack.html), disrupting care. In one Vermont hospital, [*nurses had to turn away chemotherapy patients*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/26/us/hospital-cyber-attack.html). At Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, in Brooklyn, a ransomware attack in October 2020 left the hospital staff relying on pen, paper, and a lot of elevator rides to transmit information, the hospital’s chief executive, Ramón Rodriguez, recalled in an interview. And in April, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued a warning to health care providers that a particularly aggressive hacking gang was targeting them.

John Riggi, the national adviser for cybersecurity and risk at the American Hospital Association, noted that data theft and ransomware attacks have only accelerated in the months since the start of the pandemic.

“As we raced to care for the waves of Covid-19 patients and save lives, hospitals and health systems made greater use of network and internet-connected technologies, cloud-based services and remote third parties,” Mr. Riggi said in a statement. “This helped ease the effect of severe work force shortages and increase clinical and business efficiencies. However, this also increased our digital ‘attack surface.’”

Foreign-based hackers quickly took advantage of hospitals’ increased risk exposure, he said.

At One Brooklyn Health, administrators said that workarounds are in place that have allowed operations to continue relatively smoothly, and after taking the hospital’s network offline in an effort to contain the intrusion, many services have been restored.

One Brooklyn Health grew out of a longstanding state effort to consolidate struggling hospitals in central Brooklyn. Brookdale is the largest of the hospitals, although Interfaith is one of the largest providers of inpatient psychiatry in Brooklyn, with more than 120 beds allocated for behavioral health.

The hospitals largely serve Medicaid and Medicare patients and l[*ose millions of dollars*](https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_audit/24997020211) each year because of low reimbursement rates. The unpaid [*chairman*](https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/815323275/202113519349300706/full)of the board of One Brooklyn Health, however, is [*Alexander Rovt*](https://alexanderrovt.com/about-me/), a billionaire real estate investor and Democratic donor who made his fortune in the fertilizer business.

Liam Stack contributed reporting.

Liam Stack contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Interfaith Medical Center in Brooklyn is part of the One Brooklyn Health system, where a cyberattack has taken some critical services offline. The cybersecurity incident happened in November. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A17.

**Load-Date:** December 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Upbeat Official Report on Race in Britain Draws a Swift Backlash***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62BB-XF41-JBG3-619N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1265 words

**Byline:** Mark Landler and Stephen Castle

**Highlight:** The government report, while acknowledging enduring racism, said Britain provided a model for other white-majority countries on issues of race. Critics accused it of ignoring racial injustice in the country.

**Body**

The government report, while acknowledging enduring racism, said Britain provided a model for other white-majority countries on issues of race. Critics accused it of ignoring racial injustice in the country.

LONDON — British cities echoed last year with the cries of Black Lives Matter protesters, demanding a racial reckoning in Britain similar to that convulsing the United States in the wake of [*multiple killings of Black Americans by the police*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/20/us/protests-policing-george-floyd.html?searchResultPosition=2).

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Boris Johnson responded by releasing a government-commissioned report on the state of racial discrimination in Britain that concluded that the country “should be regarded as a model for other white-majority countries.” The backlash was swift and scathing.

Critics accused the Conservative government of whitewashing racial injustice by arguing that discrimination is more a result of socio-economic disparities than skin color. By discouraging use of the term institutional racism, they said, the report sought to turn back the clock on how Britons talk about race.

While the document, compiled by a 10-member Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, acknowledged the enduring nature of racism — “graffiti on someone’s business, violence in the street or prejudice in the labor market” — it came to an upbeat conclusion about the progress of British society as a whole.

“Put simply, we no longer see a Britain where the system is deliberately rigged against ethnic minorities,” the report said. “Too often ‘racism’ is the catch all explanation and can be simply implicitly accepted rather than explicitly examined.”

Among its most prominent assertions is that among low-income groups, ethnic minorities — South Asians and Black Africans — consistently outperform ***working-class*** white people in school examinations. Only children from Black Caribbean families perform worse than white people. That finding is not new, scholars said, but it bolsters the case that race is not the biggest obstacle to educational attainment.

For some critics, the findings seemed calculated to buttress Mr. Johnson’s political agenda, which seeks to [*“level up”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/20/us/protests-policing-george-floyd.html?searchResultPosition=2) prosperity between wealthy London and the white, ***working-class*** strongholds in the Midlands and the north. While the commission is independent, and all but one of its members are ethnic minorities, critics said they were chosen because their views generally align with that agenda.

“The argument is that the real victims of racism are the white ***working class***,” said Kehinde Andrews, a professor of Black Studies at Birmingham City University. “The reason they have asked these Black and brown people to do this report is to legitimize their position.”

The findings are “so brazen it’s ridiculous,” Professor Andrews said, adding, “white academics couldn’t get away with saying this.”

Defenders of the report, however, say it moves the debate over race to more objective ground, marshaling statistics to puncture what they call popular myths about racial discrimination in British society. It makes sensible recommendations, like abandoning the widely-used acronym B.A.M.E. — Black, Asian and minority ethnic — which it says does not account for the divergent experiences of different ethnic groups.

Racial disadvantage “is real but not generally caused by white racism,” the author David Goodhart wrote in an essay for his think tank, Policy Exchange. “There can be racial disadvantage without racists because of a legacy of distrust and lack of opportunity in the past.”

Mr. Goodhart, whose latest book, “Head, Hand, Heart,” explores alienation and the roots of populism, said the report was compiled by veterans of the racial struggles of the 1970s and 1980s, who are, in effect, saying to the young Black Lives Matter protesters, “Our experience has taught us that you do not pass on the baton of progress by cleaving to a fatalistic account that insists nothing has changed.”

Race has been recurring issue in Britain in the last year. It surfaced recently in the interview that [*Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, gave Oprah Winfrey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/20/us/protests-policing-george-floyd.html?searchResultPosition=2), when Meghan, a biracial American former actress, claimed that members of the royal family worried about the skin color of her unborn child.

Mr. Johnson set up the commission after protests in London and other cities inspired by those in the United States following the killing of George Floyd by a police officer in Minneapolis. To chair it, he chose Tony Sewell, an educational consultant and son of Jamaican immigrants, who worked for the prime minister when he was mayor of London.

The report opposed the tactics of those protesters, including [*pulling down the statue*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/20/us/protests-policing-george-floyd.html?searchResultPosition=2) of a notorious 17th-century slave trader, Edward Colston, in Bristol. Critics faulted its advocacy of a “new story” about the slave trade, one that focused less on the suffering it caused and more on how “culturally African people transformed themselves into a remodeled African/Britain.”

A Labour Party lawmaker, Zarah Sultana, wrote on Twitter that “an attempt to put positive spin on the slave trade — one of the most monstrous crimes in human history — is sickening.” The report, she said, was a “disgraceful sham.”

Even worse to critics, the 257-page document is presented as a successor to the highly influential [*Macpherson Report*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/20/us/protests-policing-george-floyd.html?searchResultPosition=2), which grew out of an inquiry into the racially motivated killing of a Black teenager, Stephen Lawrence, in 1993. That document found evidence of institutional racism in the botched investigation of the crime, a provocative new concept that transformed the debate over racism in Britain.

With hate crimes being reported to the police at a greater rate, the new report argues that the term institutional racism should no longer be used so liberally and without evidence to support it — a subtle point that critics say is nonetheless damaging.

“Reverting to the idea that we’re going to focus on racism only as overt hostility and hatred takes us back to the more simplistic ways we talked about racism,” said Matthew Ryder, a lawyer who worked on racial issues as a deputy mayor of London. “It undoes the progress we’ve made in the last 20 years in this country.”

Even before its release, critics complained that the report’s conclusions were handed to selected journalists before publication as part of a media strategy shaped more by politics than a desire to expand the discourse over race.

Afzal Khan, a Labour lawmaker, said the document was “based on a Conservative ideology that seeks to place the blame on individuals rather than addressing its root cause” and was a “blatant and transparent attempt to kick start a culture war.” The report came out against programs, like unconscious bias training for employees, which are often targeted by critics on the right.

There was also criticism from David Lammy, another Labour lawmaker and the author of a 2017 study on how the criminal justice system treated minorities. Mr. Johnson’s approach to the Black Lives Matter movement had “let an entire generation of young white and Black British people down, Mr. Lammy said on LBC, a talk-radio station on which he recently debated patiently with a caller who argued that his Afro-Caribbean heritage meant he could not be considered English.

“This report could have been a turning point and a moment to come together,” Mr. Lammy said. “Instead, it has chosen to divide us once more and keep us debating the existence of racism rather than doing anything about it.”

PHOTO: Prime Minister Boris Johnson set up the commission on race after Black Lives Matter protests in London and other cities last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDY RAIN/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

**Load-Date:** April 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Mayor's Plan for Library Cuts Would Hurt New Yorkers, Leaders Say***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:679B-3NB1-DXY4-X4S8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1242 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Body**

New York's public libraries could be forced to cut their hours and programming. The City Council wants to protect their funding in the next budget battle.

During his first year as mayor, Eric Adams said he was focused on ensuring that city government served the ***working-class*** New Yorkers who helped elect him.

But now he is under fire for cutting funding for libraries -- a critical lifeline for people who do not have internet access at home or who need after-school tutoring and English language instruction.

The proposed cuts of $13 million this fiscal year and more than $20 million next year have sparked concern among families, elected officials and library leaders. Libraries could respond to the trimmed budget by scaling back hours, workers or programming.

With more than 200 locations across the city, the public library system is a beloved institution where children learn to love books and recently arrived migrants become acclimated to their new home. Before the pandemic, city libraries typically saw about 35 million annual visitors, and many New Yorkers have started to return.

Library leaders raised the alarm about the budget cuts at a recent City Council hearing, which Gothamist first reported. Anthony W. Marx, president of the New York Public Library, said that worrying about where to cut was keeping him up at night, and library leaders added that their services were needed more than ever following the disruption of the pandemic.

''We'd have no choice but to do less, and that would be a great shame for the city,'' said Nick Buron, the chief librarian at the Queens Public Library.

City Council leaders are gearing up for a battle with Mr. Adams about his cuts to libraries and other programs like free preschool for 3-year-olds and funding for the City University of New York. A group of 13 left-leaning council members called the mayor's recent budget adjustments ''cruel and dangerous'' and argued that they would make the city less stable.

Adrienne Adams, the City Council speaker, said in an interview that the Council would oppose cuts to key services during the next budget cycle, which will begin in earnest on Thursday when Mayor Adams is expected to release his preliminary budget for the next fiscal year.

''The Council has a different vision for our city,'' said Ms. Adams. ''It focuses on investing in the essential services that our communities rely on to be healthy and safe and that really address the root causes of our greatest challenges.''

''We're prepared to fight for our vision,'' she added.

Ms. Adams, who is not related to the mayor, has been increasingly critical of Mr. Adams, even though they are both relatively moderate Democrats from Queens. They have had public disagreements over his budget cuts to schools and his handling of the migrant crisis.

As he enters his second year in office, Mr. Adams has argued that broad cuts are necessary across city agencies to address a dismal financial forecast. The city is expected to have a deficit of nearly $3 billion next year as federal pandemic aid ends and tax revenue falters.

In an interview, Mr. Adams said he took ''no joy'' in cutting money for schools and libraries but that it would be ''irresponsible'' for him not to reduce city spending.

''We made tough fiscal decisions in spite of the people who continually attacked us for it, but the decision was right for New Yorkers,'' he said.

A spokeswoman for the mayor, Amaris Cockfield, said in a statement that the Adams administration valued ''the important role libraries play in our community'' and would work with library leaders to ''implement savings initiatives in a way that does not reduce services to New Yorkers.''

The city spends roughly $400 million annually on public libraries -- a small fraction of its $100 billion budget. During the city's last financial downturn, under former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, funding for libraries was constantly under threat.

John Hyslop, the president of a union that represents library workers in Queens, said he was worried that the city would close libraries on Saturdays as it had considered doing during past budget battles. He said that it was difficult during the Bloomberg years for libraries to plan for the future with so much uncertainty, and that the situation improved under Mr. Bloomberg's successor, Mayor Bill de Blasio.

''Bill de Blasio benefited from a booming economy, but he didn't play games with our budget,'' Mr. Hyslop said.

The City Council often acted as the ''savior'' for libraries, Mr. Hyslop said: ''That's who we have to rely on to come bail us out.''

The last few years have been tumultuous for New York City's libraries. They were closed for months at the height of the pandemic and then offered ''grab and go'' books after they partially reopened. Toddler story times that were once boisterous events went virtual. As branches began to fully reopen in 2021, the New York Public Library eliminated all late fees in an effort to get people to return. At a time when the city is seeing record homelessness, libraries serve an important role, often offering shelter during the day as well as internet access.

Chi Ossé, a City Council member from Brooklyn who chairs the committee that oversees libraries, said he wanted to vote down the mayor's budget modification from December that included the additional cuts for libraries.

''It would be really detrimental,'' he said. ''They've trimmed so much fat already.''

But Ms. Adams, the Council speaker, said on Tuesday that the Council decided not to bring the budget modification to a vote. She framed the move as a ''rebuke'' of the mayor's cuts while still preserving funding for nonprofits that could have been blocked. Without a yes-or-no vote, the $13 million in cuts to libraries for this year will take effect.

Ms. Adams, who once served on the board of the Queens Public Library, said she viewed libraries as ''intergenerational beacons'' and would work hard to spare them from further cuts.

''I can't tell you how passionate I am about making sure that our libraries are intact,'' she said.

Mr. Marx, the head of the New York Public Library, said in a statement on Tuesday that the budget cuts would ''hurt our patrons and the communities we serve'' and that he would ''continue our talks with Mayor Adams and the City Council to preserve our levels of funding.''

The Bronx Library Center, the largest public library in the Bronx, was busy on a recent afternoon. Dozens of people waited in the basement for English classes or to apply for an IDNYC card, a municipal identification card that is often used by immigrants. The library has been a welcome center for a recent wave of migrants arriving from the Mexican border, and long lines start to form outside the library an hour before it opens in the morning.

Sadou Barry, an immigrant from Senegal, arrived hoping to join an English writing class. He said he started coming to the library a few months ago to study English grammar books.

''It gives us a chance to have an opportunity,'' he said.

Melvin Nunez, 17, said he visited the library when he was bored and wanted to get away from home, and that it felt like a refuge. He read ''Deadpool'' comic books and worked on his homework.

''I get some places need to get some cuts, but I don't believe that it should be something so important to the people,'' he said. ''Libraries are very important things for the community.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/11/nyregion/library-funding-cuts-eric-adams.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/11/nyregion/library-funding-cuts-eric-adams.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The New York City public library system, which has more than 200 locations, could scale back hours, workers or programming. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BING GUAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A14.

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**End of Document**



[***Here Are the Most Anticipated Movies of Fall 2023; Fall Preview***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6949-BBW1-DXY4-X006-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Ben Kenigsberg

**Highlight:** New films by Martin Scorsese, Sofia Coppola, David Fincher and Bradley Cooper lead a select list of the season’s highlights.

**Body**

New films by Martin Scorsese, Sofia Coppola, David Fincher and Bradley Cooper lead a select list of the season’s highlights.

What’s the anatomy of a fall movie season? Although the writers’ and actors’ strikes have kept Hollywood in suspense, the calendar is, for now, still filled with exciting titles, including work from established masters (Martin Scorsese, Sofia Coppola, David Fincher) and relative breakouts like Justine Triet, the director of, well, “Anatomy of a Fall,” which won the top prize at the Cannes Film Festival in May. Here is a select list of features coming to theaters and streaming services beginning later this month. (Pedro Almodóvar and Wes Anderson, among other directors, are releasing shorts but those are not included.) Release dates and platforms are subject to change.

September

THE SAINT OF SECOND CHANCES Morgan Neville (“Won’t You Be My Neighbor?”) and Jeff Malmberg (“Marwencol”) directed this documentary on Mike Veeck, son of the Chicago White Sox owner [*Bill Veeck*](https://www.nytimes.com/1986/01/03/obituaries/bill-veeck-baseball-innovator-dies.html), and his efforts to make amends after enabling [*Disco Demolition Night*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/05/sports/baseball/05disco.html), the disastrous 1979 promotion at Comiskey Park. (Sept. 19 on Netflix)

EXPEND4BLES Sylvester Stallone, Jason Statham and Dolph Lundgren enjoy a fourth hurr4h as mercenaries. Megan Fox, Tony Jaa and the rapper 50 Cent are among the franchise’s latest recruits. (Sept. 22 in theaters)

FLORA AND SON An acoustic guitar helps bridge the gap between a mother (Eve Hewson) and her son (Orén Kinlan). Joseph Gordon-Levitt also stars. John Carney (“Once”) wrote and directed. (Sept. 22 in theaters, Sept. 29 on Apple TV+)

IT LIVES INSIDE A demonic entity makes it even harder for a schoolgirl (Megan Suri) to adjust to her surroundings. Bishal Dutta wrote and directed. (Sept. 22 in theaters)

THE ORIGIN OF EVIL After claiming to be the daughter of an affluent man, a woman (Laure Calamy) meets his family. (Sept. 22 in theaters and on demand)

SPY KIDS: ARMAGEDDON The original Spy Kids are surely Spy Adults by now, but Gina Rodriguez and Zachary Levi play the parents in this latest installment of the franchise. Robert Rodriguez (no relation to the actress) directed, writing the screenplay with Racer Max, his son. (Sept. 22 on Netflix)

THE TRIAL (EL JUICIO) Promising ample courtroom footage, this documentary recalls the 1985 trial of members of the junta that ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1983. The case was dramatized in last year’s [*“Argentina, 1985.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/29/movies/argentina-1985-review.html) (Sept. 22 in theaters)

26.2 TO LIFE Prisoners in San Quentin train to run a marathon within its walls in this documentary. (Sept. 22 in theaters)

THE CREATOR Set against the backdrop of war with sentient artificial intelligence, this is sort of an adult-child buddy movie, except the adult is a psychologically scarred operative (John David Washington) and the child is the lethal A.I. entity (Madeleine Yuna Voyles) he is supposed to destroy. Gareth Edwards directed. (Sept. 29 in theaters)

DICKS: THE MUSICAL Reunited brothers set a raunchy, tuneful version of “The Parent Trap” for Nathan Lane and Megan Mullally. Aaron Jackson and Josh Sharp star as the siblings and also wrote the screenplay and lyrics. Larry Charles (“Borat”) directed. (Sept. 29 in theaters)

FAIR PLAY A promotion poisons the dynamic between a couple (Phoebe Dynevor and Alden Ehrenreich) who work at the same hedge fund but have kept their relationship secret. Chloe Domont wrote and directed this Sundance crackler, which also stars Eddie Marsan. (Sept. 29 in theaters, Oct. 13 on Netflix)

PAW PATROL: THE MIGHTY MOVIE If you thought the pups were high-tech before, this time they get superpowers, courtesy of a meteor. The movie also has quite the voice cast, including Taraji P. Henson, Chris Rock, Serena Williams and a returning Kim Kardashian. (Sept. 29 in theaters)

SAW X Fraudsters trick a cancer patient into getting a sham operation. Unfortunately for them, the patient is Jigsaw (Tobin Bell), master of elaborate games of torture and revenge. (Sept. 29 in theaters)

October

SHADOWS IN THE CITY The Museum of Modern Art calls this film, originally shown in 1991, the last major work of the No Wave cinema scene. It’s a horror riff that the artist Ari Roussimoff shot in New York throughout the 1980s, featuring mainstays of experimental film like Taylor Mead and the “Flaming Creatures” director Jack Smith. (Oct. 5 in theaters)

THE BURIAL Jamie Foxx plays a lawyer who helps the owner of a funeral home (Tommy Lee Jones) hang on to his business. Maggie Betts directed. (Oct. 6 in theaters, Oct. 13 on Amazon Prime Video)

CAT PERSON Kristen Roupenian’s [*short story*](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/12/11/cat-person), a widely read conversation piece when it appeared in The New Yorker, gets expanded into a feature. Emilia Jones (“CODA”) is the college student and movie theater employee who embarks on an awkward, texting-based flirtation with a somewhat older man (Nicholas Braun, of “Succession”). Susanna Fogel directed. (Oct. 6 in theaters)

THE EXORCIST: BELIEVER Although she didn’t appear in the two sequels or [*either prequel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/02/movies/double-your-pleasure-early-exorcist-take-2.html), Chris MacNeil (Ellen Burstyn) is certainly someone who knows how to [*go about getting an exorcism*](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0070047/quotes/?ref_=tt_ql_dyk_3). Leslie Odom Jr. plays a father who needs her help in the director David Gordon Green’s reboot of the franchise. (Oct. 6 in theaters)

FOE In an adaptation of Iain Reid’s 2018 novel, Saoirse Ronan and Paul Mescal play a couple several decades from now confronted by a stranger (Aaron Pierre) at their farm. Garth Davis directed. (Oct. 6 in theaters)

JOAN BAEZ I AM A NOISE This documentary follows the folk singer on her farewell tour and also delves into archival material. (Oct. 6 in theaters)

MIRANDA’S VICTIM Ernesto Miranda was initially convicted of kidnapping and rape, but the Supreme Court [*ruled in 1966*](https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/384/436/#tab-opinion-1946133) that the police had violated his constitutional rights in obtaining a confession in the case that brought about the Miranda warnings. In this dramatization, Abigail Breslin plays the victim and Sebastian Quinn is Miranda. (Oct. 6 in theaters and on demand)

MY LOVE AFFAIR WITH MARRIAGE In an animated feature about a woman searching for love over decades in Eastern Europe, the director Signe Baumane “builds an impressionistic world of line-drawn characters who skip across diorama backdrops,” the critic Natalia Winkelman wrote [*when it played at the Tribeca Festival in 2022*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/08/movies/tribeca-film-festival.html). (Oct. 6 in theaters)

PET SEMATARY: BLOODLINES Will [*that dapper cat*](https://twitter.com/nickallen_redux/status/1113645367940218880) be back? (Oct. 6 on Paramount+)

REPTILE Benicio Del Toro plays a detective investigating the murder of a real estate agent. Justin Timberlake and Alicia Silverstone also star. Grant Singer directed. (Oct. 6 on Netflix)

SHE CAME TO ME Peter Dinklage is a composer who poaches elements from the life of a tugboat captain (Marisa Tomei) for his latest opera. Anne Hathaway plays his therapist wife. Rebecca Miller wrote and directed. (Oct. 6 in theaters)

STORY AVE Asante Blackk stars as a teenager in the Bronx who tries to rob a subway conductor (Luis Guzmán). But he and the conductor become friends, and the teen begins to tap unrealized artistic potential. Aristotle Torres directed. (Oct. 6 in theaters)

VICTIMS OF SIN This 1951 feature from Emilio Fernández, one of the [*most highly regarded directors in the history of Mexican cinema*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/22/movies/golden-age-of-mexican-cinema.html), gets a long overdue New York release. Ninón Sevilla stars as a cabaret performer who becomes a mother to an abandoned boy. (Oct. 6 in theaters)

IN MY MOTHER’S SKIN This fairy tale of sorts is set in the Japanese-occupied Philippines of World War II, when a girl encounters a mystical flesh-eating figure whom she believes can save her mother from death. Kenneth Dagatan wrote and directed. (Oct. 12 on Amazon Prime Video)

ANATOMY OF A FALL The French director Justine Triet (“Sibyl”) won this year’s Palme d’Or for her take on the courtroom-thriller genre. (The title alludes to Otto Preminger’s [*“Anatomy of a Murder.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/21/movies/anatomy-of-a-murder.html)) Sandra Hüller stars as an author in a strained marriage whose husband dies in a fall. Was it a mishap, a suicide or a killing? (Oct. 13 in theaters)

DEAR DAVID A [*Twitter thread*](https://www.buzzfeed.com/adamellis/my-apartment-is-being-haunted-by-the-ghost-of-a-dead-child) by a Buzzfeed staffer convinced he was being haunted is now a horror film about a Buzzfeed staffer subject to such a haunting. (Oct. 13 in theaters and on demand)

THE PERSIAN VERSION The writer-director Maryam Keshavarz won the screenwriting prize at Sundance for this semi-musical about an Iranian-American woman, her many siblings, an unexpected pregnancy and a heart transplant, among other complications. Layla Mohammadi and Niousha Noor star. (Oct. 13 in theaters)

TAYLOR SWIFT: THE ERAS TOUR [*Couldn’t get tickets*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/16/arts/music/taylor-swift-eras-tour-tickets-fans.html)? A concert film version of the singer’s smash international tour is [*hitting movie screens*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/31/arts/music/taylor-swift-eras-tour-concert-movie.html), creating such potentially fierce competition at the box office that “The Exorcist: Believer” skittered away from a Friday the 13th opening. There is also now the possibility of making a memorable double bill with the Martin Scorsese feature debuting the following week. (Oct. 13 in theaters)

SILVER DOLLAR ROAD Working from a [*2019 ProPublica article*](https://features.propublica.org/black-land-loss/heirs-property-rights-why-black-families-lose-land-south/), the director Raoul Peck ([*“I Am Not Your Negro”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/02/movies/review-i-am-not-your-negro-review-james-baldwin.html)) tells the story of why the brothers Melvin Davis and Licurtis Reels spent eight years in jail for not leaving the land they grew up on. He also focuses on the rest of the family, including Mamie Reels Ellison, their sister, and Kim Renee Duhon, their niece. (Oct. 13 in theaters, Oct. 21 on Amazon Prime Video)

THE DELINQUENTS A bank clerk (Daniel Elías) comes up with a peculiar scheme for a robbery: He will steal from his employer with the full knowledge that he’ll be caught and serve time — but not enough time that the heist won’t make economic sense. In the interim, he will leave the loot with a caretaker (Esteban Bigliardi). Rodrigo Moreno directed this three-hour Argentine drama, a Cannes favorite, on how all that plays out. (Oct. 18 in theaters)

ANOTHER BODY This documentary looks at what happened to a college student who was depicted in pornographic deepfakes online. (Oct. 20 in theaters and on demand)

KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON Martin Scorsese directed this sweeping adaptation of David Grann’s nonfiction book about the 1920s murders of members of the Osage Nation — rich with oil money and therefore targets. The longtime Scorsese leads Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert De Niro appear together in one of the filmmaker’s features for the first time, but Lily Gladstone is the movie’s soul. (Oct. 20 in theaters)

NYAD In 2013, Diana Nyad made headlines for [*swimming from Cuba to Florida*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/03/sports/nyad-completes-cuba-to-florida-swim.html) at age 64, a feat that is [*not universally recognized*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/09/sports/questions-and-doubt-after-a-record-swim-from-cuba-to-florida.html). Annette Bening plays her in the first dramatized feature from Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin (“Free Solo”). Jodie Foster also stars. (Oct. 20 in theaters, Nov. 3 on Netflix)

PAIN HUSTLERS “The Hard Sell,” a [*nonfiction book by Evan Hughes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/19/books/review/hard-sell-evan-hughes.html) partly based on an [*article he wrote for The New York Times Magazine*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/05/02/magazine/money-issue-insys-opioids-kickbacks.html), told the story of a pharmaceutical company that tried to market a fentanyl-based spray. Emily Blunt and Chris Evans star in the movie version, directed by David Yates. (Oct. 20 in theaters, Oct. 27 on Netflix)

THE PIGEON TUNNEL Errol Morris is no stranger to intrigue or paranoia, and in his latest documentary, he interrogates the author — and erstwhile British agent — John le Carré, in what is billed as le Carré’s final interview. (He [*died in 2020*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/13/books/john-le-carre-dead.html).) (Oct. 20 in theaters and on Apple TV+)

RADICAL Eugenio Derbez (“CODA”) plays a teacher who tries to inspire students in a Mexican border town. (Oct. 20 in theaters)

TO KILL A TIGER Nisha Pahuja directed this documentary about a father seeking justice after his daughter is the target of a gang rape in India. (Oct. 20 in theaters)

BOUDICA: QUEEN OF WAR Sword-and-sandal epics have arguably neglected the period when the Roman empire controlled what is now England. Olga Kurylenko now rectifies this omission as a vengeful, anti-Roman Celtic warrior. (Oct. 27 in theaters and on demand)

FINGERNAILS Meeting a new person at a “love testing institute” challenges one woman’s machine-verified diagnosis that she had found true love. Love-testing institutes tend to complicate things in that way. Jessie Buckley, Riz Ahmed and — from “The Bear” — Jeremy Allen White star. Christos Nikou directed. (Oct. 27 in theaters, Nov. 3 on Apple TV+)

FIVE NIGHTS AT FREDDY’S Josh Hutcherson plays a new security guard at a shuttered, Chuck E. Cheese-like entertainment complex from the 1980s where the animatronic figures are possessed by the ghosts of children who went missing there. It’s based on the series of video games. Emma Tammi directed. (Oct. 27 in theaters)

FOUR DAUGHTERS Extremists radicalized two of Olfa Hamrouni’s four daughters; the pair ran away and joined the Islamic State in Libya. Using a mix of straight documentary and re-enactments, the director Kaouther Ben Hania tells this Tunisian family’s story. (Oct. 27 in theaters)

THE HOLDOVERS Alexander Payne reunites with his “Sideways” star Paul Giamatti in the story of a prep schoolteacher who stays behind over the holidays to supervise the pupils stuck there. Dominic Sessa and Da’Vine Joy Randolph also star. The [*trailer*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhKLpJmHhIg) gives a Roman-numeral copyright date of 1971, a nod to when the movie is set. (Oct. 27 in theaters)

THE KILLER The last time David Fincher worked with the screenwriter Andrew Kevin Walker, the result was one of the bleakest films in Hollywood history: “Seven” (1995). This time Walker is adapting the graphic-novel series by Matz and Luc Jacamon. Michael Fassbender plays an assassin, and Tilda Swinton is in it, too. (Oct. 27 in theaters, Nov. 10 on Netflix)

PRISCILLA Mention Elvis, and there’s no need to specify a last name. Sofia Coppola, no stranger to chronicling the isolating effects of fame, elevates Mrs. Presley to a similarly iconic stature in this look at one of the most watched marriages in rock ’n’ roll. Cailee Spaeny plays Priscilla; Jacob Elordi is the King. (Oct. 27 in theaters)

November

AMERICAN FICTION Adapting a [*2001 satirical novel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/07/books/books-in-brief-fiction-enuf-pafology.html) by Percival Everett, the [*TV writer and former Gawker editor Cord Jefferson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/24/well/mind/cord-jefferson-emmy-black-mental-health.html) directed Jeffrey Wright as a Black author who, in frustration and jest, writes a book that plays into stereotypes — and suddenly finds the success that has eluded him. Tracee Ellis Ross and Sterling K. Brown also star. (Nov. 3 in theaters)

EVER DEADLY [*Tanya Tagaq*](https://archive.nytimes.com/artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/09/23/tanya-tagaq-wins-canadas-polaris-prize/?searchResultPosition=1), the acclaimed Inuk throat singer, is the subject of this documentary profile. (Nov. 3 in theaters)

GOING TO MARS: THE NIKKI GIOVANNI PROJECT This profile of [*Giovanni*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/27/magazine/nikki-giovanni-interview.html), the poet, mixes readings, biography and reflections, including thoughts on her longtime interest in outer space. Joe Brewster and Michèle Stephenson directed. (Nov. 3 in theaters)

QUIZ LADY Her mother has gambling debts. Her dog has been kidnapped. And to fix things, the woman played by Awkwafina, together with Sandra Oh as her sister, strives to win big on a game show. Jessica Yu directed. (Nov. 3 on Hulu)

RUSTIN Colman Domingo plays the civil rights activist Bayard Rustin, who was a principal organizer of the 1963 March on Washington and whose legacy has received renewed attention. (In 2020, Gov. Gavin Newsom of California [*granted him a posthumous pardon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/bayard-rustin-pardon.html) for a 1953 conviction on a charge that had been used to criminalize homosexual activity.) George C. Wolfe directed. Chris Rock, Glynn Turman and Audra McDonald co-star. (Nov. 3 in theaters, Nov. 17 on Netflix)

SLY Sylvester Stallone shares how his life and career have constituted their own “Rocky”-esque, unlikely success story. Thom Zimny directed this profile. (Nov. 3 on Netflix)

WHAT HAPPENS LATER Meg Ryan directed herself and David Duchovny as former flames who get stuck at an airport and are compelled to sort things out. The movie is based on a play, “Shooting Star,” by Steven Dietz. (Nov. 3 in theaters)

DREAM SCENARIO For reasons unclear, a man named Paul starts making guest appearances in random people’s dreams. Given that Paul is played by Nicolas Cage, those dreams are probably pretty out-there. Julianne Nicholson, Michael Cera and Tim Meadows also star. Kristoffer Borgli wrote and directed. (Nov. 10 in theaters)

THE MARVELS Captain Marvel (Brie Larson), Ms. Marvel (Iman Vellani) and Captain Monica Rambeau (Teyonah Parris) join forces to take down whoever is threatening the Marvel Cinematic Universe these days. Nia DaCosta (the 2021 “Candyman” remake) directed. (Nov. 10 in theaters)

ORLANDO, MY POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY Directing his first feature, a documentary, the philosopher Paul B. Preciado uses Virginia Woolf’s “Orlando” as a lens for exploring issues of gender identity, enlisting transgender and nonbinary people to play the character. (Nov. 10 in theaters)

THE LADY BIRD DIARIES The latest nonfiction feature from Dawn Porter (“John Lewis: Good Trouble”) draws on archival audio of the first lady Lady Bird Johnson and assesses the part she played in President Lyndon B. Johnson’s administration. (Nov. 13 on Hulu)

STAMPED FROM THE BEGINNING The academic and activist Ibram X. Kendi’s 2016 book, “Stamped From the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America,” becomes a documentary film with commentary from Kendi and others, including Angela Davis and the poet Honorée Fanonne Jeffers. Roger Ross Williams directed. (Nov. 15 on Netflix)

DASHING THROUGH THE SNOW Magic helps restore the Yuletide spirit for a social worker (Chris Bridges, a.k.a. Ludacris) and his 9-year-old (Madison Skye). Lil Rel Howery and Teyonah Parris also star; Tim Story directed. (Nov. 17 on Disney+)

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF SHERE HITE Nicole Newnham (a director of “Crip Camp”) made this documentary on the work of [*Shere Hite*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/11/books/shere-hite-dead.html), who in 1976 published “The Hite Report: A Nationwide Study of Female Sexuality,” which advanced the then-radical notion that women could achieve sexual satisfaction without intercourse. (Nov. 17 in theaters)

FALLEN LEAVES The latest from the Finnish treasure Aki Kaurismaki won the jury prize at the Cannes Film Festival; the award scanned as an affectionate third place. It’s a love story — in an unusually bittersweet and low-key register — between lonesome members of the ***working class*** (Alma Poysti and Jussi Vatanen), and between Kaurismaki and cinema. (Nov. 17 in theaters)

THE HUNGER GAMES: THE BALLAD OF SONGBIRDS &amp; SNAKES Set before the events of the Jennifer Lawrence films, this screen installment from Suzanne Collins’s books casts Tom Blyth as a teenage tyrant in the making and Rachel Zegler as the tribute he tries to prepare for the deadly games. Francis Lawrence returns to direct. (Nov. 17 in theaters)

MAY DECEMBER Todd Haynes investigates what constitutes realistic acting — and what attracts viewers to tabloid sensationalism — in this drama, which casts Natalie Portman as a TV star shadowing her latest role’s infamous real-life inspiration (Julianne Moore), a woman whose past is not dissimilar from [*Mary Kay Letourneau’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/07/obituaries/mary-kay-letourneau-dead.html). With Charles Melton. (Nov. 17 in theaters, Dec. 1 on Netflix)

NEXT GOAL WINS Smarting from a [*record-breaking loss*](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/04/12/sports/plus-soccer-was-it-31-0-or-32-0-australia-wins.html), American Samoa’s soccer team braces for another try at the World Cup qualifying matches, this time with a new, curmudgeonly coach (Michael Fassbender). Taika Waititi directed. The team’s story was also told in a [*documentary with the same title*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/24/movies/in-next-goal-wins-american-samoa-tries-to-overcome-a-loss.html). (Nov. 17 in theaters)

THANKSGIVING Sixteen years is a long time from trailer to release. But the tongue-in-cheek coming attraction that Eli Roth made for the midpoint of [*“Grindhouse” (2007)*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/06/movies/06grin.html) is now a feature film in its own right. Patrick Dempsey stars. (Nov. 17 in theaters)

TROLLS BAND TOGETHER The Troll universe expands again as Poppy (voiced by Anna Kendrick) and Branch (Justin Timberlake) seek out Branch’s brothers, with whom he previously formed a boy band. That the siblings are not voiced by Timberlake’s former ’N Sync mates seems like a missed opportunity. (Nov. 17 in theaters)

THE BOY AND THE HERON Ten years after [*“The Wind Rises,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/08/movies/the-wind-rises-miyazakis-film-about-a-warplane-creator.html) which [*had been billed as a final feature*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/06/movies/hayao-miyazakis-film-the-wind-rises-gets-complaints.html), the master animator Hayao Miyazaki gives us this story of a boy who moves from Tokyo after his mother’s death during World War II. An enigmatic tower that stands near his new home becomes a gateway to a parallel world — a quintessentially Miyazakian realm. (Nov. 22 in theaters)

MAESTRO In the director’s chair again after “A Star Is Born” (2018), Bradley Cooper also stars as the legendary conductor and composer Leonard Bernstein. Carey Mulligan plays the actress Felicia Montealegre Bernstein, his wife for nearly three decades until her death. (Nov. 22 in theaters, Dec. 20 on Netflix)

MENUS-PLAISIRS — LES TROISGROS After more than 40 features, the 93-year-old Frederick Wiseman is still going strong. You could probably [*bake a pretty good cassoulet*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/guides/37-how-to-make-cassoulet) in the four hours it takes to watch his latest documentary, which observes the workings of a three-Michelin-star restaurant in Roanne, France, from farm to table and beyond. (Nov. 22 in theaters)

NAPOLEON Stanley Kubrick’s Bonaparte biography will, alas, always be one of cinema’s great what-ifs. But we are getting Ridley Scott’s version of the life of the French military leader, with Joaquin Phoenix donning the [*bicorn*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/18/world/europe/napoleon-hat-auction-waterloo.html). Vanessa Kirby also stars. (Nov. 22 in theaters)

WISH Will Ariana DeBose belt out a hit as big as “Let It Go”? Disney’s latest animated offering, advertising its affinities with “Frozen,” among other movies, casts the “West Side Story” Oscar winner as a heroine who takes on a king with the help of a cosmic force and a goat. Alan Tudyk and Chris Pine lend their voices as well. (Nov. 22 in theaters)

SALTBURN The writer-director Emerald Fennell’s first feature behind the camera since “Promising Young Woman” is set at Oxford, where a student played by Barry Keoghan becomes taken with the lifestyle of a classmate (Jacob Elordi). (Nov. 24 in theaters)

December

THE BIKERIDERS A married couple (Jodie Comer and Austin Butler) are part of a motorcycle gang; Tom Hardy plays their leader. The movie, directed by Jeff Nichols (“Loving”), is inspired by a 1968 book by the photographer Danny Lyon. (Dec. 1 in theaters)

CANDY CANE LANE A spell cast by an elf (Jillian Bell) causes Christmastime trouble for a man (Eddie Murphy) and his family. With Tracee Ellis Ross. Reginald Hudlin directed. (Dec. 1 on Amazon Prime)

SHAYDA Zar Amir Ebrahimi plays a woman from Iran residing in a shelter in Australia who is desperate to prevent her estranged husband from taking their child back with him. Noora Niasari wrote and directed. (Dec. 1 in theaters)

LEAVE THE WORLD BEHIND Sam Esmail (“Mr. Robot”) wrote and directed this adaptation of Rumaan Alam’s 2020 novel. Julia Roberts, Mahershala Ali and Ethan Hawke play characters on Long Island facing the prospect of a cyberattack-spurred apocalypse. Barack and Michelle Obama’s Higher Ground Productions is attached. (Dec. 8 on Netflix)

POOR THINGS Alasdair Gray’s 1992 novel riffed on the concept of the Frankenstein monster. In this version, directed by Yorgos Lanthimos (“The Favourite”), who usually works from his own absurdist material, Emma Stone plays the revivified creature, and Willem Dafoe her scientist creator. Mark Ruffalo and Ramy Youssef co-star. (Dec. 8 in theaters)

THE ZONE OF INTEREST Loosely based on [*Martin Amis’s 2014 Holocaust novel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/05/books/review/martin-amiss-zone-of-interest.html), the director Jonathan Glazer’s first feature since “Under the Skin” a decade ago is an intensely formal exercise that tries to immerse viewers in the perspective of Rudolf Höss (Christian Friedel), the commandant of Auschwitz, as he carried on with his life next to the camp. With Sandra Hüller as Höss’s wife. (Dec. 8 in theaters)

ANYONE BUT YOU [*Advance word*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/13/movies/sex-comedies-no-hard-feelings-joy-ride.html) suggests that this film, starring Sydney Sweeney and Glen Powell, is unusually racy by the standards of comedies faintly inspired by “Much Ado About Nothing.” Will Gluck directed. (Dec. 15 in theaters)

CHICKEN RUN: DAWN OF THE NUGGET A [*teaser trailer*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81223025) suggests that the “nugget” in question is a newborn chick — although the title could also refer to the invention of chicken nuggets, which would make this sequel to “Chicken Run” (2000) more of a horror film than a family feature. Thandiwe Newton, Zachary Levi and Bella Ramsey provide some of the voices. (Dec. 15 on Netflix)

WONKA While “Willy Wonka &amp; the Chocolate Factory” and Roald Dahl’s book left many questions, how Wonka defeated a chocolate cartel to found his factory was not exactly foremost among them. Will the movie at least explain how Timothée Chalamet, who plays Wonka in this prequel, could grow into Gene Wilder? (Dec. 15 in theaters)

AQUAMAN AND THE LOST KINGDOM Jason Momoa has to form an alliance to save Atlantis. As long as there aren’t [*flesh-eating bacteria in the water*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/18/science/flesh-eating-bacteria-beach.html), how bad could it be? Amber Heard and Nicole Kidman return. James Wan directed. (Dec. 20 in theaters)

ALL OF US STRANGERS A run-in with a neighbor (Paul Mescal) somehow causes a rupture in the life of a screenwriter (Andrew Scott), who encounters the home where he grew up. Claire Foy and Jamie Bell also star in the latest film from the “45 Years” director Andrew Haigh. (Dec. 22 in theaters)

THE IRON CLAW Sean Durkin (“The Nest”) directed this dramatization of the real-life Von Erich brothers, who beginning in the 1970s made a name for themselves wrestling and who almost all died young. Zac Efron and Jeremy Allen White star. (Dec. 22 in theaters)

MIGRATION A family of ducks — the Mallards — do what a lot of American families do: fly south for a winter getaway. Not surprisingly, travel proves to be a hassle. Mike White, a long way from “The White Lotus,” wrote the screenplay for this animated feature, which has the voices of Kumail Nanjiani, Elizabeth Banks, Awkwafina and Keegan-Michael Key, among others. (Dec. 22 in theaters)

REBEL MOON — PART ONE: A CHILD OF FIRE Sofia Boutella bands together misfit warriors to save the galaxy. Untethered from DC Comics characters and the zombies of his “Dawn of the Dead” and “Army of the Dead,” this could be the most unfiltered dose of [*Zack Snyder*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/14/movies/zack-snyders-rough-and-tumble-ride-with-justice-league.html) since “Sucker Punch” (2011). This is the first of two installments, with the next one due in April. (Dec. 22 on Netflix)

THE COLOR PURPLE The Broadway musical version of Alice Walker’s novel, which itself was already adapted into a movie by Steven Spielberg in 1985, hits the big screen. The singer Fantasia, a.k.a. Fantasia Barrino, plays Celie, the role Whoopi Goldberg embodied in the original film. With Taraji P. Henson, Danielle Brooks, Colman Domingo and Halle Bailey. Blitz Bazawule directed. (Dec. 25 in theaters)

FERRARI Michael Mann and the sleek Italian auto brand go way back. (See also “Miami Vice” in its TV and movie versions.) Adam Driver plays the sports car maker Enzo Ferrari in 1957, at a time of personal turmoil, when he bets big on the Mille Miglia race across Italy. Penélope Cruz and Shailene Woodley also star. (Dec. 25 in theaters)

OCCUPIED CITY Working from a book by his wife, the Dutch filmmaker Bianca Stigter, the director Steve McQueen combines documentary footage from present-day Amsterdam with narration that recounts events in the city throughout World War II. “With formal rigor and adamant focus, it maps — street by street, address by address — the catastrophe that befell Amsterdam’s Jewish population,” [*Manohla Dargis wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/18/movies/cannes-maiwenn-johnny-depp-steve-mcqueen.html) when the film played at Cannes. (Dec. 25 in theaters)

Compiled with the assistance of Gabe Cohn.

PHOTOS: Carey Mulligan and Bradley Cooper portray Felicia and Leonard Bernstein in the drama “Maestro,” which Cooper also directed. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JASON McDONALD/NETFLIX); Layla Mohammadi, left, and Niousha Noor in “The Persian Version,” an Iranian American family musical that won the screenwriting prize at Sundance. (PHOTOGRAPH BY YIGET EKEN/SONY PICTURES CLASSICS); Phoebe Dynevor and Alden Ehrenreich illustrate the perils of office romance in the psychological thriller “Fair Play.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY SERGEJ RADOVIC/NETFLIX); Tommy Lee Jones plays the owner of a funeral home and Jamie Foxx is a lawyer in “The Burial.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY SKIP BOLEN/PRIME VIDEO) (AR51); Jacob Elordi as Elvis Presley and Cailee Spaeny as Priscilla Beaulieu in “Priscilla,” directed by Sofia Coppola. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PHILIPPE LE SOURD/A24) (AR52); Tom Blyth and Rachel Zegler fill in the back story in the franchise prequel “The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds &amp; Snakes.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY MURRAY CLOSE/LIONSGATE); “The Boy and the Heron” features a gateway to a parallel world. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GKIDS); Vanessa Kirby and Joaquin Phoenix play Josephine and the title character in “Napoleon.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY AIDAN MONAGHAN/SONY PICTURES AND APPLE ORIGINAL FILMS); Phylicia Pearl Mpasi, left, and Halle Bailey as young Celie and Nettie in a new musical version of “The Color Purple.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY WARNER BROS. PICTURES) (AR53) This article appeared in print on page AR51, AR52, AR53.

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[***Why They Loved Him***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:612X-8MB1-DXY4-X3G7-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Farah Stockman

**Highlight:** The president tricked ***working-class*** voters. But the problems he railed about are real.

**Body**

The president tricked ***working-class*** voters. But the problems he railed about are real.

Kathleen Kingsbury, acting editorial page editor, wrote about the editorial board’s verdict on Donald Trump’s presidency in a special edition of our Opinion Today newsletter. You can [*read it here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html).

The [*Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) presidency has been such a five-alarm fire that many people are understandably consumed with trying to put out the flames or simply survive it. But there will come a day, hopefully in the not too distant future, when people have the breathing room to investigate how the fire got started.

It’s tempting to heap scorn and blame on President Trump’s millions of enthusiastic supporters. Without their adoration, he wouldn’t have been able to do the damage he has done. But there are good reasons to refrain. Calling large swaths of the American electorate deplorable turns out to be an ineffective way to gain their backing.

Another reason: The mess the nation faces is bigger than Donald Trump. If he is voted out in November, the people who cast ballots for him will remain, pining for the policies he promoted. About [*40 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) of American voters want tariffs and a [*border wall*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html). [*More than half*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) say it’s important to deport more undocumented immigrants.

Much ink has been spilled about whether Trump supporters voted for him out of economic anxiety or racial anxiety, with plenty of studies concluding the latter. But spend time at a dying factory and you might see how difficult it can be to disentangle the two.

For the past four years, I’ve followed a group of [*steelworkers in Indiana*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) — men and women, Black and white — who had worked at a factory that moved to Mexico. I watched them agonize about whether to train their Mexican replacements, or stand with their union and refuse. I watched them grieve the plant like a parent. I followed them as they applied for new jobs, some of which paid half as much as they made before.

A machinist named Tim carried his steelworker union card in his wallet for years after the factory closed, just to remind himself who he was. Tim grew up in a union household. His dad had been an autoworker; his grandfather, a coal miner.

“We always voted Democrat because they looked after the little man,” Tim told me. “My father went to his grave and I can guarantee you he never voted for a Republican.”

Tim had such faith in Democrats that he didn’t worry when President Bill Clinton pushed the North American Free Trade Agreement over the finish line in 1993. Nor did he worry when Mr. Clinton normalized trade with China in 2000. But then the factory where Tim worked moved to Shanghai. And the next one moved to Mexico.

By the time I met Tim, he loathed the Clintons and the Democratic Party. Democrats had gotten in bed with the corporations, while no one was looking. Tim felt betrayed, and politically abandoned — until Mr. Trump came along.

College-educated people scoffed at Mr. Trump’s promises to bring back the factories. The factories are never coming back, they insisted. But even false hope is a form of hope, perhaps the most ubiquitous kind.

There is little doubt that Mr. Trump is president today because of blue-collar people like Tim who were once a reliable pillar of the Democratic Party. About [*55 percent of voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) who expected to support Mr. Trump during the 2016 primaries identified as ***working class***, according to a 2015 [*study*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) by the Public Religion Research Institute. Fewer than a third who backed other Republican candidates identified as such.

In Mahoning County, Ohio, more than a quarter of people who voted in the Republican primary were ex-Democrats, according to [*The Washington Post*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html). Eighteen members of the county’s Democratic central committee crossed over to cast ballots for Mr. Trump, the county’s Democratic chairman told The Post.

Those defections stemmed in part from anger over millions of factory jobs that went to China in the 2000s. Workers who made instrument panels for G.M. trucks in Michigan, stitched shirts in Pennsylvania and sanded wooden dressers in North Carolina saw alarming increases in [*child poverty, single motherhood, deaths from alcohol and drugs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) and reliance on public assistance.

Exposure to trade with China led to “sizable increases in the likelihood of G.O.P. victory in majority-white non-Hispanic congressional districts from 2002-2010,” said [*a study*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) co-written by David Autor, an economics professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Hillary Clinton would have won Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin — and thus the presidency — in 2016 had the economic blow of imports from China been half as big, the report concluded.

It is worth noting that many of those same counties that hemorrhaged factory jobs also saw large increases in undocumented immigrants competing for the unskilled jobs that remained — cleaning hotel rooms, slaughtering chickens and mowing lawns. Their arrival fueled still more resentment of the world beyond America’s borders.

Anger about globalization is not confined to the right. It fueled the rise of Bernie Sanders, who won the endorsement of the steelworkers I followed. The same week I met Tim, I interviewed an anarchist facing criminal charges for his role in the disruption of Mr. Trump’s inauguration when windows were smashed and a limousine was set on fire. Why had he became an anarchist? NAFTA and the tyranny of global capitalism, he said.

To many, that anger can seem silly or misplaced. Free trade and globalization have undoubtedly made the country richer. But those riches have flowed disproportionately to the few with capital and education, while globalization’s downsides have piled on the shoulders of the most vulnerable Americans.

NAFTA has come to symbolize a world order crafted by elites, for elites. The deal traded away blue-collar factory jobs in exchange for white-collar opportunities to invest in Mexico’s banking and insurance sectors. Today, even its biggest supporters admit that it resulted in [*a net loss*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) of American jobs.

In hindsight, it seems inevitable that globalization would cause a backlash. During the height of euphoria about free trade in the 1990s, the philosopher Richard Rorty [*predicted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) that workers “will sooner or later realize that their government is not even trying to prevent wages from sinking or to prevent jobs from being exported.” At that point, he wrote, parts of the electorate “will decide that the system has failed and start looking around for a strongman to vote for — someone willing to assure them that, once he is elected, the smug bureaucrats, tricky lawyers, overpaid bond salesmen and postmodernist professors will no longer be calling the shots.”

In countries from Britain to Brazil, voters have elected leaders who promised to reverse decades of international economic integration. Most of those [*populist*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) movements are right wing. The rebellion against free trade and globalization has largely taken the left by surprise. Dani Rodrik, an economics professor at Harvard who is perhaps the country’s most prominent skeptic of unfettered globalization, lamented [*in an article*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) a few months before Mr. Trump’s election that left-wing parties around the world had failed to present viable alternatives to protectionism and walls.

Since then, the landscape has changed. Joe Biden, who once whole-heartedly embraced free trade, acknowledges the harm it’s inflicted on the ***working class***. Mr. Biden’s economic plan includes a 10 percent tax on businesses that send manufacturing offshore, and a 10 percent tax credit for companies that bolster job growth inside the United States. He has also [*put forth a plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) to spend $2 trillion over four years on green energy infrastructure.

“Biden, the nominally centrist candidate, has a platform that is far more progressive than Hillary Clinton’s on economics,” Mr. Rodrik told me in an email. “But the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and we will see whether Biden will deliver real change if elected.”

Many Americans who longed for a strongman will vote for Mr. Trump again. They revere him for tearing up NAFTA (even if the new version [*looks an awful lot like the old one*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html)) and slapping tariffs on Chinese imports and [*Korean washing machines*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) (even if his unpredictable trade war forced [*the deepest contraction*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) in the manufacturing sector in a decade).

Yet, ***working-class*** voters who look a little deeper will notice something strange about their perceived champion: He is against unions. His first Supreme Court pick, Neil Gorsuch, helped erode the ability of unions to collect dues and fees [*in a landmark case*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html). Another strange thing: The Trump administration’s [*interim trade deal with China*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html) focuses far more on opening up the Chinese banking and insurance sectors than on creating blue-collar jobs.

Also, Mr. Trump’s 2017 tax cut favored corporations and shareholders — including those who aren’t American citizens. Money that would have flowed into the U.S. Treasury went instead into their pockets and deep bank accounts. The companies used much of it to buy back their own stock, [*making their owners richer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html), instead of hiring and training new workers or increasing pay. The buybacks were so shameless that even Mr. Trump couldn’t defend them.

“We thought they would have known better,” [*he told reporters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html).

President Trump is the one who should have known better. He’s either incompetent or he’s a Trojan horse who used blue-collar workers to get into the White House, only to hand over the keys to the one percent. Now that the Trump administration is trying to kill the Affordable Care Act, which millions of people depend on in the middle of a pandemic, it could not be more clear whose side he is on.

Health care is one of the things that sent Shannon, a steelworker I followed in Indiana, back to the Democrats, even though most people in her family still support Mr. Trump.

“He’s bragging that he’s saving all these jobs,” she told me. “But he’s not.”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.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/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/opinion/editorial-board-donald-trump.html).

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**Byline:** By Carina Chocano

**Body**

This season focuses on the willful delusion of the wealthy -- and how easily preyed upon people who evade reality can be.

Early in the second season of ''The White Lotus'' -- Mike White's HBO satire of the leisure class, currently set in a five-star Sicilian resort -- there's a sequence that offers an overt, shot-for-shot homage to a scene in ''L'Avventura,'' from 1960, the first film in Michelangelo Antonioni's ''Trilogy of Decadence.'' Coolly removed and virtually plotless, Antonioni's three films were intended as an indictment of the entropic passivity of wealth. All starred Monica Vitti, the glamorous Italian actress with whom Antonioni was romantically involved. In ''L'Avventura,'' she plays Claudia, a young woman whose best friend, Anna, disappears during a yacht trip off the coast of Sicily. As Claudia and Anna's boyfriend, Sandro, search for the missing girl, they drift into an unconvincing relationship. When they arrive at the lone hotel in the town of Noto, Claudia, suddenly worried about facing her friend, tells Sandro to search inside without her.

The scene ''The White Lotus'' recreates takes place outside, in the piazza, where Claudia is accosted by a horde of leering men. The aesthetics are disconcerting: Antonioni uses the town's baroque architecture to pile men around and atop Claudia. She looks afraid, for a moment, but then has a sort of detachment from reality. Walking slowly through the crowd, she seems to give herself over to the experience, allowing herself to become a spectacle, subject to the men's (and the audience's) scrutinizing, consuming gaze.

Even before ''The White Lotus'' fully replicates this image, though, we see one character -- a batty gazillionaire named Tanya McQuoid, played by Jennifer Coolidge -- explicitly name-check Vitti. Describing her fantasy of a day in Italy to her husband, Greg, she stays resolutely on the surface: ''First, I want to look just like Monica Vitti,'' she says. ''And then this man in a very slim-fitting suit, he comes over and he lights my cigarette. And it tastes really good. And then he takes me for a drive on his Vespa. Then, at sunset, we go down really close to the sea, to one of those really romantic spots. And then we drink lots of aperitivos and we eat big plates of pasta with giant clams. And we're just really chic and happy. And we're beautiful.'' Greg obligingly rents a Vespa. But Tanya is not the character who will feature in the Antonioni homage.

''L'Avventura'' is not the only film referenced in ''The White Lotus,'' which is positively haunted by movies and the fantasies they engender. As Tanya casts herself in her superficial version of an Italian film, Bert Di Grasso -- a grandfather whose family trip to Sicily has been upended by the women in the family's refusing to come -- is exalting the ethos of ''The Godfather,'' in which he sees men who are free to do as they like. After her ill-fated Vitti cosplay leaves her alone and betrayed, Tanya takes up with Quentin, part of a group of ''high-end gays,'' as she calls them, who recast her as a tragic heroine. Quentin tells her about his own lost love, but it sounds like the plot of ''Brokeback Mountain,'' and he takes her to the opera to see ''Madama Butterfly,'' which, in this context, can't help but call to mind ''M. Butterfly,'' and a very specific form of romantic deception. As the line blurs between stories and lies, the vibe shifts closer to ''The Talented Mr. Ripley.'' If the first season of ''The White Lotus'' was about the casual destructiveness of wealth, this one seems to be about its willful delusion -- and how easily preyed upon people who evade reality can be.

In Antonioni's film, Vitti's wealth and beauty grant her character access to a world of glamour, but they also trap her in a lie, concealing a real world of rot and corruption. ''L'Avventura'' means ''the adventure'' -- ironic, since nothing much happens in the movie, and its central mystery is never solved -- but an ''avventura'' is also a term for an illicit affair, often one entered out of boredom, for kicks. This is precisely how everyone in this season of ''The White Lotus'' gets into trouble. For both show and film, ''love'' is a dance of deception and self-delusion, in which it's hard to tell who's the mark.

The only character who still clings to purity -- the only innocent left to corrupt -- is Harper Spiller, played by Aubrey Plaza. And she is the one who ends up in Noto, recreating the Monica Vitti scene in the piazza. Like Claudia, Harper has drifted here by accident -- by virtue, another character observes, of being pretty. The newly rich wife of a tech founder, she has come on a luxury vacation at the invitation of his college roommate. Harper is suspicious of the whole endeavor: of getting rich quickly, of old friends who materialize suddenly after you get rich, of rich people who spend their lives disengaging from the world and drifting from one fantasy locale to the next. In Noto, she finds herself alone and surrounded by men, exactly like Vitti. Just as in the film, the scene feels over the top and surreal -- part paranoid fantasy, part dissociative experience, and even stranger now that it's 2022, not 1960, and Aubrey Plaza doesn't cut quite so otherworldly and surprising (for Noto) a figure as the statuesque blonde Vitti did.

As we watch Harper drift through the crowd, what we are looking at is the experience of being looked at. Along with Tanya -- who aims to imitate Vitti but is instead brutally compared, by a tactless hotel manager, to Peppa Pig -- she offers a metaphor for how thoroughly we can give ourselves over to imposture.

Antonioni started working during the Italian neorealism movement, when films were shot on location, making use of nonactors, telling stories about ***working-class*** people and poverty and despair. But it was ''L'Avventura,'' with its focus on the alienation of the moneyed, that made him internationally famous. I know this because I took an Italian-neorealism class during a junior year abroad in Paris, and -- not surprisingly, I suppose, for the kind of person who takes an Italian-neorealism class during a junior year in Paris -- I, too, preferred Antonioni's trilogy about disaffected rich people to the stuff that had come before: children stealing bicycles, Anna Magnani worrying about unpaid bills, that sort of thing. Struggle is hard to watch; it is much more pleasant to have our moral judgments projected into a world of aestheticized, escapist pleasure.

We carry a desire to inhabit images we've seen, reified symbols of love, glamour, happiness, success. The ''White Lotus'' scene in Noto is a perfect representation of this recursive fakery and its nightmarish endpoint. Like so many travelers in the Instagram age, the show's characters drift through their adventures without any real purpose other than to reproduce the pretty scenes and special moments they've seen elsewhere, trying to locate themselves in endless reflections. Among them, it is only Harper who remains unaffected by visual culture. Her scene in Noto feels like an inflection point. It is easier than ever to mistake beauty for truth -- or pretend to. Which, the show asks, will Harper choose?

Source photographs: HBO; Cino del Duca/PCE, Lyre.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/07/magazine/the-white-lotus-monica-vitti.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/07/magazine/the-white-lotus-monica-vitti.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY HBO) (MM11)

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY CELINA PEREIRA

HBO

CINO DEL DUCA/PCE, LYRE.) (MM12-MM13) This article appeared in print on page MM11, MM12, MM13, MM14.

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[***The 10 Best Books of 2022***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:672H-XT11-DXY4-X141-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 11, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Books; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1264 words

**Byline:** By The New York Times Books Staff

**Body**

You don't need to have read Egan's Pulitzer-winning ''A Visit From the Goon Squad'' to jump feet first into this much-anticipated sequel. But for lovers of the 2010 book's prematurely nostalgic New Yorkers, cerebral beauty and laser-sharp take on modernity, ''The Candy House'' is like coming home -- albeit to dystopia. This time around, Egan's characters are variously the creators and prisoners of a universe in which, through the wonders of technology, people can access their entire memory banks and use the contents as social media currency. The result is a glorious, hideous fun house that feels more familiar than sci-fi, all rendered with Egan's signature inventive confidence and -- perhaps most impressive of all -- heart. ''The Candy House'' is of its moment, with all that implies.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

Bennett, a British writer who makes her home in Ireland, first leaped onto the scene with her 2015 debut novel, ''Pond.'' Her second book contains all of the first's linguistic artistry and dark wit, but it is even more exhilarating. ''Checkout 19,'' ostensibly the story of a young woman falling in love with language in a ***working-class*** town outside London, has an unusual setting: the human mind -- a brilliant, surprising, weird and very funny one. All the words one might use to describe this book -- experimental, autofictional, surrealist -- fail to convey the sheer pleasure of ''Checkout 19.'' You'll come away dazed, delighted, reminded of just how much fun reading can be, eager to share it with people in your lives. It's a love letter to books, and an argument for them, too.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

Kingsolver's powerful new novel, a close retelling of Charles Dickens's ''David Copperfield'' set in contemporary Appalachia, gallops through issues including childhood poverty, opioid addiction and rural dispossession even as its larger focus remains squarely on the question of how an artist's consciousness is formed. Like Dickens, Kingsolver is unblushingly political and works on a sprawling scale, animating her pages with an abundance of charm and the presence of seemingly every creeping thing that has ever crept upon the earth.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

After losing her brother when she was 12, one of the narrators of Serpell's second novel keeps coming across men who resemble him as she works through her trauma long into adulthood. She enters an intimate relationship with one of them, who's also haunted by his past. This richly layered book explores the nature of grief, how it can stretch or compress time, reshape memories and make us dream up alternate realities. ''I don't want to tell you what happened,'' the narrator says. ''I want to tell you how it felt.''Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

Diaz uncovers the secrets of an American fortune in the early 20th century, detailing the dizzying rise of a New York financier and the enigmatic talents of his wife. Each of the novel's four parts, which are told from different perspectives, redirects the narrative (and upends readers' expectations) while paying tribute to literary titans from Henry James to Jorge Luis Borges. Whose version of events can we trust? Diaz's spotlight on stories behind stories seeks out the dark workings behind capitalism, as well as the uncredited figures behind the so-called Great Men of history. It's an exhilarating pursuit.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble\_\_\_\_\_\_

Yong certainly gave himself a formidable task with this book -- getting humans to step outside their ''sensory bubble'' and consider how nonhuman animals experience the world. But the enormous difficulty of making sense of senses we do not have is a reminder that each one of us has a purchase on only a sliver of reality. Yong is a terrific storyteller, and there are plenty of surprising animal facts to keep this book moving toward its profound conclusion: The breadth of this immense world should make us recognize how small we really are.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

In this quietly wrenching memoir, Hsu recalls starting out at Berkeley in the mid-1990s as a watchful music snob, fastidiously curating his tastes and mercilessly judging the tastes of others. Then he met Ken, a Japanese American frat boy. Their friendship was intense, but brief. Less than three years later, Ken would be killed in a carjacking. Hsu traces the course of their relationship -- one that seemed improbable at first but eventually became a fixture in his life, a trellis along which both young men could stretch and grow.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

In this rich and nuanced book, Aviv writes about people in extreme mental distress, beginning with her own experience of being told she had anorexia when she was 6 years old. That personal history made her especially attuned to how stories can clarify as well as distort what a person is going through. This isn't an anti-psychiatry book -- Aviv is too aware of the specifics of any situation to succumb to anything so sweeping. What she does is hold space for empathy and uncertainty, exploring a multiplicity of stories instead of jumping at the impulse to explain them away.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

Through case histories as well as independent reporting, Villarosa's remarkable third book elegantly traces the effects of the legacy of slavery -- and the doctrine of anti-Blackness that sprang up to philosophically justify it -- on Black health: reproductive, environmental, mental and more. Beginning with a long personal history of her awakening to these structural inequalities, the journalist repositions various narratives about race and medicine -- the soaring Black maternal mortality rates; the rise of heart disease and hypertension; the oft-repeated dictum that Black people reject psychological therapy -- as evidence not of Black inferiority, but of racism in the health care system.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

O'Toole, a prolific essayist and critic, calls this inventive narrative ''a personal history of modern Ireland'' -- an ambitious project, but one he pulls off with élan. Charting six decades of Irish history against his own life, O'Toole manages to both deftly illustrate a country in drastic flux, and include a sly, self-deprecating biography that infuses his sociology with humor and pathos. You'll be educated, yes -- about increasing secularism, the Celtic tiger, human rights -- but you'll also be wildly, uproariously entertained by a gifted raconteur at the height of his powers.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & NobleWhen you purchase an independently reviewed book through our site, we earn an affiliate commission.Illustration by Rozalina Burkova. Design and development by Leo Dominguez and Rumsey Taylor. Produced by Shreya Chattopadhyay, Joumana Khatib and Miguel Salazar.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/22/books/notable-books.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/22/books/notable-books.html)

**Load-Date:** December 11, 2022

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[***The Hidden Depression Trump Isn’t Helping***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y5F-5421-DXY4-X293-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 8, 2020 Saturday 11:53 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; sunday

**Length:** 931 words

**Byline:** Nicholas Kristof

**Highlight:** The economy may get the president re-elected, but not everyone is sharing in its strength.

**Body**

The economy may get the president re-elected, but not everyone is sharing in its strength.

President Trump declared in his [*State of the Union address*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/state-of-union-transcript.html) that “our economy is the best it has ever been.”

Put aside the Trumpian hyperbole, and it’s true that the economy is strong — and that this is critical to Trump’s chances for re-election. The Obama recovery has continued under Trump, with the stock market surging and corporate profits swelling. Just last month, employers added 225,000 jobs.

Private wealth owned by American households and nonprofits [*has soared*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/state-of-union-transcript.html) just since 2000 by the equivalent of more than $800,000 per household, according to Federal Reserve data. Wow! I feel richer already.

Yet we live in two Americas, and there’s another side of the country that Trump didn’t mention — one that helped elect him but that he has neglected since. In the other America, suicide rates are at a record high in the post-World War II era, and more Americans die every two weeks from drugs, alcohol and suicide — “deaths of despair” — than died in 18 years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq.

These deaths are symptoms of a larger economic malaise for ***working-class*** Americans that predates Trump. It’s not his fault, but neither has he tried seriously to address it; in some ways, especially in health care, he has worsened it.

Important new research finds that 20 million Americans, particularly those with low levels of education, describe all 30 of the last 30 days as “bad mental health days.”

“These men and women report in effect that every day of life is a bad day,” said David G. Blanchflower, a Dartmouth economist who conducted the research. Blanchflower noted that self-reported happiness in America has continued to fall.

Low-income Americans also [*report levels of physical pain*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/state-of-union-transcript.html) impairing their lives that are higher than reported by wealthier Americans, and far higher than in other advanced countries. One-third of Americans say that they have been in pain “often” or “very often” in the last four weeks.

Some of the pain probably results from a lack of universal health care. Millions of Americans endure constant toothaches in a way that doesn’t happen in our peer countries.

In effect, we have a bifurcated economy, marked by prosperity for millions of Americans and by a Social Great Depression for millions of others.

It’s strange to make a comparison to the Great Depression, for output is surging. But consider the effect on mortality: Even during the Great Depression, life expectancy rose strongly, while in three of the last four years it fell because of deaths of despair.

We’re used to thinking of a depression as geographic, but this one is demographic. ***Working-class*** Americans, often defined as those without a college degree, are caught in a dust bowl.

“The crisis is almost invisible for those with a college degree,” noted Anne Case, a Princeton economist who is an author, with her husband, fellow-economist Angus Deaton, of [*an excellent book*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/state-of-union-transcript.html) coming out this spring about deaths of despair.

It is these ***working-class*** Americans, white and black alike, who have seen earnings collapse, family structure disintegrate and mortality climb. These Americans are earning less on average, adjusted for inflation, than their counterparts back in the 1970s.

“Our story of deaths of despair is essentially a long-run account of destruction of the ***working class***,” Deaton said.

In the 1930s, President Franklin Roosevelt worked hard to address the Depression with the New Deal. This time, Trump in some ways has exacerbated the pain — such as by chipping away at access to health care. Some 400,000 children have lost health insurance under Trump.

It’s true that unemployment has dropped and that workers at the bottom are enjoying some of the largest wage gains, a pattern that is drawing some people back into the labor force. That’s significant and welcome (albeit the wage gains result partly from [*local increases in the minimum wage*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/state-of-union-transcript.html) and the economic strength partly from trillion-dollar deficits). But Case says that even so, almost half of Americans aged 25 and over with only a high school diploma are no longer in the labor force.

Meanwhile, the central fact of America today is not its economic vigor but its profound inequity.

I noted that private wealth has increased by $800,000 per household. It’s similarly true that whenever Jeff Bezos walks into a room, average wealth there shoots up so that each person becomes, on average, a billionaire.

Interesting, but not very meaningful.

\*

[*Last week, I told*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/state-of-union-transcript.html) how U.S. Bank had fired two employees who had used $20 of their own money to help a stranded customer. Within hours of the column going online, I received a call from the bank’s C.E.O., Andrew Cecere, who previously wouldn’t return my calls, apologizing and saying that he would correct the situation.

Here’s an update. Abigail Gilbert, the manager who was fired, confirms that she will return to her old job. Cecere says the bank is talking with Emily James, the other fired employee, about a job with more responsibility and higher pay; she is also discussing jobs with other companies.

This all sounds promising, but indignant columns are not a scalable solution to the problem of labor injustices.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/state-of-union-transcript.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/2020/02/05/us/politics/state-of-union-transcript.html). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/state-of-union-transcript.html).

PHOTO: A rally last June in Washington sought to push lawmakers to combat suicide. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EVELYN HOCKSTEIN/FOR THE WASHINGTON POST, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** February 14, 2020

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[***Previewing Our Wisconsin Polling Experiment***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66SD-BRM1-DXY4-X3G1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 3, 2022 Thursday 13:19 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 1026 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** We tried to break through nonresponse bias by paying people up to $25 to take a survey.

**Body**

We tried to break through nonresponse bias by paying people up to $25 to take a survey.

In the aftermath of the 2020 election, pollsters and analysts promised a polling autopsy that would help uncover why pre-election surveys systematically underestimated Donald J. Trump’s support.

It didn’t turn up much. The major polling industry post-mortem declared that it was “[*impossible*](https://www.aapor.org/Education-Resources/Reports/2020-Pre-Election-Polling-An-Evaluation-of-the-202.aspx)” to definitively explain why the polls systematically underestimated his support.

Without another explanation, pollsters defaulted to the one theory that remained after ruling out the usual suspects: nonresponse bias — the possibility that Trump voters were simply less likely to respond to surveys than demographically similar Biden voters.

Almost by definition, nonresponse bias is a grave challenge for pollsters. Like a stealthy poison, it can evade detection and cripple the accuracy of a survey. Not only is it extremely challenging to diagnose, but it is even harder to treat. After all, nonrespondents … don’t respond. We know nothing about them, even if we can infer they support Mr. Trump in greater numbers.

Without evidence, pollsters can’t make the adjustments to figure out how to reach these voters — or at least account for their existence. To obtain evidence, The Times used the only thing that seemed to have a chance of luring usual survey nonrespondents to take a poll:

Money.

In partnership with Ipsos, we paid respondents up to $25 to take a survey in Wisconsin, the state that was ground zero for survey error in 2016 and 2020. The state’s relatively high share of white ***working-class*** voters poses unusual challenges for pollsters. In 2016, Hillary Clinton, seemingly feeling secure about her chances there, didn’t even campaign in the state. Mr. Trump would [*go on*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/wisconsin) to a stunning upset victory.

Four years later, the polls showed Mr. Biden with a commanding lead in Wisconsin, including the Times/Siena poll, which showed him up 11 points. He won by less than a point. The state does not have party registration, making it even harder for pollsters to ensure a reasonable balance of Democrats and Republicans

In early September, Ipsos mailed thousands of first-class and priority mail envelopes to Wisconsin households. The mailing included a crisp $5 bill and a letter promising an additional $20 if the respondent took the survey online or filled and returned the enclosed paper questionnaire and return envelope. Responses can arrive until the election, but so far more than 1,500 people responded to the survey.

The questionnaire put theories of nonresponse bias to the test. We asked voters things like whether they own an ATV; how many books they read; whether they work from home or have a “no trespassing sign.” And for comparison, we fielded a typical Times/Siena live-interview poll and an Ipsos/KnowledgePanel online survey in parallel.

The question: Would we reach a different — perhaps more conservative, perhaps less trusting, perhaps less educated — sample with financial incentives? And if so, could the information from the mail-incentive survey provide the data necessary to adjust the lower-cost surveys?

So far, nearly 30 percent of households responded to the survey. The parallel Times/Siena survey, in contrast, reached only about 1 percent of the people we tried to contact.

Of course, this is not exactly a proper experiment. There are other differences between the two surveys besides the response rates. The Times/Siena poll [*is off a voter file*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/06/upshot/live-poll-explainer.html); the Ipsos sample frame is the adult population. The difference between a self-administered survey and a live interviewer is also relevant. There’s reason to think we can control for these factors to some extent, with the online Ipsos/KnowledgePanel data and the ability to join the mail-based survey to the voter file, but ultimately the study presumes that major differences are likely because of nonresponse.

The Ipsos mail survey results just came back Tuesday night. Before we got the data, it seemed there were three basic possibilities for the headline results — and our understanding of the state of survey research today:

Possibility 1: The Ipsos mail survey yields far more Republican results than the Times/Siena poll, perhaps with additional hallmarks of reaching the “hidden Trump” vote, like finding lower social trust or more people who say they prefer to work with their hands. This would be a troubling sign that nonresponse bias continues to plague telephone surveys in 2022. Nonetheless, the survey might offer the beginning of a path forward. Perhaps a Times/Siena poll adjusted to have the right number of people who prefer “working with their hands” would be just fine.

Possibility 2: Neither the Ipsos mail survey nor the Times/Siena survey appears to reach a “hidden Trump” vote. This conclusion might be based on a relatively Democratic sample or more people who say they volunteer or think most people can be trusted than we would expect from other sources. This would be challenging to interpret. On the one hand, similarity between the Times/Siena and Ipsos surveys could boost confidence in the Times/Siena poll. At the very least, it would suggest it’s hard to improve upon the Times/Siena poll by boosting response rates. On the other, it would raise the possibility that even the high-incentive mail data was biased toward Democrats, despite the high response rate. If $25 can’t reach the “hidden Trump” vote, what can?

Possibility 3: The Ipsos and Times/Siena polls wind up with similar results, but with both surveys appearing to do a decent job of handling nonresponse bias. This would suggest that nonresponse bias has faded since 2020, bolstering our confidence in surveys heading into the election. We could still hope to find differences between the two surveys and perhaps improve the Times/Siena poll, but this would fundamentally be good news for pollsters.

We’ll have the results for you soon.

PHOTO: This letter was sent to thousands of households in Wisconsin inviting them to participate in our survey. The response rate for the poll was nearly 30 percent, compared with about 1 percent for a typical NYT/Siena poll. (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 27, 2023

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[***Mayor’s Proposed Cuts to Libraries Will Hurt New Yorkers, Leaders Say***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6796-FY01-DXY4-X3XH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 11, 2023 Wednesday 10:55 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1258 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Highlight:** New York’s public libraries could be forced to cut their hours and programming. The City Council wants to protect their funding in the next budget battle.

**Body**

New York’s public libraries could be forced to cut their hours and programming. The City Council wants to protect their funding in the next budget battle.

During his first year as mayor, Eric Adams said he was focused on ensuring that city government served the ***working-class*** New Yorkers who helped elect him.

But now he is under fire for cutting funding for libraries — a critical lifeline for people who do not have internet access at home or who need after-school tutoring and English language instruction.

The proposed [*cuts of $13 million this fiscal year and more than $20 million next year*](https://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/looking-under-the-hood-of-new-york-citys-november-2022-financial-plan-program-to-eliminate-the-gap/) have sparked concern among families, elected officials and library leaders. Libraries could respond to the trimmed budget by scaling back hours, workers or programming.

With more than 200 locations across the city, the public library system is a beloved institution where children learn to love books and recently arrived migrants become acclimated to their new home. Before the pandemic, [*city libraries typically saw about 35 million annual visitors*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/24/nyregion/denying-new-york-libraries-the-fuel-they-need.html), and many New Yorkers have started to return.

Library leaders [*raised the alarm about the budget cuts*](https://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/looking-under-the-hood-of-new-york-citys-november-2022-financial-plan-program-to-eliminate-the-gap/) at a recent City Council hearing, which [*Gothamist first reported*](https://gothamist.com/news/nyc-public-libraries-say-proposed-budget-cuts-may-push-us-over-the-edge). Anthony W. Marx, president of the New York Public Library, said that worrying about where to cut was keeping him up at night, and library leaders added that their services were needed more than ever following the disruption of the pandemic.

“We’d have no choice but to do less, and that would be a great shame for the city,” said Nick Buron, the chief librarian at the Queens Public Library.

City Council leaders are gearing up for a battle with Mr. Adams about his cuts to libraries and other programs like [*free preschool for 3-year-olds*](https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2022/11/16/23463419/ny-3k-expansion-preschool-early-childhood-education-eric-adams) and funding for the City University of New York. A group of 13 left-leaning council members [*called the mayor’s recent budget adjustments “cruel and dangerous*](https://twitter.com/OsseChi/status/1605672052823728128?s=20&amp;t=mZ31MBSPycF1V_tJ_V-pog)” and argued that they would make the city less stable.

Adrienne Adams, the City Council speaker, said in an interview that the Council would oppose cuts to key services during the next budget cycle, which will begin in earnest on Thursday when Mayor Adams is expected to release his preliminary budget for the next fiscal year.

“The Council has a different vision for our city,” said Ms. Adams. “It focuses on investing in the essential services that our communities rely on to be healthy and safe and that really address the root causes of our greatest challenges.”

“We’re prepared to fight for our vision,” she added.

Ms. Adams, who is not related to the mayor, has been increasingly critical of Mr. Adams, even though they are both relatively moderate Democrats from Queens. They have had public disagreements over his budget cuts to schools and his handling of the migrant crisis.

As he enters his second year in office, Mr. Adams has argued that broad cuts are necessary across city agencies to address a dismal financial forecast. The [*city is expected to have a deficit of nearly $3 billion next year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/16/nyregion/budget-deficit-nyc.html) as federal pandemic aid ends and tax revenue falters.

In an interview, Mr. Adams said he took “no joy” in cutting money for schools and libraries but that it would be “irresponsible” for him not to reduce city spending.

“We made tough fiscal decisions in spite of the people who continually attacked us for it, but the decision was right for New Yorkers,” he said.

A spokeswoman for the mayor, Amaris Cockfield, said in a statement that the Adams administration valued “the important role libraries play in our community” and would work with library leaders to “implement savings initiatives in a way that does not reduce services to New Yorkers.”

The city spends roughly $400 million annually on public libraries — a small fraction of its $100 billion budget. During the city’s last financial downturn, under former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, [*funding for libraries was constantly under threat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/15/nyregion/15library.html).

John Hyslop, the president of a union that represents library workers in Queens, said he was worried that the city would close libraries on Saturdays as it had considered doing during past budget battles. He said that it was difficult during the Bloomberg years for libraries to plan for the future with so much uncertainty, and that the situation improved under Mr. Bloomberg’s successor, Mayor Bill de Blasio.

“Bill de Blasio benefited from a booming economy, but he didn’t play games with our budget,” Mr. Hyslop said.

The City Council often acted as the “savior” for libraries, Mr. Hyslop said: “That’s who we have to rely on to come bail us out.”

The last few years have been tumultuous for New York City’s libraries. They were closed for months at the height of the pandemic and then offered “grab and go” books after they partially reopened. Toddler story times that were once boisterous events went virtual. As branches began to fully reopen in 2021, [*city libraries eliminated all late fees*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/nyregion/nyc-library-fines-books-returned.html) in an effort to get people to return. At a time when the city is seeing record homelessness, libraries serve an important role, often offering shelter during the day as well as internet access.

Chi Ossé, a City Council member from Brooklyn who chairs the committee that oversees libraries, said he wanted to vote down the mayor’s budget modification from December that included the additional cuts for libraries.

“It would be really detrimental,” he said. “They’ve trimmed so much fat already.”

But Ms. Adams, the Council speaker, said on Tuesday that the Council decided not to bring the budget modification to a vote. She framed the move as a “rebuke” of the mayor’s cuts while still preserving funding for nonprofits that could have been blocked. Without a yes-or-no vote, the $13 million in cuts to libraries for this year will take effect.

Ms. Adams, who once served on the board of the Queens Public Library, said she viewed libraries as “intergenerational beacons” and would work hard to spare them from further cuts.

“I can’t tell you how passionate I am about making sure that our libraries are intact,” she said.

Mr. Marx, the head of the New York Public Library, said in a statement on Tuesday that the budget cuts would “hurt our patrons and the communities we serve” and that he would “continue our talks with Mayor Adams and the City Council to preserve our levels of funding.”

The Bronx Library Center, the largest public library in the Bronx, was busy on a recent afternoon. Dozens of people waited in the basement for English classes or to apply for an IDNYC card, a municipal identification card that is often used by immigrants. The library has been a welcome center for a recent wave of migrants arriving from the Mexican border, and long lines start to form outside the library an hour before it opens in the morning.

Sadou Barry, an immigrant from Senegal, arrived hoping to join an English writing class. He said he started coming to the library a few months ago to study English grammar books.

“It gives us a chance to have an opportunity,” he said.

Melvin Nunez, 17, said he visited the library when he was bored and wanted to get away from home, and that it felt like a refuge. He read “Deadpool” comic books and worked on his homework.

“I get some places need to get some cuts, but I don’t believe that it should be something so important to the people,” he said. “Libraries are very important things for the community.”

PHOTO: The New York City public library system, which has more than 200 locations, could scale back hours, workers or programming. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BING GUAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A14.

**Load-Date:** January 12, 2023

**End of Document**



[***The Village People***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65R6-W371-DXY4-X4GY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 19, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 21; FICTION

**Length:** 723 words

**Byline:** By Stuart Dybek

**Body**

Set mostly in western Ireland, Colin Barrett's second collection is shot through with dark humor.

HOMESICKNESS: Stories, by Colin Barrett

Maybe you've had a similar encounter, up late quietly reading, when before you know it you were swept up into a story whose energy kept building by way of comic invention, your laughter disrupting the night. It's an experience worth pursuing, especially in trying times.

Trying times are the context for ''The Alps,'' the story in question, from Colin Barrett's second book, ''Homesickness.'' Its comedy stands in balance to the collection's more tragic tenor. The setting isn't Switzerland, but County Mayo, Ireland, at the Swinford Gaels football club. The Alps is the local moniker for three brothers: ''shortish men with massive arses and brutally capable forearms. They breathed coltishly through their noses and rolled their shoulders with a circumspect flourish whenever women crossed their paths. They billed themselves as tradesmen, though between them had never acquired a qualification in any particular trade.'' Their massiveness will figure in the story's wonderfully unpredictable ending.

The eight stories in ''Homesickness'' are Barrett's follow-up to ''Young Skins'' (2014), a debut that garnered major prizes including the Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award and the Guardian First Book Award. ''Homesickness'' expands his range, and though the first took place in the fictional Irish town of Glanbeigh, the books share a fabric shot through with dark humor, pitch-perfect dialogue and a signature freshness that makes life palpable on the page. The language counterpoints the sometimes inarticulate desperation of the ***working-class*** characters, and that dissonance lends an emotional complexity to their stories. The painterly descriptions conflate character and place, as in ''Anhedonia, Here I Come,'' which follows Bobby Tallis, a poète maudit on a six-mile walk on the weird side that will lead to a striking conclusion. ''Bobby was certain he was the only resident under the age of 60'' in his building, whose ''corridors -- the sour-cream walls lit by low-wattage sconces downy with dust; the furred, blue, perpetually damp carpeting in which shoe-print impressions dolefully lingered -- evoked for Bobby a budget version of the afterlife.''

Irish writers have excelled at proving the paradox that the local yields the universal. The title of Barrett's book alludes to that lineage, and specifically to ''Home Sickness,'' the classic story by George Moore from the early 20th century, in which an Irish American immigrant returns to Ireland to regain his health, but finds he's lost his connection to village life, and goes back to New York.

In Barrett's stories, homesickness mostly afflicts those who've stayed home, but no longer fit. Their lives orbit physical and mental illness, alienation, substance abuse, wounds, suicide and bad luck that exceeds society's margin for error. In ''The Ways,'' three orphaned siblings struggle to stay a family after cancer has taken ''the folks.'' Home has become an edge, and life on the edge is the theme and variation, the underlying design that gives this book its power. Each story exerts the tension of social connections being tested. Sometimes, depending on who is measuring, the connections appear to hold as they do in the memorable opening story, ''A Shooting in Rathreedane.'' In other stories, despite good intentions and the intimate bonds of the past, the resilient cannot sustain the vulnerable.

As a writer, Barrett doesn't legislate from the top down. His unruly characters surge up with their vitality and their mystery intact. Their stories aren't shaped by familiar resolutions -- no realizations, morals or epiphanies. The absence of a conventional resolution does risk leaving an otherwise charming story like ''The Silver Coast'' with the rambling feel of a slice of life. But in the majority of the stories in this book, to reinvent an ending is to reinvent how a story is told, and overall, ''Homesickness'' is graced with an original, lingering beauty.

HOMESICKNESS: Stories, by Colin Barrett | 213 pp. | Grove Press | $27

Stuart Dybek is the author, most recently, of ''Paper Lantern: Love Stories.''Stuart Dybek needs a bio. tkt tk tkt tkt kt tkt kt kt tkt kt tkt kt kt kt tk tkt kt kt kt

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/30/books/review/colin-barrett-homesickness.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/30/books/review/colin-barrett-homesickness.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ben Thompson FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 19, 2022

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[***Six Takeaways From the Only Vance-Ryan Debate for Ohio Senate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66KG-N2C1-JBG3-6383-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 11, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 18

**Length:** 917 words

**Byline:** By Jonathan Weisman and Trip Gabriel

**Body**

In their only debate, Representative Tim Ryan and J.D. Vance pushed their campaign messages, focusing often on the economy and China.

In a sometimes heated, often personal debate, the two candidates vying for the seat of the retiring Senator Rob Portman -- Representative Tim Ryan and the investor J.D. Vance -- each took turns accusing the other of being elite and out of touch, while claiming the mantle of ***working-class*** defender.

Here are six takeaways from the one and only Ohio Senate debate.

Extremism vs. the economy

Mr. Ryan, the Democrat, had the difficult task of tarring Mr. Vance, the Republican, as a ''MAGA extremist'' without alienating supporters of Donald J. Trump in a state where Mr. Trump remains popular and which he won twice. He did so by saying Mr. Vance is ''running around with the election deniers, the extremists,'' like Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene, and supporting some of the rioters who attacked the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

But in a state that has for decades worried about the economy and the loss of manufacturing jobs, Mr. Vance had a ready pivot: ''I find it interesting how preoccupied you are with this at a time when people can't afford groceries,'' he told his opponent.

China, China, China

Mr. Ryan set the tone of his underdog campaign from the start with an advertisement attacking China, and he didn't let up in the debate. He repeatedly accused Mr. Vance of investing in companies that did business with China or shipped jobs there. Mr. Vance taunted him with ''name one.''

China even muddied what had been a clear foreign policy debate. Mr. Vance stuck to the ''America First'' position of his benefactor, Mr. Trump, when it came to Ukraine, saying Democrats were ''sleepwalking into a nuclear war.'' But asked about defending Taiwan against a hypothetical Chinese attack, he shifted. ''Taiwan is a much different situation than Russia and Ukraine,'' Mr. Vance said.

Change vs. service

Mr. Vance tried to present himself as an agent of change who would shake things up in Washington, accusing Mr. Ryan of being a career politician who accomplished little during his many years in the House. Embracing term limits, he said Mr. Ryan's native northeast Ohio would have been better off if its congressman had left Washington a while ago and gotten a job in Youngstown.

That riled Mr. Ryan, who spoke about his family's history of service through its Catholic church -- including running the ''beer tent'' at church events. ''I'm not going to apologize for spending 20 years slogging away to try to help one of the hardest economically hit regions of Ohio,'' he said. Adding that Mr. Vance should be ashamed of himself, he snapped, ''You went off to California drinking wine and eating cheese.''

Mr. Vance, putting himself forward as a young, savvy businessman more than as an acolyte of Mr. Trump, said he admires service. ''What I don't admire,'' he said, ''is the failure of accomplishment.''

Crime and policing

The candidates struck a rare note of bipartisan accord on the need for local police departments to hire more officers, with Mr. Ryan boasting of delivering $500 million in federal funds for Ohio police through a pandemic relief bill. But then the debate took a nasty swerve. Mr. Ryan accused Mr. Vance of encouraging donations to Jan. 6 rioters who injured some 140 officers in the siege of the Capitol, warning his opponent, ''Don't even try to deny it.''

''We've got your Twitter posts and everything else,'' Mr. Ryan said. ''He's raising money for the insurrectionists who were beating up the Capitol Police.''

Mr. Vance did not respond to the charge. Instead, he attacked Mr. Ryan for comments he made during civil disturbances in American cities after the police murder of George Floyd in 2020.

''Tim Ryan threw the police under the bus,'' Mr. Vance said. ''He attacked them as the new Jim Crow, as systemically racist, and he voted for legislation that would have stripped funding from them and redirected it toward litigation defense.''

Separating from the party

The Democrats may be trying to label Republicans allied with Mr. Trump as extremists, but it was Mr. Ryan, not Mr. Vance, who was looking for distance from his party leadership. He reiterated his view that President Biden should not run for re-election, and instead should give way to ''generational change.'' He called Vice President Kamala Harris ''absolutely wrong'' for saying the southern border is secure. And he insisted he had been a pain in Speaker Nancy Pelosi's rear end.

''I'm not here to toe the party line,'' he said, mocking Mr. Vance for slavishly standing by Mr. Trump even when the former president said that the candidate must grovel to him, while using coarser language.

A game changer? Not likely.

The Senate campaign has been spirited and may be close, which is remarkable considering the Republican bent of the state and the commanding lead that its Republican governor, Mike DeWine, has in his quest for re-election. But Mr. Ryan has a tall order: He must persuade hundreds of thousands of Republican voters to cast their ballots for a Democrat in a year when the Democratic president is unpopular and the economy is faltering.

Mr. Vance, after a heated primary season, has been accused of coasting through the summer, and he entered the debate with low expectations. But he knew the bar was low for him to prove himself palatable enough to ride Mr. DeWine's coattails and the broader political winds. He most likely did that.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/us/politics/jd-vance-tim-ryan-ohio-debate.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/us/politics/jd-vance-tim-ryan-ohio-debate.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Rep. Tim Ryan, left, and J.D. Vance, right. The candidates talked China, the economy and more. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DUSTIN FRANZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

JEFF SWENSEN/GETTY IMAGES) This article appeared in print on page A19.

**Load-Date:** October 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Governments must create millions of new green jobs, Ban Ki-moon says.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:640K-2TX1-JBG3-6185-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 3, 2021 Wednesday 08:26 EST

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**Section:** CLIMATE

**Length:** 389 words

**Byline:** Jenny Gross

**Highlight:** His comments come amid rising concern that transitioning to a greener economy could provoke a backlash if the cost falls to low- and middle-income people.

**Body**

Global leaders must create jobs in the renewable energy sector so that the costs of transitioning from fossil fuels do not exacerbate economic inequalities, Ban Ki-moon, the former United Nations secretary general, said on Wednesday on the sidelines of the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow.

“What is absolutely necessary at this time — it is critical now — is for governments to increase their ambition level, not only in clean energy, but creating millions of new green jobs for the people,” Mr. Ban, the U.N. leader from 2007 to 2016, said at the opening of [*a Times event series running alongside the conference*](https://climatehub.nytimes.com/).

“I believe that we need to be more realistic about the winners and losers of globalization,” he said, “and take more decisive action in addressing inequality both within and between countries.”

Around the world, and especially in Europe, leaders are focused on the risks that a shift to a greener economy could lead to [*a backlash*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/business/energy-environment/europe-climate-action-cost.html), particularly if ***working-class*** and middle-class people bear the brunt of the cost. Mr. Ban said there was a need to address the risks of the “underlying currents of populist skepticism.”

He called on industrialized countries to follow through on their pledge to give $100 billion a year to poorer countries to address climate change.

“They must be serious, because we have no time to lose,” he said.

Only some of that money, which industrialized countries agreed to last year, has been delivered.

Last week, [*diplomats from Canada and Germany said they expected the $100 billion to be delivered by 2023*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/25/climate/100-billion-climate-aid-cop26.html), three years late. Experts have said the amount will not be enough to help poorer countries with the costs of moving their economies away from fossil fuels and coping with damages brought on by extreme weather.

Mr. Ban said that he was disappointed that President Xi Jinping of China, the world’s largest emitter of greenhouse gases, was not attending [*COP26*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/what-is-cop26-climate-change-summit.html), but that he was encouraged by [*Mr. Xi’s vow in September that China would stop building coal-burning power plants*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/21/climate/china-power-plants-coal.html) overseas.

It is time, Mr. Ban said, for China, the United States and other countries to bridge “the gap between rhetoric and commitment.”

“The time for talk,” he said, “is over now.”

PHOTO: Ban Ki-moon, the former U.N. secretary general, in September. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ilvy Njiokiktjien for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 3, 2021

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[***There Still Is No Strategy to Defeat Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66D5-CDY1-DXY4-X24V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 16, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23; DAVID BROOKS

**Length:** 904 words

**Byline:** By David Brooks

**Body**

One of the stunning facts of the age is the continued prominence of Donald Trump. His candidates did well in the G.O.P. primaries this year. He won more votes in 2020 than he did in 2016. His favorability ratings within his party have been high and basically unchanged since late 2016. In a range of polls, some have actually shown Trump leading President Biden in a race for re-election in 2024.

His prominence is astounding because over the past seven years the American establishment has spent enormous amounts of energy trying to discredit him.

Those of us in this establishment correctly identified Trump as a grave threat to American democracy. The task before us was clear. We were never going to shake the hard-core MAGA folks. The job was to peel away independents and those Republicans offended by and exhausted by his antics.

Many strategies were deployed in order to discredit Trump. There was the immorality strategy: Thousands of articles were written detailing his lies and peccadilloes. There was the impeachment strategy: Investigations were launched into his various scandals and outrages. There was the exposure strategy: Scores of books were written exposing how shambolic and ineffective the Trump White House really was.

The net effect of these strategies has been to sell a lot of books and subscriptions and to make anti-Trumpists feel good. But this entire barrage of invective has not discredited Trump among the people who will very likely play the most determinant role. It has probably pulled some college-educated Republicans into the Democratic ranks and pushed some ***working-class*** voters over to the Republican side.

The barrage has probably solidified Trump's hold on his party. Republicans see themselves at war with the progressive coastal elites. If those elites are dumping on Trump, he must be their guy.

A couple weeks ago, Biden gave a speech in Philadelphia, declaring the MAGA movement a threat to democracy. The speech said a lot of true things about that movement, but there was an implied confession: We have no strategy. Denouncing Trump and discrediting Trump are two different tasks. And if there's one thing we've learned, denunciation may be morally necessary, but it doesn't achieve the goal the denouncers think it does.

Some commentators argued that Biden's strategy in the speech was to make Trump the central issue of the 2022 midterms; both Biden and Trump have an interest in making sure that Trump is the sun around which all of American politics revolves.

This week, I talked with a Republican who was incensed by Biden's approach. He is an 82-year-old émigré from Russia who is thinking of supporting Ron DeSantis in the 2024 primaries because he has less baggage. His parents were killed by the Nazis in World War II. ''And now Biden's calling me a fascist?!'' he fumed.

You would think that those of us in the anti-Trump camp would have at one point stepped back and asked some elemental questions: What are we trying to achieve? Who is the core audience here? Which strategies have worked, and which have not?

If those questions were asked, the straightforward conclusion would be that most of what we are doing is not working. The next conclusion might be that there's a lot of self-indulgence here. We're doing things that help those of us in the anti-Trump world bond with one another and that help people in the Trump world bond with one another. We're locking in the political structures that benefit Trump.

My core conclusion is that attacking Trump personally doesn't work. You have to rearrange the underlying situation. We are in the middle of a cultural/economic/partisan/identity war between more progressive people in the metro areas and more conservative people everywhere else. To lead the right in this war, Trump doesn't have to be honest, moral or competent; he just has to be seen taking the fight to the ''elites.''

The proper strategy in this situation is to scramble the identity war narrative. That's what Biden did in 2020. He ran as a middle-class moderate from Scranton. He dodged the culture war issues. That's what the Democratic Senate candidate John Fetterman is trying to do in Pennsylvania.

A Democratic candidate who steps outside the culture/identity war narrative is going to have access to the voters who need to be moved. Public voices who don't seem locked in the insular educated elite worldview are going to be able to reach the people who need to be reached.

Trumpists tell themselves that America is being threatened by a radical left putsch that is out to take over the government and undermine the culture. The core challenge now is to show by word and deed that this is a gross exaggeration.

Can Trump win again? Absolutely. I'm a DeSantis doubter. I doubt someone so emotionally flat and charmless can win a nomination in the age of intensive media. And then once Trump is nominated, he has some chance of winning, because nobody is executing an effective strategy against him.

If that happens, we can at least console ourselves with that Taylor Swift lyric: ''I had a marvelous time ruinin' everything.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/opinion/strategy-defeat-donald-trump.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/opinion/strategy-defeat-donald-trump.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Mark Peterson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 16, 2022

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[***Six Takeaways From the Vance-Ryan Debate for Senate in Ohio***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66KB-40H1-JBG3-631R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 10, 2022 Monday 00:35 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 934 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Weisman and Trip Gabriel

**Highlight:** Representative Tim Ryan and J.D. Vance pushed their campaign messages, focusing often on the economy and China.

**Body**

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In a sometimes heated, often personal debate, the two candidates vying for the seat of the retiring Senator Rob Portman — Representative Tim Ryan and the investor J.D. Vance — each took turns accusing the other of being elite and out of touch, while claiming the mantle of ***working-class*** defender.

Here are six takeaways from the Ohio Senate debate.

Extremism vs. the economy

Mr. Ryan, the Democrat, had the difficult task of tarring Mr. Vance, the Republican, as a “MAGA extremist” without alienating supporters of Donald J. Trump in a state where Mr. Trump remains popular and which he won twice. He did so by saying Mr. Vance is “running around with the election deniers, the extremists,” like Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene, and supporting some of the rioters who attacked the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

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PHOTO: Rep. Tim Ryan, left, and J.D. Vance, right. The candidates talked China, the economy and more. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DUSTIN FRANZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; JEFF SWENSEN/GETTY IMAGES) This article appeared in print on page A19.

**Load-Date:** October 18, 2022

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[***The Rise of Eric Adams And Black New York***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64D3-6DC1-JBG3-603M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 27, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 19; MARA GAY

**Length:** 1814 words

**Byline:** By Mara Gay

**Body**

It was winter in Black New York, and the last thing Eric Leroy Adams wanted to do was join the New York Police Department.

It was the early 1980s and waves of joblessness and crime were sweeping over ***working-class*** areas of the city. In Black neighborhoods, the Police Department, still overwhelmingly white, had become an occupying force, deepening the misery and the injustice.

Inside a Brooklyn church, the Rev. Herbert Daughtry, a veteran of the civil rights movement, told a young Mr. Adams, then a local college student, that it was time to join the N.Y.P.D. The Black community, Mr. Daughtry said, needed someone to make change from the inside.

''You got to be out of your mind,'' Mr. Adams recalls telling Mr. Daughtry.

On Jan. 1, when Mr. Adams, 61, is sworn in as mayor, Mr. Daughtry's vision will be realized. ***Working-class*** Black New York, which makes up the heart of the Democratic base but has long been shut out of City Hall, will finally have its moment.

To many, the future mayor is still an enigma. He talks of law and order, but also Black Lives Matter. He courts Wall Street, then travels to Ghana to be spiritually cleansed. He parties late into the night alongside the rapper Ja Rule and the former Google chief executive Eric Schmidt. His talent and intellect are obvious. But he sounds nothing like Barack Obama.

What exactly Mr. Adams intends to do once at City Hall is unclear. What is certain for now is that Mr. Adams knows who sent him there.

New York's Black Democratic base had endured a plague and marched for Black lives. They had kept the city going, along with municipal workers of all backgrounds, while wealthier New Yorkers remained safely at home. They had felt the rise in violence in their neighborhoods, and seen the resurgence of white supremacy under President Donald Trump. Their choice for mayor was Eric Adams.

In his victory speech in November, Mr. Adams said his election belonged to the city's working poor. ''I am you. I am you. After years of praying and hoping and struggling and working, we are headed to City Hall,'' Mr. Adams boomed. ''It is proof that people of this city will love you if you love them.''

New York's first Black mayor, David Dinkins, died last year at the age of 93. A soft-spoken Marine, in his signature bow tie, he made plain he intended to serve the entire city, which he famously called a ''gorgeous mosaic.'' Mr. Dinkins served just one term in office and was ousted by Rudy Giuliani in 1993 in an election fraught with racist backlash. It was a bitter defeat Black New York would never forget.

Mr. Dinkins was part of a storied tradition of Black politicians from Harlem that included Adam Clayton Powell Jr., Charles Rangel, Percy Sutton, and Basil Paterson. The political club swung Black votes in the city for more than a generation.

Mr. Adams's pathway to Gracie Mansion runs through a different New York.

He was born in the Brownsville area of Brooklyn, among the poorest neighborhoods in the city. Later, the family moved to South Jamaica, a largely Black enclave in Queens. Like many of his neighbors, Mr. Adams grew up poor, the fourth of six children of Dorothy Mae Adams, a single mother who worked cleaning houses, and later, at a day care center.

At 15, Mr. Adams was arrested on a criminal trespass charge for entering the home of an acquaintance. He has said he was beaten so severely by police officers that his urine was filled with blood for a week.

Several years later, Mr. Adams met Mr. Daughtry. The pastor was recruiting young Black New Yorkers to organize Brooklyn's struggling communities as part of the National Black United Front, a Black empowerment group.

''It was a tough time,'' Mr. Daughtry, now 90 years old, said in a phone interview. Mr. Adams stood out. ''He was rather precocious,'' Mr. Daughtry said. ''He didn't just want a job. He was concerned about the lack of progress, the gang violence, the addiction.''

Mr. Adams joined the Police Department in 1984 and served 22 years there. He co-founded 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care, a group that protested police brutality. He also served as president of the Grand Council of Guardians, a statewide group of Black law enforcement officials.

He was protesting police brutality in the late 1980s when he met the Rev. Al Sharpton. Both were the sons of single mothers who had arrived in New York from Alabama.

And both men said they reveled in eschewing the snobbishness exuded by the Black elite: a small but dazzling world of the powerful -- if not always wealthy -- shaped by historic college fraternities and sororities, and exclusive societies like the Sigma Pi Phi fraternity and the Links. The groups were created in the depths of segregation to help members network and uplift the Black community. Some of the organizations are over a century old.

''Me and Eric used to tease each other,'' Mr. Sharpton told me recently. ''I used to say, 'You're the guy with the patrolman's hat and I'm the guy with the conked hair style like James Brown, and we do not care if the bougies don't like us,''' he said. ''We used to laugh about that.''

Mr. Dinkins was a member of Sigma Pi Phi, also known as the Boulé (pronounced boo-lay). That fraternity, among the most exclusive of the bunch, counted the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as a member. Percy Sutton, who as Manhattan borough president was once the highest ranking Black elected official in New York, belonged to Kappa Alpha Psi -- one of the ''Divine Nine'' historically Black fraternities and sororities. Representative Hakeem Jeffries is also a member of Kappa Alpha Psi. Former Representative Charles Rangel is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha but joined Boulé only several years ago (''They never invited me'' before that, he said). Vice President Kamala Harris is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha.

''I'm not part of any of those things, you know what I'm saying?'' Mr. Adams told me. ''But the energy and spirit they bring, we need that.''

By 2006, Mr. Adams had risen to the rank of captain, but his public advocacy had made him a thorn in the side of the Police Department's clubby, white male brass. He left the department and was quickly elected to the State Senate. In 2013, he was elected Brooklyn borough president, a largely ceremonial role -- but a good launching pad for a campaign for mayor.

In the decades since David Dinkins had left office, the center of Black life and political power had shifted firmly from Harlem to Brooklyn. Letitia James, the state attorney general, is from Brooklyn. Jumaane Williams, the city's public advocate, is also from Brooklyn. Representative Jeffries represents part of the borough, as well as a part of Queens.

Making the rise of these Black politicians possible was a decades-long shift to an increasingly diverse electorate from one that had once been dominated by white voters. Some white Democrats have proven more willing to vote for Black candidates. The changes have turned Brooklyn into a political powerhouse.

In 2013, that Brooklyn coalition, led by Black voters, sent Mayor Bill de Blasio to Gracie Mansion.

Then, in early 2020, the pandemic hit New York City, claiming tens of thousands of lives. It killed people from all walks of life, but hit especially hard in the minority and immigrant communities in the Democratic base. Every level of government, including City Hall, had failed them.

A year later, the Democratic primary included three major Black candidates. One of them, Maya Wiley, a progressive, garnered significant support. But ***working-class*** Black New York went with Mr. Adams, handing him a narrow victory. Basil Smikle, director of the public policy program at Hunter College, said they wanted someone who understood their everyday lives.

''The Dinkinses and the Obamas of the world, yes it's aspirational, we'd all like our children to grow up to be them,'' said Mr. Smikle, who is Black. ''But to what extent do you know how people are living?''

Mr. Adams's political showmanship doesn't hurt.

In 2016, when Mr. Adams became a vegan, reversing a diabetes diagnosis, he promoted the diet as a way to liberate Black Americans from the history of slavery and published a cookbook.

Years earlier, in the State Senate, Mr. Adams produced a dramatized video from his office encouraging parents to search their children's belongings for contraband. ''You don't know what your child may be hiding,'' Mr. Adams tells the camera, pulling a gun out of a jewelry box. The stunt left political insiders giggling. But it demonstrated how deeply connected Mr. Adams was to the voters he represented.

''It is comical, but let me tell you, my mom would probably be nodding her head for the entire video,'' said Zellnor Myrie, 35, who holds Mr. Adams's former Senate seat, and was raised in the district by his mother.

Much of what appears to be paradoxical about Mr. Adams is, to Black Americans, just familiar.

''All of us have been at dinner with some uncle who talks about 'Black on Black' crime,'' said Christina Greer, associate professor of political science at Fordham University. ''We know Eric Adams.''

Yet, Mr. Adams is familiar to New Yorkers of many backgrounds. They recognize the swagger of the beat cop; the blunt cadence of southeast Queens, with its languorous vowels; the hustle and ambition found all over New York.

Starting Jan. 1, he will be mayor for the entire city. His support is expansive and includes large numbers of Asian, Latino and Orthodox Jewish voters. If he can cement this coalition, he may become a formidable force nationally in a Democratic Party hungry for stars.

Mr. Adams has also shown a savvy for courting The New York Post, announcing his pick for police commissioner -- Nassau County chief of detectives Keechant Sewell, a Black Queens native -- in the right-wing tabloid. Better to feed the beast, Mr. Adams understands, than let it maul you.

At his inner circle, though, is a tight-knit group of Black New Yorkers who have waited a generation for their shot to run City Hall.

Outside a public school in Brooklyn recently, Mr. Adams stood with David Banks, a veteran Black educator he tapped to serve as schools chancellor. ''If 65 percent of white children were not reaching proficiency in this city, they would burn the city down,'' Mr. Adams said to the enthusiastic, largely nonwhite crowd.

From the moneyed corners of Manhattan to the gracious brownstones of Cobble Hill, there is a creeping sense of shock: The new mayor is not necessarily speaking to them. Power in America's largest city has changed hands.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***In Bid to Rally the Left in His Runoff With Le Pen, Macron Pledges Climate Action***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657S-PK11-DXY4-X2DP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 17, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 11

**Length:** 1321 words

**Byline:** By Constant Méheut

**Body**

France's president is trying to tap into the country's large pool of left-wing voters, but many are hesitant to back him.

MARSEILLE, France -- On a stage erected on lush green lawns overlooking the sun-soaked Mediterranean port of Marseille, President Emmanuel Macron declared on Saturday to a crowd of supporters, ''The politics that I will carry out in the next five years will be environmental, or will not be!''

It was an ambitious promise for a president whose green policies have been criticized at repeated climate protests, condemned by courts for ''inaction'' and marked by failure to meet goals. But above all, Mr. Macron's vow was a direct appeal to voters to his left, who hold the key to a final victory in the second round of the presidential election -- and for whom climate has become a key issue.

Mr. Macron devoted about three-quarters of his hour-and-a-half speech to environmental issues. He promised to appoint ministers responsible for long-term environmental planning, to plant 140 million trees by 2030 and to rapidly cut dependence on oil and gas by developing nuclear and renewable energy.

''Inaction -- not for me!'' he told a cheering crowd of some 4,000 people who gathered in the Parc du Pharo, on the heights of Marseille, for what was possibly Mr. Macron's last rally before the April 24th vote.

The event symbolized Mr. Macron's strategy for the runoff between the centrist incumbent and his far-right opponent, Marine Le Pen: wooing the left with progressive policies and campaigning in ***working-class*** cities where he is trying to shed his image as an aloof president detached from everyday realities. If large numbers of left-wing voters stay home for the second round of voting, or migrate to Ms. Le Pen's camp, it could spell serious trouble for Mr. Macron.

Stewart Chau, an analyst for the polling firm Viavoice, said Mr. Macron's main goal was to ''seek voters of Jean-Luc Mélenchon,'' the far-left candidate who came in third overall in the first round of voting -- but first in Marseille, with 31 percent of the vote.

In September, the president unveiled a multibillion-euro plan to tackle crime and poverty in Marseille.

Promising a ''complete renewal'' if he is re-elected, Mr. Macron also used his speech to attack Ms. Le Pen, accusing her of wanting to curtail freedom of the press, challenge gender equality and lead France out of the Europe Union. He is trying to revive the ''dam'' that mainstream voters have long formed by voting for anyone over a Le Pen -- either his current opponent or her father, Jean-Marie, leaders of the French far right since the 1970s.

Saturday's rally capped an intense week of campaigning for Mr. Macron, touring the country since Monday to make up for a lackluster initial campaign. Visiting only places where Ms. Le Pen or Mr. Mélenchon came out on top in the first round, he is risking engaging with angry residents, in an attempt to show that he, too, can feel their pain.

By contrast, Ms. Le Pen, who has long striven to soften her public image, has been more risk-averse, limiting her campaign trips this week. Instead, she has tried to cement her credibility with two news conferences on her institutional overhaul proposals and her foreign policy agenda.

But those events partly backfired after her party's refusal to accredit some media outlets caused a stir, and as she detailed contentious plans to seek rapprochement with Russia and quit NATO's integrated military command.

Ms. Le Pen has been more exposed to scrutiny since another far-right candidate, Éric Zemmour, failed to make the runoff. His incendiary comments opposing immigration and Islam drew much of the attention away from Ms. Le Pen, who has long been known for similar stances.

''The form confronts the substance,'' said Mr. Chau, the analyst, adding that Ms. Le Pen's sanitized image now clashed with ''the reality of her ideas, which are anything but appeased, anything but softened.''

At a rally on Thursday in the southern city of Avignon, Ms. Le Pen mentioned immigration only three times, despite it being the cornerstone of her platform. She has proposed deporting foreigners after they have been unemployed for one year, giving priority to native-born French for social housing and benefits, and abolishing the right to citizenship through birth in France.

Her supporters were blunter. ''She still wants to kick out the immigrants,'' said Aline Vincent, a French flag in her right hand, who attended Ms. Le Pen's rally along with about 4,000 others. ''But she doesn't say it the same way.''

In Marseille, Daniel Beddou, said he ''was very worried'' about the rise of the far right. Holding a European flag in his left hand, he said he was pleased by Mr. Macron's environmental plans. He said they embodied the president's ''at the same time'' approach, referring to his habit of borrowing policies from both the left and right.

As he appeals to the 7.7 million voters who backed Mr. Mélenchon in the first round and appear to hold the key to a final victory, Mr. Macron has toned down some of his proposals, like a plan to raise the legal retirement age to 65 from 62, which he now says could be softened.

On Saturday, he also insisted on long-term ''environmental planning'' -- a concept that was a cornerstone of Mr. Mélenchon's platform -- promising to appoint a minister ''directly responsible'' for it, assisted by two ministers in charge of the energy and environmental transition.

''There's a real willingness to speak to a ***working-class*** electorate, a left-wing electorate that we lacked in the first round,'' said Sacha Houlié, a lawmaker and spokesman for Mr. Macron's campaign.

To what extent Mr. Macron's last-minute leftward tilt will yield results at the ballot box remains to be seen.

Many voters remain disillusioned by Mr. Macron's tack to the right in recent years. François Dosse, a French historian and philosopher who was one of Mr. Macron's most enthusiastic supporters in the last election, said his tough stance on immigration and against Islamic extremism amounted to ''recycling the fears of the far right'' and indirectly lending credence to Ms. Le Pen's discourse.

''It's about playing Russian roulette,'' Mr. Dosse said of Mr. Macron's strategy of triangulating France's electoral landscape. ''And it's a dangerous game in which one can lose -- and lose democracy.''

Mr. Macron won just 28 percent of the vote last week, to 23 percent for Ms. Le Pen and 22 percent for Mr. Mélenchon, with a host of others trailing behind. Already, some voters are considering sitting out Round 2, disappointed by the incumbent's record.

''In 2017, he was a fresh face, he was young, he was ambitious -- but in the end, he didn't do anything,'' said Nadia Mebrek, a 48-year-old Mélenchon supporter, adding she would likely abstain. She was standing in the Rue d'Aubagne, where two buildings collapsed in 2018, killing eight people -- a testament to Marseille's endemic housing and poverty crisis.

''Macron, he protects the rich more than the poor,'' said Ms. Mebrek, who as a personal care assistant has always been paid only the minimum wage.

Polls show that only a third of Mr. Mélenchon's supporters would back Mr. Macron in the runoff to keep Ms. Le Pen from power, with the rest split between a vote for Ms. Le Pen and abstention.

But the first week of the runoff campaign has seemed to favor Mr. Macron. Voter surveys show that his lead in the second round has widened. The French president would get 56 percent of the vote, compared with 44 for Ms. Le Pen -- his largest lead since late March.

In Marseille, many Mélenchon supporters like Nate Gasser, 26, said they would hold their noses and back Mr. Macron to defeat Ms. Le Pen. ''It annoys me to do that, but we'll vote for Macron,'' he said, insisting that it was not ''a vote of adherence.''

''And after that,'' he said, ''we'll take to the streets to protest.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/16/world/europe/french-election-macron-le-pen.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/16/world/europe/french-election-macron-le-pen.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Emmanuel Macron of France in Marseille on Saturday. Mr. Macron, trying to shed his image as a leader out of touch with everyday realities, promised a ''complete renewal'' if re-elected. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LUDOVIC MARIN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** April 17, 2022

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[***On the Fringe***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65D8-3991-JBG3-62BJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 8, 2022 Sunday

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 14; FICTION

**Length:** 712 words

**Byline:** By Stephen Kearse

**Body**

THE MEMORY LIBRARIAN And Other Stories of Dirty Computer By Janelle Monáe

Janelle Monáe's love of science fiction courses through her music like blood. The promotional artwork and music videos for her early albums and EPs pulled heavily from canonical sci-fi films such as ''Metropolis,'' ''Blade Runner'' and ''I, Robot,'' variously styling Monáe as a robot and android. Inspired by the alienation and oppression that artificial intelligence faces in these fictional worlds, Monáe channels her own experiences of estrangement as a queer, ***working-class*** Black woman into lush and theatrical songs about love under siege by an invasive state.

In her best work, these sci-fi flourishes blend seamlessly into her fusionist music, flavoring her ''neon gumbo'' but not defining it. ''The Memory Librarian,'' an anthology that adapts the themes of Monáe's 2018 album, ''Dirty Computer,'' into literature, lacks that proportion, its flimsy tales drenched in sci-fi tropes but thin on compelling storytelling. Co-authored with the established genre writers Sheree Renée Thomas, Alaya Dawn Johnson and Eve L. Ewing, and with the newcomers Yohanca Delgado and Danny Lore, ''The Memory Librarian'' offers five windows into an authoritarian world in which social deviants -- almost all of them queer, Black, poor women -- are relentlessly hunted and persecuted. The hunters are New Dawn, a nebulous ''techno-nationalist'' outfit that manages a sprawling surveillance operation.

Armed with drones, emotion trackers and other dystopian technology that allows them to edit memories, the group targets ''dirty computers'' for ''cleaning,'' euphemisms for eugenic erasure of unsavory past and current behaviors. Monáe has a clear interest in highlighting the margins of this bleak world, so the stories home in on fugitives from New Dawn, dwelling on the ways they defy their labeling and find love and fulfillment on the outskirts of society. The collection opens with ''Breaking Dawn,'' a preface that paints the characters to come as savvy resisters digging tunnels under border walls and deviously festering in the shadows. ''On the skin of it, the future's blemishes appeared to be clearing,'' Monáe writes, ''but they'd just been forced down into the sinews -- a righteous inflammation burning, a flagrant flame in the flesh.''

Unfortunately, the body politic implied by these corporeal terms (sinews, blemishes, flesh) never manifests in the storytelling. Monáe's outcasts -- daughters of a New Dawn victim, a queer commune hiding in a desert -- rebel against a curiously hollow core. Although two of the stories are novella-length, across the collection it never becomes clear whether New Dawn is the government, a company or a religious group. Nor does the public sentiment for New Dawn's methods ever get meaningfully articulated. Do ''clean'' people support the hunt for dirty computers? Are they aware the pogroms are happening? Do they benefit from New Dawn's mind wipes? Why does New Dawn even go to the trouble of capturing people and erasing their memories when it could just, you know, kill them?

Science fiction has historically -- and often unfairly -- been mocked for investing more brainpower into explaining elaborate systems than fleshing out the people who live within them, but ''The Memory Librarian'' fumbles both pursuits. There's so little explanation of the basic mechanisms of New Dawn's rule that the downtrodden main characters are deprived of agency and nuance. Their domestic and internal struggles, though rendered with meticulous attention to queer experiences and concerns, have no meaningful connection to their material circumstances.

''Timebox,'' the best story of the bunch, holds all the shaky world-building at arm's length. Its premise -- a pantry that exists outside of time -- is secondary to the probing of a troubled relationship between two women who discover the room when they move into their first shared apartment. The story is a subtle reminder that the worlds of science fiction don't have to be grandiose, epic or futuristic to be rich.Stephen Kearse is assistant editor at Spotlight PA and a contributing writer at The Nation.THE MEMORY LIBRARIANAnd Other Stories of Dirty ComputerBy Janelle Monáe321 pp. Harper Voyager. $28.99.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/19/books/review/janelle-monae-the-memory-librarian-and-other-stories-of-dirty-computer.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/19/books/review/janelle-monae-the-memory-librarian-and-other-stories-of-dirty-computer.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Janelle Monáe (PHOTOGRAPH BY JHEYDA MCGARRELL)

**Load-Date:** May 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[***And Now Their Troubles Are Ended***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66JM-S8W1-DXY4-X1HT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 7, 2022 Friday

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**Length:** 968 words

**Byline:** By James Poniewozik

**Body**

Netflix's riotous comedy brings its coming-of-age story to a close, along with a chapter in Northern Ireland's history.

''Derry Girls,'' the raucous Netflix comedy created by Lisa McGee, is about two long-simmering states of conflict: the Troubles in Northern Ireland and adolescence.

The series, which returns for its third and final season Friday, is first and foremost a brutally funny coming-of-age story, following five ***working-class*** friends at a Catholic girls' school in the 1990s. But the larger political battle is ever-present, even in the show's title. In the pilot, Erin (Saoirse-Monica Jackson) introduces herself, via a diary entry, as being 16 years old and living in ''Derry -- or Londonderry, depending on your persuasion.''

''Londonderry'' is the official name, preferred by Protestant unionists who support Northern Ireland's remaining part of the United Kingdom; ''Derry'' is how Erin's Catholic friends and neighbors know it. In the intro, the camera sails above youths spray-painting over the ''London-'' on a road sign, as a military vehicle passes and ''Dreams'' by the Cranberries plays on the soundtrack.

This is ''Derry Girls,'' made out of '90s pop and spray paint. It's a bubblegum-punk document of growing up in a conflict zone, with a feisty, optimistic spirit.

The earnest, awkward Erin and her friends -- ditsy Orla (Louisa Harland); bag of nerves Claire (Nicola Coughlan, ''Bridgerton''); brassy Michelle (Jamie-Lee O'Donnell); and Michelle's meek English cousin, James (Dylan Llewellyn) -- know the times they're living in. (In a running joke, each season opens with Erin's mock-dramatic narration about her generation's plight.) But their problems are teen problems: money, social status, breaking rules and evading Sister Michael (Siobhán McSweeney), their sardonic, suffer-no-fools headmistress.

Like a teenager in a strict school, McGee is an expert smuggler. In ''Derry Girls'' she has sewed a social-political commentary into the stuffing of a wild comedy.

Nearly every episode is built around a classic, gleefully executed sitcom premise -- a scam, a road trip, a wacky misunderstanding -- which inevitably spirals into an avalanche of poor decisions compounded by freakouts, ending, typically, in disciplinary action or perhaps a house fire.

But the antics are grounded by a lived sense of the teens' reality, and the spiky chemistry among the leads. McGee's writing is riotous and alive; the dialogue ricochets like a pinball and uses curse words like punctuation. (I regret that I cannot quote most of the best lines.) In ''Derry Girls,'' teen girlhood is imagined as a kind of unstable chemical reaction; its characters, delightfully, have absolutely no chill.

That they are also living in a place riven by sectarian violence is background noise, an intractable complication of daily life. In the pilot, the commute on the first day of school is complicated by a bomb scare. In a later episode, the friends sneak off to Belfast for a concert by the pop group Take That; Michelle brings a suitcase of vodka on the bus, then -- after she denies ownership of it to avoid getting busted for underage drinking -- the ''unclaimed bag'' causes an evacuation and is destroyed by the bomb squad.

Adolescence is itself a kind of bomb threat; it too has a ticking clock. The characters of ''Derry Girls'' are on the cusp of change, as is the place where they live. Season 2 ends with the 1995 visit to Northern Ireland by the U.S. president Bill Clinton to encourage the peace process. As Season 3 begins, the girls are facing what life might look like for them after graduation, even as Derry contemplates what might come after a peace agreement.

This theme gives the seven-episode final season a heightened sense of stakes, even as the chaos continues. One character is revealed to have a family member imprisoned because of the rebellion; more than one character is touched by death in the family.

Above everything looms adulthood. In the season premiere, the girls stress about their results on a crucial school exam, and Claire's meltdown captures their anxieties: ''Passing those exams was our only chance. We're girls. We're poor. We're from Northern Ireland. We're Catholic, for Christ's sake!'' (Coughlan's transformations into a fireball of molten panic are a joy to watch.)

The final season underscores the odds against the girls, with a remarkable episode that flashes back to their parents as members of the class of '77. The elders, who have been comic-support buffoons for much of the series, were once kids bursting with their own hormones and punk rebellion. (The episode features ''Teenage Kicks'' by Derry's the Undertones, introduced as ''our national anthem.'')

All this builds to the double-length finale, which takes place in 1998, when the girls are turning 18 and Northern Ireland is about to vote on the Good Friday Referendum, a power-sharing agreement between the warring factions. Maybe our heroines are just one generational link in a long chain of Derry girls and Derry women. But the finale suggests, buoyantly but not sappily, that things might be different -- or at least that it's essential to believe that they could be.

The relatively short run of ''Derry Girls,'' like that of many swift British comedies, allows it to condense adolescence into a fittingly packed space. So much happens in what, in retrospect, seems like such a short time. The series is able to end, pristine and in peak form, before the onset of implausible aging or the inevitable softening of characters that afflicts long-running sitcoms.

Don't get me wrong: I could gladly have watched 200 episodes of ''Derry Girls.'' But its speedy ending is in keeping with the show's unsentimental spirit. Like one's own teenage kicks, it couldn't go on forever.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/06/arts/television/derry-girls-season-3-netflix.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/06/arts/television/derry-girls-season-3-netflix.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, from left, Nicola Coughlan, Louisa Harland, Saoirse-Monica Jackson, Dylan Llewellyn and Jamie-Lee O'Donnell in Season 3 of ''Derry Girls.'' Above, Harland's ditsy Orla growing up in a conflict zone. (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA HAT TRICK PRODUCTIONS AND NETFLIX)

**Load-Date:** October 7, 2022

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[***Macron Vows Ambitious Green Policies, Wooing the Left in Runoff***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657K-XV11-DXY4-X1JB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 16, 2022 Saturday 14:36 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1346 words

**Byline:** Constant Méheut

**Highlight:** France’s president is trying to tap into the country’s large pool of left-wing voters, but many are hesitant to back him.

**Body**

France’s president is trying to tap into the country’s large pool of left-wing voters, but many are hesitant to back him.

MARSEILLE, France — On a stage erected on lush green lawns overlooking the sun-soaked Mediterranean port of Marseille, [*President Emmanuel Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/emmanuel-macron) declared on Saturday to a crowd of supporters, “The politics that I will carry out in the next five years will be environmental, or will not be!”

It was an ambitious promise for a president whose green policies [*have been criticized*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/30/world/europe/france-elite-universities-environment.html) at repeated [*climate protests*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/19/business/macron-france-climate-bill.html), [*condemned by courts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/03/world/europe/france-emissions-court.html) for “inaction” and marked by [*failure to meet goals*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/06/world/europe/france-climate-change-constitution.html). But above all, Mr. Macron’s vow was a direct appeal to voters to his left, who hold the key to a final victory in the second round of the [*presidential election*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/french-presidential-election) — and for whom climate has become a key issue.

Mr. Macron devoted about three-quarters of his hour-and-a-half speech to environmental issues. He promised to appoint ministers responsible for long-term environmental planning, to plant 140 million trees by 2030 and to rapidly cut dependence on oil and gas by developing nuclear and renewable energy.

“Inaction — not for me!” he told a cheering crowd of some 4,000 people who gathered in the Parc du Pharo, on the heights of Marseille, for what was possibly Mr. Macron’s last rally before the April 24th vote.

The event symbolized Mr. Macron’s strategy for the runoff between the centrist incumbent and his far-right opponent, Marine Le Pen: wooing the left with progressive policies and campaigning in ***working-class*** cities where he is trying to shed his image as an aloof president detached from everyday realities. If large numbers of left-wing voters stay home for the second round of voting, or migrate to Ms. Le Pen’s camp, it could spell serious trouble for Mr. Macron.

Stewart Chau, an analyst for the polling firm Viavoice, said Mr. Macron’s main goal was to “seek voters of Jean-Luc Mélenchon,” the [*far-left candidate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/26/world/europe/melenchon-france-election-left.html) who came in third overall [*in the first round*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/10/world/europe/french-presidential-election-macron-le-pen.html) of voting — but first in Marseille, with 31 percent of the vote.

In September, the president unveiled a multibillion-euro plan to tackle crime and poverty in Marseille.

Promising a “complete renewal” if he is re-elected, Mr. Macron also used his speech to attack Ms. Le Pen, accusing her of wanting to curtail freedom of the press, challenge gender equality and lead France out of the Europe Union. He is trying to revive the “[*dam*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/11/world/europe/french-presidential-election-macron-le-pen-far-fight.html)” that mainstream voters have long formed by voting for anyone over a Le Pen — either his current opponent or her father, Jean-Marie, leaders of the French far right since the 1970s.

Saturday’s rally capped an intense week of campaigning for Mr. Macron, [*touring the country since Monday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/world/europe/macron-le-pen-france-election.html) to make up for a [*lackluster initial campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/world/europe/emmanuel-macron-france-election-debate.html). Visiting only places where Ms. Le Pen or Mr. Mélenchon came out on top in the first round, he is risking engaging with angry residents, in an attempt to show that he, too, can feel their pain.

By contrast, Ms. Le Pen, [*who has long striven to soften her public image*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/world/europe/marine-le-pen-french-elections-macron.html), has been more risk-averse, limiting her campaign trips this week. Instead, she has tried to cement her credibility with two news conferences on her institutional overhaul proposals and her foreign policy agenda.

But those events partly backfired after her party’s refusal to accredit some media outlets caused a stir, and as she [*detailed contentious plans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/13/world/europe/le-pen-nato-russia-germany.html) to seek rapprochement with Russia and quit NATO’s integrated military command.

Ms. Le Pen has been more exposed to scrutiny since another far-right candidate, [*Éric Zemmour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/27/world/europe/eric-zemmour-france.html), failed to make the runoff. His [*incendiary comments opposing immigration and Islam*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/11/world/europe/eric-zemmour-rally-france.html) drew much of the attention away from Ms. Le Pen, who has long been known for similar stances.

“The form confronts the substance,” said Mr. Chau, the analyst, adding that Ms. Le Pen’s sanitized image now clashed with “the reality of her ideas, which are anything but appeased, anything but softened.”

At a rally on Thursday in the southern city of Avignon, Ms. Le Pen mentioned immigration only three times, despite it being the cornerstone of her platform. She has proposed deporting foreigners after they have been unemployed for one year, giving priority to native-born French for social housing and benefits, and abolishing the right to citizenship through birth in France.

Her supporters were blunter. “She still wants to kick out the immigrants,” said Aline Vincent, a French flag in her right hand, who attended Ms. Le Pen’s rally along with about 4,000 others. “But she doesn’t say it the same way.”

In Marseille, Daniel Beddou, said he “was very worried” about the rise of the far right. Holding a European flag in his left hand, he said he was pleased by Mr. Macron’s environmental plans. He said they embodied the president’s “at the same time” approach, referring to his habit of borrowing policies from both the left and right.

As he appeals to the 7.7 million voters who backed Mr. Mélenchon in the first round and appear to hold the key to a final victory, Mr. Macron has toned down some of his proposals, like a plan to raise the legal retirement age to 65 from 62, which he now says could be softened.

On Saturday, he also insisted on long-term “environmental planning” — a concept that was a cornerstone of Mr. Mélenchon’s platform — promising to appoint a minister “directly responsible” for it, assisted by two ministers in charge of the energy and environmental transition.

“There’s a real willingness to speak to a ***working-class*** electorate, a left-wing electorate that we lacked in the first round,” said Sacha Houlié, a lawmaker and spokesman for Mr. Macron’s campaign.

To what extent Mr. Macron’s last-minute leftward tilt will yield results at the ballot box remains to be seen.

Many voters remain disillusioned by [*Mr. Macron’s tack to the right in recent years*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/25/world/europe/france-macron-muslims-police-laws.html). François Dosse, a French historian and philosopher who was one of Mr. Macron’s most enthusiastic supporters in the last election, said his [*tough stance on immigration*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/06/world/europe/france-macron-immigration.html) and against [*Islamic extremism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/23/world/europe/france-terrorism-islamist-extremism-laws-passed.html) amounted to “recycling the fears of the far right” and indirectly lending credence to Ms. Le Pen’s discourse.

“It’s about playing Russian roulette,” Mr. Dosse said of Mr. Macron’s strategy of triangulating France’s electoral landscape. “And it’s a dangerous game in which one can lose — and lose democracy.”

Mr. Macron won just 28 percent of the vote last week, to 23 percent for Ms. Le Pen and 22 percent for Mr. Mélenchon, with a host of others trailing behind. Already, some voters are considering sitting out Round 2, disappointed by the incumbent’s record.

“In 2017, he was a fresh face, he was young, he was ambitious — but in the end, he didn’t do anything,” said Nadia Mebrek, a 48-year-old Mélenchon supporter, adding she would likely abstain. She was standing in the Rue d’Aubagne, where [*two buildings collapsed in 2018, killing eight people*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/world/europe/marseille-building-collapse-toll.html) — a testament to [*Marseille’s endemic housing and poverty crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/19/world/europe/france-marseille-building-collapse.html).

“Macron, he protects the rich more than the poor,” said Ms. Mebrek, who as a personal care assistant has always been paid only the minimum wage.

[*Polls*](https://www.ipsos.com/fr-fr/presidentielle-2022/1er-tour-intention-vote-2nd-tour) show that only a third of Mr. Mélenchon’s supporters would back Mr. Macron in the runoff to keep Ms. Le Pen from power, with the rest split between a vote for Ms. Le Pen and abstention.

But the first week of the runoff campaign has seemed to favor Mr. Macron. [*Voter surveys*](https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2022-04/Ipsos-Barometre_2022-15-04.pdf) show that his lead in the second round has widened. The French president would get 56 percent of the vote, compared with 44 for Ms. Le Pen — his largest lead since late March.

In Marseille, many Mélenchon supporters like Nate Gasser, 26, said they would hold their noses and back Mr. Macron to defeat Ms. Le Pen. “It annoys me to do that, but we’ll vote for Macron,” he said, insisting that it was not “a vote of adherence.”

“And after that,” he said, “we’ll take to the streets to protest.”

PHOTO: President Emmanuel Macron of France in Marseille on Saturday. Mr. Macron, trying to shed his image as a leader out of touch with everyday realities, promised a “complete renewal” if re-elected. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LUDOVIC MARIN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** April 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Everything Democrats Could Do if Warnock Wins; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6717-K2C1-JBG3-60C3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 5, 2022 Monday 09:40 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1253 words

**Byline:** Ross Barkan

**Highlight:** Once more, America’s fate is bound up in Georgia.

**Body**

Nearly two years ago, Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff won runoff elections in Georgia that allowed the new vice president, Kamala Harris, to be the Senate’s tiebreaking vote. Those victories were critical to unleashing a remarkable wave of legislation and spending.

Without Mr. Warnock and Mr. Ossoff, President Biden could not have made substantial investments in roads, bridges, public transportation and semiconductor chip manufacturing. He could not have permitted Medicare to negotiate the price of prescription drugs. He could not have taken tangible steps to combat climate change. The 2021 tranche of federal pandemic aid, today criticized for contributing to inflation, offered critical bailouts for local governments that headed off crippling layoffs and brutal cuts to public schools.

Now Mr. Warnock is [*locked in another runoff*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/21/us/politics/georgia-senate-runoff.html?searchResultPosition=5) on Dec. 6, this time against Herschel Walker, the former football star. The stakes feel lower for this one: Democrats are already guaranteed a Senate majority. And no matter the outcome in Georgia, Congress will be divided, with the House in the hands of Republicans.

Yet the outcome of Mr. Warnock’s contest matters significantly, for Democrats and Republicans alike — but especially for Democrats. They need Mr. Warnock in power for at least two overriding reasons: to safeguard their gains in the judiciary and to bolster their national bench.

Under President Donald Trump, Mitch McConnell was venerated — or denounced — for his efficient and cutthroat approach to ramming through Mr. Trump’s Supreme Court picks and confirming federal judges.

In four years, Mr. McConnell’s Senate majority confirmed three right-wing justices and [*234 new judges overall*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/trump-about-land-his-200th-judge-lasting-legacy-poised-reshape-n1231377), many of them youthful conservatives rubber-stamped by the Federalist Society. These Trump appointees can serve for the rest of their lives; it is plausible that some of them will still be remaking federal law 30 or 40 years from now. Most of these judges are avowed originalists, fiercely opposed to the “living Constitution” school that dominates liberal jurisprudence and allowed for all sorts of social progress that is now being turned back. The overturning of Roe v. Wade is the exemplar.

Since Democrats retook the Senate majority in 2021, Mr. Biden has undertaken his own successful counteroffensive, in tandem with Chuck Schumer, the Senate majority leader. Mr. Schumer’s Senate has actually confirmed federal judges at a faster rate than Mr. McConnell’s at the time of the first midterm election. So far, over 85 judges appointed by Mr. Biden have been confirmed, including a new Supreme Court justice, Ketanji Brown Jackson. The judges, overall, are traditional liberals, many of them younger and nonwhite. Mr. Biden and Mr. Schumer were willing to elevate judges who were former public defenders, an unlikely prospect in the law-and-order 20th century.

If Mr. Warnock wins, the Senate can move more rapidly and seek judges who are perhaps more progressive in their worldviews — the sort who could hit a snag if someone like Joe Manchin, the centrist from West Virginia, or Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona is the deciding vote.

Democrats must evenly split committee members in the 50-50 Senate, giving Republicans the power to delay votes on judges. A 51-49 majority would be much more dominant: Committees like the judiciary would be stacked with Democrats, greatly speeding up the confirmation process. There [*are about 75 vacancies*](https://www.uscourts.gov/judges-judgeships/judicial-vacancies) on U.S. District Courts and nine at the appellate level. That number is bound to grow as more judges retire in the next two years.

Democrats, with Mr. Warnock, could also be in position to replace a Supreme Court justice. The 6-3 conservative majority makes this seem less pressing, but Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s death was a lesson that Stephen Breyer, who retired this year, seemed to heed: Once you’re of retirement age, it’s best to leave the court if an ideologically friendly president and Senate majority are in control.

Sonia Sotomayor is 68 and Elena Kagan is 62. Both can serve for decades, but Democrats have to think seriously about the practical advantage of installing liberal justices who are in their 40s or early 50s. Amy Coney Barrett was confirmed at 48; Neil Gorsuch was 49. Justice Breyer wisely gave way to Justice Jackson. Perhaps Justice Sotomayor, at least, should give thought to stepping aside with Mr. Biden in the White House and Mr. Schumer guiding the Senate. With 51 votes, Mr. Schumer could steer through a judge who is as progressive as either Justice Sotomayor or Kagan, helping to nurture a liberal minority that could theoretically expand someday.

And then there’s 2024. If Mr. Walker defeats Mr. Warnock, Republicans will have an enormous advantage in their quest to not only flip the Senate but also build a durable majority that could last a generation or more. The 2024 map is foreboding for Democrats: Assuming they run for re-election, three incumbents represent states that Mr. Trump handily carried in 2020. Mr. Manchin, resented by the left, will have to find a way to win in deep-red West Virginia (Mr. Trump [*carried the state*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-west-virginia-president.html) in 2020 with nearly 70 percent of the vote). Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio (who has stated he will run) will have to win a state that has now twice voted for Mr. Trump and is sending J.D. Vance to Washington. Jon Tester of Montana has the daunting task of trying to win a rural state that has in recent years become inhospitable to Democrats for statewide offices.

A 51-49 majority is a better hedge against such a possible wipeout. It also gives Mr. Warnock a chance to shine on the national level and demonstrate whether he can become a formidable member of an expanding Democratic bench, the kind of senator who could end up president someday.

It’s tantalizing to consider whether the Georgia senator holds answers to the various major and minor crises looming over the future of the party. Mr. Warnock, like Barack Obama, is a Black politician who has proved he can weave together multiracial coalitions, retaining ***working-class*** support in communities of color while attracting some right-leaning voters and independents, many of them white. To finish just ahead of Mr. Walker in November, Mr. Warnock had to win over a sizable number of Georgians who were voting to re-elect the Republican governor, Brian Kemp. Mr. Warnock boasted repeatedly of his bipartisan bona fides — his campaign is still actively courting Kemp voters, even as the governor stumps for Mr. Walker — while retaining enthusiasm from the Democratic base. He did this in part by being a reliable supporter of the Biden policy agenda in Washington, avoiding the posture of needless antagonism that made both Mr. Manchin and Ms. Sinema enemies of the left for much of the past two years.

Mr. Warnock enters the final stretch with [*three times*](https://www.opensecrets.org/news/2022/11/walker-warnock-u-s-senate-race-in-georgia-most-expensive-in-2022-cycle-as-runoff-intensifies/) as much cash on hand as Mr. Walker, who is lately trying to fend off a deluge of negative [*TV ads*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/29/us/politics/warnock-walker-georgia-ad.html?searchResultPosition=2) and allegations of carpetbagging. Once more, America’s fate is bound up in Georgia, and Mr. Warnock’s own political star may yet shine much brighter in the weeks to come.

Ross Barkan, a novelist, is a contributor to New York Magazine and The Nation.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 5, 2022

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[***Yes, the Polling Warning Signs Are Flashing Again***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66C9-W1M1-DXY4-X1N0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 12, 2022 Monday 16:53 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 901 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Democrats are polling well in exactly the places where surveys missed most in 2020.

**Body**

Democrats are polling well in exactly the places where surveys missed most in 2020.

Ahead of the last presidential election, we created [*a website*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden) tracking the latest polls — internally, we called it a “polling diary.” Despite a tough polling cycle, one feature proved to be particularly helpful: a table showing what would happen if the 2020 polls were as “wrong” as they were in 2016, when pollsters systematically underestimated Donald J. Trump’s strength against Hillary Clinton.

The table proved eerily prescient. Here’s what it looked like on Election Day in 2020, plus a new column with the final result. As you can see, the final results were a lot like the poll estimates “with 2016-like poll error.”

We created this poll error table for a reason: Early in the 2020 cycle, we noticed that Joe Biden seemed to be outperforming Mrs. Clinton in the same places where the polls overestimated her four years earlier. That pattern didn’t necessarily mean the polls would be wrong — it could have just reflected Mr. Biden’s promised strength among white ***working-class*** voters, for instance — but it was a warning sign.

That warning sign is flashing again: Democratic Senate candidates are outrunning expectations in the same places where the polls overestimated Mr. Biden in 2020 and Mrs. Clinton in 2016.

Wisconsin is a good example. On paper, the Republican senator Ron Johnson ought to be favored to win re-election. The FiveThirtyEight [*fundamentals index*](https://fivethirtyeight.com/methodology/how-fivethirtyeights-house-and-senate-models-work/), for instance, makes him a two-point favorite. Instead, the polls have exceeded the wildest expectations of Democrats. The state’s gold-standard Marquette Law School survey even [*showed*](https://law.marquette.edu/poll/2022/08/17/mlsp71-press-release/) the Democrat Mandela Barnes leading Mr. Johnson by seven percentage points.

But in this case, good for Wisconsin Democrats might be too good to be true. The state was ground zero for survey error in 2020, when pre-election polls proved to be too good to be true for Mr. Biden. In the end, the polls overestimated Mr. Biden by about eight percentage points. Eerily enough, Mr. Barnes is faring better than expected by a similar margin.

The Wisconsin data is just one example of a broader pattern across the battlegrounds: The more the polls overestimated Mr. Biden last time, the better Democrats seem to be doing relative to expectations. And conversely, Democrats are posting less impressive numbers in some of the states where the polls were fairly accurate two years ago, like Georgia.

If you put this relationship on a chart — Beware, my editors have permitted me to include somewhat challenging scatterplots on occasion — you see a consistent link between Democratic strength today and polling error two years ago.

It raises the possibility that the apparent Democratic strength in Wisconsin and elsewhere is a mirage — an artifact of persistent and unaddressed biases in survey research.

If the polls are wrong yet again, it will not be hard to explain. Most pollsters haven’t made significant methodological changes since the last election. The major polling community post-mortem [*declared*](https://www.aapor.org/Education-Resources/Reports/2020-Pre-Election-Polling-An-Evaluation-of-the-202.aspx) that it was “impossible” to definitively ascertain what went wrong in the 2020 election.

The pattern of Democratic strength isn’t the only sign that the polls might still be off in similar ways. Since the Supreme Court’s Dobbs decision on abortion, some pollsters have said they’re seeing the familiar signs of nonresponse bias — when people who don’t respond to a poll are meaningfully different from those who participate — creeping back into their surveys.

Brian Stryker, a partner at Impact Research (Mr. Biden is a client), told me that his polling firm was getting “a ton of Democratic responses” in recent surveys, especially in “the familiar places” where the polls have erred in recent cycles.

None of this means the polls are destined to be as wrong as they were in 2020. Some of the polling challenges in 2020 might have since subsided, such as the greater likelihood that liberals were [*at home*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/10/upshot/polls-what-went-wrong.html) (and thus more likely to take polls) during the pandemic. And historically, it has been hard to anticipate polling error simply by looking at the error from the previous cycle. For example, the polls in 2018 [*weren’t so bad*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/21/upshot/polls-2018-midterms-accuracy.html).

Some pollsters are making efforts to deal with the challenge. Mr. Stryker said his firm was “restricting the number of Democratic primary voters, early voters and other super-engaged Democrats” in their surveys. The New York Times/Siena College polls take similar steps.

But the pattern is worth taking seriously after what happened two years ago.

With that in mind, here’s an update of the table from 2020, with the polling averages in nine states the Cook Political Report [*describes*](https://www.cookpolitical.com/ratings/senate-race-ratings) as competitive. If the polls are just as wrong as they were in 2020, the race for the Senate looks very different.

The apparent Democratic edge in Senate races in Wisconsin, North Carolina and Ohio would evaporate. To take the chamber, Republicans would need any two of Georgia, Arizona, Nevada or Pennsylvania. With Democrats today well ahead in Pennsylvania and Arizona, the fight for control of the chamber would come down to very close races in Nevada and Georgia.

Regardless of who was favored, the race for Senate control would be extremely competitive. Republican control of the House would seem to be a foregone conclusion.

PHOTO: The midterms are on Nov. 8, less than two months away. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dustin Franz for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 13, 2022

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[***100 Notable Books of 2022***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6712-4J51-DXY4-X1Y1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 4, 2022 Sunday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; Books

**Length:** 1264 words

**Byline:** By The New York Times Books Staff

**Body**

You don't need to have read Egan's Pulitzer-winning ''A Visit From the Goon Squad'' to jump feet first into this much-anticipated sequel. But for lovers of the 2010 book's prematurely nostalgic New Yorkers, cerebral beauty and laser-sharp take on modernity, ''The Candy House'' is like coming home -- albeit to dystopia. This time around, Egan's characters are variously the creators and prisoners of a universe in which, through the wonders of technology, people can access their entire memory banks and use the contents as social media currency. The result is a glorious, hideous fun house that feels more familiar than sci-fi, all rendered with Egan's signature inventive confidence and -- perhaps most impressive of all -- heart. ''The Candy House'' is of its moment, with all that implies.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

Bennett, a British writer who makes her home in Ireland, first leaped onto the scene with her 2015 debut novel, ''Pond.'' Her second book contains all of the first's linguistic artistry and dark wit, but it is even more exhilarating. ''Checkout 19,'' ostensibly the story of a young woman falling in love with language in a ***working-class*** town outside London, has an unusual setting: the human mind -- a brilliant, surprising, weird and very funny one. All the words one might use to describe this book -- experimental, autofictional, surrealist -- fail to convey the sheer pleasure of ''Checkout 19.'' You'll come away dazed, delighted, reminded of just how much fun reading can be, eager to share it with people in your lives. It's a love letter to books, and an argument for them, too.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

Kingsolver's powerful new novel, a close retelling of Charles Dickens's ''David Copperfield'' set in contemporary Appalachia, gallops through issues including childhood poverty, opioid addiction and rural dispossession even as its larger focus remains squarely on the question of how an artist's consciousness is formed. Like Dickens, Kingsolver is unblushingly political and works on a sprawling scale, animating her pages with an abundance of charm and the presence of seemingly every creeping thing that has ever crept upon the earth.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

After losing her brother when she was 12, one of the narrators of Serpell's second novel keeps coming across men who resemble him as she works through her trauma long into adulthood. She enters an intimate relationship with one of them, who's also haunted by his past. This richly layered book explores the nature of grief, how it can stretch or compress time, reshape memories and make us dream up alternate realities. ''I don't want to tell you what happened,'' the narrator says. ''I want to tell you how it felt.''Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

Diaz uncovers the secrets of an American fortune in the early 20th century, detailing the dizzying rise of a New York financier and the enigmatic talents of his wife. Each of the novel's four parts, which are told from different perspectives, redirects the narrative (and upends readers' expectations) while paying tribute to literary titans from Henry James to Jorge Luis Borges. Whose version of events can we trust? Diaz's spotlight on stories behind stories seeks out the dark workings behind capitalism, as well as the uncredited figures behind the so-called Great Men of history. It's an exhilarating pursuit.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble\_\_\_\_\_\_

Yong certainly gave himself a formidable task with this book -- getting humans to step outside their ''sensory bubble'' and consider how nonhuman animals experience the world. But the enormous difficulty of making sense of senses we do not have is a reminder that each one of us has a purchase on only a sliver of reality. Yong is a terrific storyteller, and there are plenty of surprising animal facts to keep this book moving toward its profound conclusion: The breadth of this immense world should make us recognize how small we really are.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

In this quietly wrenching memoir, Hsu recalls starting out at Berkeley in the mid-1990s as a watchful music snob, fastidiously curating his tastes and mercilessly judging the tastes of others. Then he met Ken, a Japanese American frat boy. Their friendship was intense, but brief. Less than three years later, Ken would be killed in a carjacking. Hsu traces the course of their relationship -- one that seemed improbable at first but eventually became a fixture in his life, a trellis along which both young men could stretch and grow.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

In this rich and nuanced book, Aviv writes about people in extreme mental distress, beginning with her own experience of being told she had anorexia when she was 6 years old. That personal history made her especially attuned to how stories can clarify as well as distort what a person is going through. This isn't an anti-psychiatry book -- Aviv is too aware of the specifics of any situation to succumb to anything so sweeping. What she does is hold space for empathy and uncertainty, exploring a multiplicity of stories instead of jumping at the impulse to explain them away.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

Through case histories as well as independent reporting, Villarosa's remarkable third book elegantly traces the effects of the legacy of slavery -- and the doctrine of anti-Blackness that sprang up to philosophically justify it -- on Black health: reproductive, environmental, mental and more. Beginning with a long personal history of her awakening to these structural inequalities, the journalist repositions various narratives about race and medicine -- the soaring Black maternal mortality rates; the rise of heart disease and hypertension; the oft-repeated dictum that Black people reject psychological therapy -- as evidence not of Black inferiority, but of racism in the health care system.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

O'Toole, a prolific essayist and critic, calls this inventive narrative ''a personal history of modern Ireland'' -- an ambitious project, but one he pulls off with élan. Charting six decades of Irish history against his own life, O'Toole manages to both deftly illustrate a country in drastic flux, and include a sly, self-deprecating biography that infuses his sociology with humor and pathos. You'll be educated, yes -- about increasing secularism, the Celtic tiger, human rights -- but you'll also be wildly, uproariously entertained by a gifted raconteur at the height of his powers.Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & NobleWhen you purchase an independently reviewed book through our site, we earn an affiliate commission.Illustration by Rozalina Burkova. Design and development by Leo Dominguez and Rumsey Taylor. Produced by Shreya Chattopadhyay, Joumana Khatib and Miguel Salazar.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/22/books/notable-books.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/22/books/notable-books.html)

**Load-Date:** December 4, 2022

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[***The Rise of Eric Adams and Black New York; Mara Gay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64C6-6YV1-JBG3-64VV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 22, 2021 Wednesday 22:53 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1801 words

**Byline:** Mara Gay

**Highlight:** Eric Adams’s winning coalition shows how the city’s power structure has changed.

**Body**

It was winter in Black New York, and the last thing Eric Leroy Adams wanted to do was join the New York Police Department.

It was the early 1980s and waves of joblessness and crime were sweeping over ***working-class*** areas of the city. In Black neighborhoods, the Police Department, still [*overwhelmingly white*](https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/Digitization/121490NCJRS.pdf), had become an occupying force, deepening the misery and the injustice.

Inside a Brooklyn church, the Rev. Herbert Daughtry, a [*veteran*](https://amsterdamnews.com/news/2015/01/29/rev-herbert-daughtry-celebrated-sage/) of the civil rights movement, told a young Mr. Adams, then a local college student, that it was time to join the N.Y.P.D. The Black community, Mr. Daughtry said, needed someone to make change from the inside.

“You got to be out of your mind,” Mr. Adams recalls telling Mr. Daughtry.

On Jan. 1, when Mr. Adams, 61, is sworn in as mayor, Mr. Daughtry’s vision will be realized. ***Working-class*** Black New York, which makes up the heart of the Democratic base but has long been shut out of City Hall, will finally have its moment.

To many, the future mayor is still an enigma. He talks of law and order, but also Black Lives Matter. He courts Wall Street, then travels to Ghana to be [*spiritually cleansed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/10/nyregion/eric-adams-ghana.html). He [*parties*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-03/eric-adams-mingles-with-ceos-rappers-in-noho-after-mayoral-win) late into the night alongside the rapper Ja Rule and the former Google chief executive Eric Schmidt. His talent and intellect are obvious. But he sounds nothing like Barack Obama.

What exactly Mr. Adams intends to do once at City Hall is unclear. What is certain for now is that Mr. Adams knows who sent him there.

New York’s Black Democratic base had endured a plague and [*marched*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/07/nyregion/nyc-protests-george-floyd.html) for Black lives. They had kept the city going, along with municipal workers of all backgrounds, while wealthier New Yorkers remained safely at home. They had felt the [*rise*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/14/nyregion/shootings-nyc-covid.html) in violence in their neighborhoods, and seen the resurgence of white supremacy under President Donald Trump. Their choice for mayor was Eric Adams.

In his victory speech in November, Mr. Adams said his election belonged to the city’s working poor. “I am you. I am you. After years of praying and hoping and struggling and working, we are headed to City Hall,” Mr. Adams boomed. “It is proof that people of this city will love you if you love them.”

New York’s first Black mayor, [*David Dinkins*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/nyregion/david-dinkins-dead.html), died last year at the age of 93. A soft-spoken Marine, in his signature bow tie, he made plain he intended to serve the entire city, which he famously called a “gorgeous mosaic.” Mr. Dinkins served just one term in office and was [*ousted*](https://www.nytimes.com/1993/11/03/nyregion/1993-elections-mayor-giuliani-ousts-dinkins-thin-margin-whitman-upset-winner.html) by Rudy Giuliani in 1993 in an election fraught with [*racist backlash*](https://www.nytimes.com/1992/09/17/nyregion/officers-rally-and-dinkins-is-their-target.html). It was a bitter defeat Black New York would never forget.

Mr. Dinkins was part of a storied tradition of Black politicians from Harlem that included [*Adam Clayton Powell Jr.*](https://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/11/28/remembering-adam-clayton-powell-jr/), [*Charles Rangel*](https://history.house.gov/People/Listing/R/RANGEL,-Charles-B--(R000053)/), [*Percy Sutton*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/28/nyregion/28sutton.html), and [*Basil Paterson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/18/nyregion/basil-a-paterson-harlem-leader-and-father-of-a-governor-dies-at-87.html). The political club swung Black votes in the city for more than a generation.

Mr. Adams’s pathway to Gracie Mansion runs through a different New York.

He was born in the Brownsville area of Brooklyn, among the poorest neighborhoods in the city. Later, the family moved to South Jamaica, a largely Black enclave in Queens. Like many of his neighbors, Mr. Adams grew up poor, the fourth of six children of Dorothy Mae Adams, a single mother who worked cleaning houses, and later, at a day care center.

At 15, Mr. Adams was arrested on a criminal trespass charge for entering the home of an acquaintance. He has [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/05/opinion/we-must-stop-police-abuse-of-black-men.html) he was beaten so severely by police officers that his urine was filled with blood for a week.

Several years later, Mr. Adams met Mr. Daughtry. The pastor was recruiting young Black New Yorkers to organize Brooklyn’s struggling communities as part of the [*National Black United Front*](https://africanactivist.msu.edu/organization.php?name=National+Black+United+Front), a Black empowerment group.

“It was a tough time,” Mr. Daughtry, now 90 years old, said in a phone interview. Mr. Adams stood out. “He was rather precocious,” Mr. Daughtry said. “He didn’t just want a job. He was concerned about the lack of progress, the gang violence, the addiction.”

Mr. Adams joined the Police Department in 1984 and served 22 years there. He co-founded 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care, a group that protested police brutality. He also served as president of the Grand Council of Guardians, a statewide group of Black law enforcement officials.

He was protesting police brutality in the late 1980s when he met the Rev. Al Sharpton. Both were the sons of single mothers who had arrived in New York from Alabama.

And both men said they reveled in eschewing the snobbishness exuded by the Black elite: a small but dazzling world of the powerful — if not always wealthy — shaped by historic college fraternities and sororities, and exclusive societies like the Sigma Pi Phi fraternity and the Links. The groups were created in the depths of segregation to help members network and uplift the Black community. Some of the organizations are over a century old.

“Me and Eric used to tease each other,” Mr. Sharpton told me recently. “I used to say, ‘You’re the guy with the patrolman’s hat and I’m the guy with the conked hair style like James Brown, and we do not care if the bougies don’t like us,’” he said. “We used to laugh about that.”

Mr. Dinkins was a member of Sigma Pi Phi, also known as the Boulé (pronounced boo-lay). That fraternity, among the most exclusive of the bunch, counted the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as a member. Percy Sutton, who as Manhattan borough president was once the highest ranking Black elected official in New York, belonged to Kappa Alpha Psi — one of the “Divine Nine” historically Black fraternities and sororities. Representative Hakeem Jeffries is also a member of Kappa Alpha Psi. Former Representative Charles Rangel is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha but joined Boulé only several years ago (“They never invited me” before that, he said). Vice President Kamala Harris is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha.

“I’m not part of any of those things, you know what I’m saying?” Mr. Adams told me. “But the energy and spirit they bring, we need that.”

By 2006, Mr. Adams had risen to the rank of captain, but his public advocacy had made him a thorn in the side of the Police Department’s clubby, white male brass. He left the department and was quickly elected to the State Senate. In 2013, he was elected Brooklyn borough president, a largely ceremonial role — but a good launching pad for a campaign for mayor.

In the decades since David Dinkins had left office, the center of Black life and political power had shifted firmly from Harlem to Brooklyn. Letitia James, the state attorney general, is from Brooklyn. Jumaane Williams, the city’s public advocate, is also from Brooklyn. Representative Jeffries represents part of the borough, as well as a part of Queens.

Making the rise of these Black politicians possible was a decades-long shift to an increasingly diverse electorate from one that had once been dominated by white voters. Some white Democrats have proven more willing to vote for Black candidates. The changes have turned Brooklyn into a political powerhouse.

In 2013, that Brooklyn coalition, led by Black voters, sent Mayor Bill de Blasio to Gracie Mansion.

Then, in early 2020, the pandemic hit New York City, claiming tens of thousands of lives. It killed people from all walks of life, but hit especially hard in the minority and immigrant communities in the Democratic base. Every level of government, including City Hall, had failed them.

A year later, the Democratic primary included three major Black candidates. One of them, Maya Wiley, a progressive, garnered significant support. But ***working-class*** Black New York went with Mr. Adams, handing him a narrow victory. Basil Smikle, director of the public policy program at Hunter College, said they wanted someone who understood their everyday lives.

“The Dinkinses and the Obamas of the world, yes it’s aspirational, we’d all like our children to grow up to be them,” said Mr. Smikle, who is Black. “But to what extent do you know how people are living?”

Mr. Adams’s political showmanship doesn’t hurt.

In 2016, when Mr. Adams [*became a vegan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/02/well/an-inspiring-story-of-weight-loss-and-its-aftermath.html), reversing a diabetes diagnosis, he promoted the diet as a way to liberate Black Americans from the history of slavery and published a cookbook.

Years earlier, in the State Senate, Mr. Adams produced a dramatized video from his office encouraging parents to search their children’s belongings for contraband. “You don’t know what your child may be hiding,” Mr. Adams [*tells the camera*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sk2Wc4Y5CxE), pulling a gun out of a jewelry box. The stunt left political insiders giggling. But it demonstrated how deeply connected Mr. Adams was to the voters he represented.

“It is comical, but let me tell you, my mom would probably be nodding her head for the entire video,” said Zellnor Myrie, 35, who holds Mr. Adams’s former Senate seat, and was raised in the district by his mother.

Much of what appears to be paradoxical about Mr. Adams is, to Black Americans, just familiar.

“All of us have been at dinner with some uncle who talks about ‘Black on Black’ crime,” said Christina Greer, associate professor of political science at Fordham University. “We know Eric Adams.”

Yet, Mr. Adams is familiar to New Yorkers of many backgrounds. They recognize the swagger of the beat cop; the blunt cadence of southeast Queens, with its languorous vowels; the hustle and ambition found all over New York.

Starting Jan. 1, he will be mayor for the entire city. His support is expansive and includes large numbers of Asian, Latino and Orthodox Jewish voters. If he can cement this coalition, he may become a formidable force nationally in a Democratic Party hungry for stars.

Mr. Adams has also shown a savvy for courting The New York Post, announcing his pick for police commissioner — Nassau County chief of detectives Keechant Sewell, a Black Queens native — in the right-wing tabloid. Better to feed the beast, Mr. Adams understands, than let it maul you.

At his inner circle, though, is a tight-knit group of Black New Yorkers who have waited a generation for their shot to run City Hall.

Outside a public school in Brooklyn recently, Mr. Adams stood with David Banks, a veteran Black educator he tapped to serve as schools chancellor. “If 65 percent of white children were not reaching proficiency in this city, they would burn the city down,” Mr. Adams [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/09/nyregion/david-banks-schools-chancellor.html) to the enthusiastic, largely nonwhite crowd.

From the moneyed corners of Manhattan to the gracious brownstones of Cobble Hill, there is a creeping sense of shock: The new mayor is not necessarily speaking to them. Power in America’s largest city has changed hands.

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[***Never Complain, Never Explain***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63N0-TYK1-JBG3-62W2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 19, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 7; MAUREEN DOWD

**Length:** 961 words

**Byline:** By Maureen Dowd

**Body**

What ever happened to the good old-fashioned art of Owning It?

Our culture is awash in people who get called out for their behavior and then retreat behind some victim-y excuse. If you're going to go for it, go for it.

The ne plus ultra of this charade is Elizabeth Holmes, who is on trial for being a big fraud after she pretended to have invented a simpler, cheaper way to do blood tests with a finger prick.

Holmes plans to blame her behavior on ''a decade-long campaign of psychological abuse'' perpetuated by her former boyfriend and business partner, Ramesh ''Sunny'' Balwani -- a charge he denies.

In a Times guest essay, Ellen Pao, a former tech executive, suggested that, while Holmes should be held accountable, ''it can be sexist to hold her accountable for alleged serious wrongdoing and not hold an array of men accountable for reports of wrongdoing or bad judgment.''

Sexism this ain't, sisters. Holmes went for it. She became the youngest female self-made billionaire by spinning gold out of blood. She really put the con in Silicon Valley. And the Steve Jobs-wannabe in the black turtleneck was buoyed by many powerful men on her board -- including George Shultz, Henry Kissinger, Jim Mattis and David Boies -- who were rooting for a young woman to break into the club of boy geniuses conjuring unicorns.

Balwani will also be tried on fraud charges in January. But Holmes was no delicate flower.

''If you release a buggy software program before it's ready, no one's going to die,'' John Carreyrou, the Wall Street Journal reporter who broke the story and wrote the best seller ''Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup,'' told me. (He has a podcast by the same name.) ''Holmes was operating a medical device start-up. She commercialized a product that patients and doctors relied on to make important health decisions. She was gambling with people's lives.''

Of the allegations that Balwani abused her and ''held her in his psychological grip,'' Carreyrou said that based on his reporting and research, ''I don't buy it. Everyone I talked to who worked at Theranos and observed them closely said it was a partnership of equals and if anyone had the last say, it was Elizabeth. She controlled 99.7 percent of the voting rights.''

Sexism exists. But we shouldn't reorient our society so that people can simply wrap themselves in an identity cloak when identity is not the issue. Virtue should not be defined by who you are, putting you beyond reproach and preventing judgments about what you did. That would leave whole sectors of society exempt from moral evaluation.

That brings us to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. She said her ''Tax the Rich'' turn at the Met gala ''punctured the 4th wall of excess and spectacle.'' Sure, whatever.

Maybe it wasn't what Karl Marx had in mind. Bernie Sanders wouldn't have done it. But if A.O.C. wanted to get glammed up and pal around with the ruling class at an event that's the antithesis of all she believes in, a gala that makes every thoughtful American feel like Robespierre, she should have just gone for it.

Don a beautiful dress, let helpers carry the train, have fun and ignore the inevitable charges of hypocrisy. She should have adopted the philosophy of another frequent guest of that gala, Kate Moss: never complain, never explain.

Instead, A.O.C. tried to have it both ways. The socialist Jackie O. Vogued in a virtue-signaling garment with an anodyne slogan, expressing a view that a majority of Americans already hold.

Rather than Owning It, she put out a bloviating statement on Instagram, chalking up all criticism to sexism and racism.

''Honestly our culture is deeply disdainful and unsupportive of women, especially women of color and ***working class*** women (And LGBTQ/immigrant/etc),'' she wrote. Really, the ***working-class*** card, at the Met gala? She added: ''The more intersections one has, the deeper the disdain. I am so used to doing the same exact thing that men do -- including popular male progressive elected officials -- and getting a completely different response.''

I found this statement to be at the intersection of disingenuous and hilarious, coming from the woman who is a phenomenon and a trailblazer in wielding image and social media to her advantage.

Her response was cynical. And it wasn't the first time that she had failed to consider that people can disagree with her without disagreeing with her identity.

Two years ago, after she and three other progressive congresswomen voted against the House's version of a border bill, Nancy Pelosi said that they were simply four people with four votes.

A.O.C. riposted with the absurd charge that Pelosi was targeting ''newly elected women of color,'' smearing the speaker, who has spent her life battling for the downtrodden and who helped lift Barack Obama into the Oval Office and pass his health care bill.

A.O.C. wasn't the only House member in the past week who failed to Own It. Pramila Jayapal was the subject of a BuzzFeed News investigation in which former staffers described ''a serious disconnect between how she talks about workers' rights and how she treats her own staff.''

Her current chief of staff, Lilah Pomerance, deflected: ''Women of color are often unjustly targeted, regularly held to higher standards than their male colleagues, and always put under a sexist microscope.''

If you want to behave like Miranda Priestly (or Amy Klobuchar) with your staff, Own It.

That's all.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/18/opinion/elizabeth-holmes-AOC-dress.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/18/opinion/elizabeth-holmes-AOC-dress.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jamie McCarthy/MG21 -- Vogue, via Getty Images for The Met Museum FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Never Complain, Never Explain; Maureen Dowd***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63MT-53W1-JBG3-62HK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 18, 2021 Saturday 10:31 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 965 words

**Byline:** Maureen Dowd

**Highlight:** Drop the Identity Cloak when identity is not the issue. (And tax the rich!)

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[***Left With Few Options, Biden Freely Approves Alaska Drilling Project***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67SB-5861-DXY4-X3PF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 11

**Length:** 1687 words

**Byline:** By Lisa Friedman

**Body**

High gas prices, a looming election and fears of a costly legal battle seem to have shifted the political calculus for the president.

WASHINGTON -- As a candidate, Joseph R. Biden promised voters worried about the warming planet ''No more drilling on federal lands, period. Period, period, period.'' On Monday, President Biden approved an enormous $8 billion plan to extract 600 million barrels of oil from pristine federal land in Alaska.

The distance between Mr. Biden's campaign pledge and his blessing on that plan, known as the Willow project, is explained by a global energy crisis, intense pressure from Alaska lawmakers (including the state's lone Democratic House member), a looming election year and a complicated legal landscape that government lawyers said left few choices for Mr. Biden.

Senator Lisa Murkowski, an Alaska Republican and one of the chief advocates for Willow, which is projected to generate 2,500 jobs and millions in revenue for her state, said the president was inclined to oppose it and ''needed to really be brought around.''

Mr. Biden was acutely aware of his campaign pledge, according to multiple administration officials involved in discussions over the past several weeks. Environmental activists had also openly warned that Mr. Biden's climate record, which includes making landmark investments in clean energy, would be undermined if he approved Willow, and that young voters in particular could turn against him.

Approval of the Willow project marks a turning point in the administration's approach to fossil fuel development. Until this point, the courts and Congress have forced Mr. Biden to sign off on some limited oil and gas leases. Willow would be one of the few oil projects that Mr. Biden has approved freely, without a court order or a congressional mandate.

And it comes as the International Energy Agency has said that governments must stop approving new oil, gas and coal projects if the planet is to avert the most catastrophic impacts of climate change.

Ultimately, the administration made the internal calculation that it did not want to fight ConocoPhillips, the company behind the Willow project.

ConocoPhillips has held leases to the prospective drilling site for more than two decades, and administration attorneys argued that refusing a permit would trigger a lawsuit that could cost the government as much as $5 billion, according to administration officials who asked not to be identified in order to discuss legal strategy.

''The lease does not give Conoco the right to do whatever they want, but it does convey certain rights,'' said John Leshy, who served as the Interior Department's solicitor under President Bill Clinton. ''So the administration has to take that into account. I would not say their hands were tied, but their options were limited by the lease rights.''

The leases are essentially a contract and if the Biden administration denied the permits, essentially breached the contract, without what a court considered a valid argument, a judge would likely find in favor of the company, Mr. Leshy said. It would be unusual for a court to simply order the government to issue permits; more likely a judge would award damages, he said.

That figure could include not just compensation for investments ConocoPhillips has already made but also profits that the company could have gotten if it had been allowed to drill, Mr. Leshy said, putting a potential judgment into the billions of dollars.

Ms. Murkowski said she believed the legal argument was the turning point for Mr. Biden. ''There was no way around the fact that these were valid existing lease rights,'' she said. ''The administration was going to have to deal with that reality.''

To try to minimize the fallout, the Biden administration demanded concessions. It slashed the size of the project from five drilling sites to three. ConocoPhillips agreed to return to the government leases covering about 68,000 acres in the drilling area, which lies within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. And the administration said it would put in place new protections for a nearby coastal wetland known as Teshekpuk Lake. Those measures would effectively form a ''firewall'' that would prevent the Willow project from expanding, the administration said.

Mr. Biden also intends to designate about 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea in the Arctic Ocean near shore in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska as off limits for future oil and gas leasing. And the Interior Department plans to issue new rules to block oil and gas leases on more than 13 million of the 23 million acres that form the petroleum reserve.

But several of those measures could be revoked by a future administration, and none of them seemed to appease environmental groups, which termed the project a ''carbon bomb.''

''The announcement is nothing more than window dressing,'' Ben Jealous, president of the Sierra Club, said in an interview. ''If President Biden were sitting here I'd tell him don't spit on us and tell us that it's raining, Mr. President.''

He called the Willow approval ''a major breach of trust'' and warned that with it, Mr. Biden has alienated many of his supporters, particularly young voters.

''President Biden's decision to move forward with the Willow Project abandons the millions of young people who overwhelmingly came together to demand he stop the project and protect our futures,'' said Varshini Prakash, executive director of the Sunrise Movement, a youth-led climate change advocacy group.

Earthjustice, an environmental group, said it would sue to stop the project as soon as Wednesday and expects to be joined by several other organizations. Environmental groups argued that the administration had the legal authority to deny ConocoPhillips a permit and should have done so based on a federal environmental review that found ''substantial concerns'' about the project's impact on the climate, the danger it poses to freshwater sources and the way it threatens migratory birds, caribou, whales and other animals that inhabit the region.

The Willow project would be constructed on the nation's largest swath of undeveloped land, about 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle.

Some analysts said Mr. Biden's decision could ultimately help him with moderates and independents, given elevated gas prices amid an energy crisis created by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Republican attacks that Democratic climate policies are jeopardizing American energy independence.

''I think the White House feels the president has strong climate credentials now, but that he does need to reach out to ***working class*** voters in swing states who care about gasoline prices,'' said Paul Bledsoe, a former climate aide in the Clinton administration who now works at the Progressive Policy Institute, a think tank.

But Mr. Bledsoe said he also thought the administration needed to make a stronger case publicly that the Willow project will not make a large contribution to the climate crisis.

''The problem with climate is not supply, it's demand,'' he said. ''The world is awash in oil and other countries will supply the oil if we don't. The question is, can we reduce demand through substitute technologies? And that's where the administration has been very strong.''

The burning of oil produced by the Willow project would cause 280 million metric tons of carbon emissions, according to a federal analysis. On an annual basis, that would translate into 9.2 million metric tons of carbon pollution, equal to adding nearly two million cars to the roads each year. The United States, the second-biggest polluter on the planet after China, emits about 5.6 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide annually.

A key factor was the widespread support Willow enjoyed from lawmakers of both parties, including Mary Peltola, a Democrat and the state's first Alaska Native elected to Congress; labor unions; and most Indigenous groups in Alaska.

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Senator Dan Sullivan, Republican of Alaska, said administration officials have told lawmakers that they will defend the decision in court from environmental groups. Mr. Sullivan said the Alaska delegation and others were already preparing an amicus brief in defense of the decision.

''This is going to be the next hurdle, and it will be a big battle,'' Mr. Sullivan said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/13/climate/willow-biden-oil-climate.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/13/climate/willow-biden-oil-climate.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A photo provided by ConocoPhillips showed an exploratory drilling camp at the proposed site of the Willow oil project on Alaska's North Slope, top. Polar bears in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, above left. Climate activists have vehemently opposed the plan. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CONOCOPHILLIPS, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

SUSANNE MILLER/UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, VIA REUTERS

JASON ANDREW FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A11.

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Biden Wants South Carolina as First Primary***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:670K-CDK1-DXY4-X37F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 2, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 13

**Length:** 1264 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck and Reid J. Epstein

**Body**

Michigan would become the fifth primary. The plan came as the president asked that ''voters of color have a voice in choosing our nominee much earlier in the process.''

WASHINGTON -- President Biden and the Democratic National Committee are moving to radically reorder the party's presidential process by making South Carolina the first primary state in 2024, followed in order by Nevada and New Hampshire, Georgia and then Michigan.

The plan, announced by party officials at a dinner Thursday in Washington, signals the end of Iowa's long tenure as the Democrats' first nominating contest, and it represents an effort to elevate the diverse, ***working-class*** constituencies that powered Mr. Biden's primary victory in 2020.

The move would also be a reward for South Carolina, the state that saved Mr. Biden's candidacy two years ago after he came in fourth in Iowa and fifth in New Hampshire, both of which are smaller and have a higher percentage of white voters.

''We must ensure that voters of color have a voice in choosing our nominee much earlier in the process and throughout the entire early window,'' Mr. Biden wrote in a letter Thursday to members of the D.N.C.'s Rules and Bylaws Committee, a number of whom were stunned by the calendar proposals.

''Black voters in particular have been the backbone of the Democratic Party but have been pushed to the back of the early primary process,'' he said. ''We rely on these voters in elections but have not recognized their importance in our nominating calendar. It is time to stop taking these voters for granted, and time to give them a louder and earlier voice in the process.''

The letter went on to note bluntly, ''Our party should no longer allow caucuses as part of our nominating process.'' Iowa is a caucus state and does not hold a primary.

Iowa is still expected to remain the leadoff contest for Republicans, who have agreed to maintain the usual early-state order of Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Nevada.

Both Iowa and New Hampshire, whose famed diners and town commons are routinely overrun by candidates leading up to their nominating contests, have long promoted themselves as providing demanding tests of a candidate's authenticity, preparedness and ability to connect in small gatherings with highly discerning voters.

The new Democratic plan, by elevating several larger states, could reduce those opportunities and lead candidates instead to emphasize expensive advertising campaigns aimed at the broadest possible audiences.

''Small rural states like Iowa must have a voice in our presidential nominating process,'' said Ross Wilburn, the chairman of the Iowa Democratic Party. ''Democrats cannot forget about entire groups of voters in the heart of the Midwest without doing significant damage to the party for a generation.''

The proposal, reported first by The Washington Post, is subject to approval by the party's Rules and Bylaws Committee and then by the full D.N.C. early next year, and there may be technical and legal considerations for some of the states, including Republican-controlled Georgia. Some of those issues may be matters of discussion as the Rules Committee meets in Washington on Friday and Saturday.

The plan was met with furious pushback from New Hampshire, long accustomed to hosting the first primary as a matter of state law. Statements from several officials suggested a coming clash with the D.N.C., raising questions about how the party will enforce its final order should states try to jump the line.

''I strongly oppose the president's deeply misguided proposal, but make no mistake, New Hampshire's law is clear, and our primary will continue to be First in the Nation,'' Senator Maggie Hassan, Democrat of New Hampshire, said in a statement.

Ray Buckley, the chairman of the New Hampshire Democratic Party, declared that ''we will be holding our primary first.''

And in a joint statement, Senators Catherine Cortez Masto and Jacky Rosen of Nevada raised ''serious concerns'' about the proposed order, taking implicit swipes at South Carolina's overall conservative tilt as they argued that the kickoff contest ''should be held in a competitive, pro-labor state that supports voting access and reflects all of America's diversity.''

Nevada legislative leaders said in a statement that ''our new presidential primary will be held on Feb. 6 in 2024 and will continue to be held on the first Tuesday in February in future election cycles.''

But the president's preferences will carry enormous weight with the D.N.C., a group that often functions as the White House political arm. Mr. Biden urged the Rules and Bylaws Committee to review the calendar every four years ''to ensure that it continues to reflect the values and diversity of our party and our country.''

After Iowa's disastrous 2020 Democratic caucuses, in which the state struggled for days to deliver results, the D.N.C. embarked on a protracted effort to reassess how the party picks its presidential candidates. It invited states to apply to host the kickoff primaries amid concerns that Iowa, and to some extent New Hampshire, did not reflect the Democratic Party's diversity. The initiative led to an intense public and private lobbying effort involving high-ranking party and elected officials up and down the ballot.

The current leadoff states are Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and South Carolina, in that order, chosen to represent the four major regions of the country: the Midwest, Northeast, West and South.

Discussions throughout the process have involved several core questions: whether to replace Iowa, and if so, with either Michigan or Minnesota; the order of the early states, as Nevada sought to displace New Hampshire in the first primary; and whether a fifth state should be added to the early cluster.

Earlier this year, the committee adopted a framework that emphasized racial, ethnic, geographic and economic diversity and labor representation; raised questions about feasibility; and stressed the importance of general election competitiveness.

In the battle for the Midwest, some D.N.C. members worried -- and Minnesota Democrats have argued -- that having a large and expensive state like Michigan host a primary early in the nominating process could lead well-funded candidates to essentially camp out there and ignore the other states on the calendar.

That concern is less urgent, though, if Mr. Biden seeks re-election and avoids a contested nomination. He has said that he intends to run but plans to discuss the race with his family over the holidays and could announce a decision early next year.

Some Democrats have long been intrigued by the idea of promoting Michigan, a critical general election state that is home to diverse voter constituencies and a major labor presence. The Democratic sweep there in this year's midterm elections helped bolster that idea.

Earlier this week, the Michigan State Senate voted to move the primary from the second Tuesday in March to the second Tuesday in February.

''This president understands that any road to the White House goes through the heartland,'' said Representative Debbie Dingell, a Michigan Democrat who was heavily involved in pushing her state's bid, including by speaking with the White House. But she acknowledged that there were still crucial steps in the process.

''People are going to put up a fight,'' she said.

Lisa Lerer, Maggie Astor, Michael D. Shear and Blake Hounshell contributed reporting.Lisa Lerer, Maggie Astor, Michael D. Shear and Blake Hounshell contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/01/us/politics/biden-dnc-primary-south-carolina-2024.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/01/us/politics/biden-dnc-primary-south-carolina-2024.html)

**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page A13.

**Load-Date:** December 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***How Biden Got From ‘No More Drilling’ to Backing a Huge Project in Alaska***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67S6-MYN1-DXY4-X2XC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 13, 2023 Monday 16:52 EST

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**Section:** CLIMATE

**Length:** 1748 words

**Byline:** Lisa Friedman

**Highlight:** High gas prices, a looming election and fears of a costly legal battle seem to have shifted the political calculus for the president.

**Body**

High gas prices, a looming election and fears of a costly legal battle seem to have shifted the political calculus for the president.

WASHINGTON — As a candidate, Joseph R. Biden promised voters worried about the warming planet “No more drilling on federal lands, period. Period, period, period.” On Monday, President Biden [*approved an enormous*](https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/109410/570) $8 billion plan to extract 600 million barrels of oil from pristine federal land in Alaska.

The distance between Mr. Biden’s campaign pledge and his blessing on that plan, known as the Willow project, is explained by a global energy crisis, intense pressure from Alaska lawmakers (including the state’s lone Democratic House member), a looming election year and a complicated legal landscape that government lawyers said left few choices for Mr. Biden.

Senator Lisa Murkowski, an Alaska Republican and one of the chief advocates for Willow, which is projected to generate 2,500 jobs and millions in revenue for her state, said the president was inclined to oppose it and “needed to really be brought around.”

Mr. Biden was acutely aware of his campaign pledge, according to multiple administration officials involved in discussions over the past several weeks. Environmental activists had also openly warned that Mr. Biden’s climate record, which includes making landmark investments in clean energy, would be undermined if he approved Willow, and that young voters in particular could turn against him.

Approval of the Willow project marks a turning point in the administration’s approach to fossil fuel development. Until this point, the courts and Congress have forced Mr. Biden to sign off on some limited oil and gas leases. Willow would be one of the few oil projects that Mr. Biden has approved freely, without a court order or a congressional mandate.

And it comes as the International Energy Agency has said that governments must stop approving new oil, gas and coal projects if the planet is to avert the most catastrophic impacts of climate change.

Ultimately, the administration made the internal calculation that it did not want to fight ConocoPhillips, the company behind the Willow project.

ConocoPhillips has held leases to the prospective drilling site for more than two decades, and administration attorneys argued that refusing a permit would trigger a lawsuit that could cost the government as much as $5 billion, according to administration officials who asked not to be identified in order to discuss legal strategy.

“The lease does not give Conoco the right to do whatever they want, but it does convey certain rights,” said John Leshy, who served as the Interior Department’s solicitor under President Bill Clinton. “So the administration has to take that into account. I would not say their hands were tied, but their options were limited by the lease rights.”

The leases are basically a contract and if the Biden administration denied the permits, essentially breached the contract, without what a court considered a valid argument, a judge would likely find in favor of the company, Mr. Leshy said. It would be unusual for a court to simply order the government to issue permits; more likely a judge would award damages, he said.

That figure could include not just compensation for investments ConocoPhillips has already made but also profits that the company could have gotten if it had been allowed to drill, Mr. Leshy said, putting a potential judgment into the billions of dollars.

Ms. Murkowski said she believed the legal argument was the turning point for Mr. Biden. “There was no way around the fact that these were valid existing lease rights,” she said. “The administration was going to have to deal with that reality.”

To try to minimize the fallout, the Biden administration demanded concessions. It slashed the size of the project from five drilling sites to three. ConocoPhillips agreed to return to the government leases covering about 68,000 acres in the drilling area, which lies within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. And the administration said it would put in place new protections for a nearby coastal wetland known as Teshekpuk Lake. Those measures would effectively form a “firewall” that would prevent the Willow project from expanding, the administration said.

Mr. Biden also intends to designate about 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea in the Arctic Ocean near shore in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska as off limits for future oil and gas leasing. And the Interior Department plans to issue new rules to block oil and gas leases on more than 13 million of the 23 million acres that form the petroleum reserve.

But several of those measures could be revoked by a future administration, and none of them seemed to appease environmental groups, which termed the project a “carbon bomb.”

“The announcement is nothing more than window dressing,” Ben Jealous, president of the Sierra Club, said in an interview. “If President Biden were sitting here I’d tell him don’t spit on us and tell us that it’s raining, Mr. President.”

He called the Willow approval “a major breach of trust” and warned that with it, Mr. Biden has alienated many of his supporters, particularly young voters.

“President Biden’s decision to move forward with the Willow Project abandons the millions of young people who overwhelmingly came together to demand he stop the project and protect our futures,” said Varshini Prakash, executive director of the Sunrise Movement, a youth-led climate change advocacy group.

Earthjustice, an environmental group, said it would sue to stop the project as soon as Wednesday and expects to be joined by several other organizations. Environmental groups argued that the administration had the legal authority to deny ConocoPhillips a permit and should have done so based on a federal environmental review that found “[*substantial concerns*](https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/interior-department-issues-statement-proposed-willow-project)” about the project’s impact on the climate, the danger it poses to freshwater sources and the way it threatens migratory birds, caribou, whales and other animals that inhabit the region.

The Willow project would be constructed on the nation’s largest swath of undeveloped land, about 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle.

Some analysts said Mr. Biden’s decision could ultimately help him with moderates and independents, given elevated gas prices amid an energy crisis created by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and Republican attacks that Democratic climate policies are jeopardizing American energy independence.

“I think the White House feels the president has strong climate credentials now, but that he does need to reach out to ***working class*** voters in swing states who care about gasoline prices,” said Paul Bledsoe, a former climate aide in the Clinton administration who now works at the Progressive Policy Institute, a think tank.

But Mr. Bledsoe said he also thought the administration needed to make a stronger case publicly that the Willow project will not make a large contribution to the climate crisis.

“The problem with climate is not supply, it’s demand,” he said. “The world is awash in oil and other countries will supply the oil if we don’t. The question is, can we reduce demand through substitute technologies? And that’s where the administration has been very strong.”

The burning of oil produced by the Willow project would cause 280 million metric tons of carbon emissions, according to a federal analysis. On an annual basis, that would translate into 9.2 million metric tons of carbon pollution, equal to adding nearly two million cars to the roads each year. The United States, the second-biggest polluter on the planet after China, emits about 5.6 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide annually.

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PHOTOS: A photo provided by ConocoPhillips showed an exploratory drilling camp at the proposed site of the Willow oil project on Alaska’s North Slope, top. Polar bears in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, above left. Climate activists have vehemently opposed the plan. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CONOCOPHILLIPS, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS; SUSANNE MILLER/UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, VIA REUTERS; JASON ANDREW FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A11.

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[***The Failed Affirmative Action Campaign That Shook Democrats***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68FB-DSP1-DXY4-X43X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US

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**Byline:** Michael Powell and Ilana Marcus

**Highlight:** The Supreme Court will soon rule on race-conscious college admissions, a core Democratic issue. But an analysis of a California referendum points to a divide between the party and voters.

**Body**

The Supreme Court will soon rule on race-conscious college admissions, a core Democratic issue. But an analysis of a California referendum points to a divide between the party and voters.

The 2020 campaign to restore race-conscious affirmative action in California was close to gospel within the Democratic Party. It drew support from the governor, senators, state legislative leaders and a who’s who of business, nonprofit and labor elites, Black, Latino, white and Asian.

The Golden State Warriors, San Francisco Giants and 49ers and Oakland Athletics [*urged*](https://www.49ers.com/news/49ers-bay-area-unite-yes-on-prop-16) voters to support the referendum, Proposition 16, and remove “systemic barriers.” A commercial noted that Kamala Harris, then a U.S. senator, had endorsed the campaign, and the ad also [*suggested*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NiPdd-bfNc&amp;ab_channel=YesonProp16%3AOpportunityforAll) that to oppose it was to side with white supremacy. Supporters raised many millions of dollars for the referendum and outspent opponents by [*19 to 1.*](https://apnews.com/article/race-and-ethnicity-campaigns-san-francisco-college-admissions-california-4c56c600c86f37289e435be85695872a)

“Vote for racial justice!” urged the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California.

None of these efforts persuaded Jimmie Romero, a 63-year-old barber who grew up in the ***working-class*** Latino neighborhood of Wilmington in Los Angeles. Homelessness, illegal dumping, spiraling rents: He sat in his shop and listed so many problems.

Affirmative action was not one of those.

“I was upset that they tried to push that,” Mr. Romero recalled in a recent interview. “It was not what matters.”

Mr. Romero was one of millions of California voters, including about half who are Hispanic and a majority who are Asian American, who [*voted against*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-california-proposition-16-repeal-ban-on-affirmative-action.html) Proposition 16, which would have restored race-conscious admissions at public universities, and in government hiring and contracting.

The breadth of that rejection shook supporters. California is a liberal bastion and one of the most diverse states in the country. That year, President Biden swamped Donald Trump by 29 percentage points in California, but Proposition 16 went down, with 57 percent of voters opposing it.

That vote constitutes more than just a historical curiosity. The U.S. Supreme Court is soon [*expected*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/us/supreme-court-harvard-unc-affirmative-action.html) to rule against, or limit, affirmative action in college admissions, which the court supported for decades.

The Court’s decision could test the potency of affirmative action as an [*electoral issue*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/11/us/politics/abortion-republicans-elections.html) — just as its decision last year to end a constitutional right to abortion led to a backlash that contributed to Democratic wins in congressional races and to abortion rights victories in such unlikely corners as Kansas.

But Proposition 16 [*suggests*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/16/us/liberals-race.html) the politics of affirmative action are different. The results exposed a gulf between the party establishment and its voters.

To make sense of its failure, The New York Times analyzed the 2020 vote, focusing on Los Angeles County, the nation’s most populous county, and spoke to dozens of voters across demographic groups.

Los Angeles voters, an ethnically diverse and liberal lot, passed the proposition by a mere whisker, 51 percent to 49 percent. And the Times analysis of electoral precincts found across all races, support for the referendum fell well short of support for Joe Biden on the same ballot.

This was true across majority Black, Asian, Hispanic and white precincts.

In 1996, California voters banned affirmative action, during a more conservative time, with a Republican governor. By 2020, with liberal Californians infuriated about Donald Trump and the murder of George Floyd, Democratic leaders hoped Los Angeles voters would run up big margins and overcome conservative opposition elsewhere in the state.

Democrats have yearned for a demographic deliverance, arguing a multiracial coalition would inevitably elevate their progressive policies. Proposition 16 points to a more uncertain reality.

Carlos E. Cortés has lived the history of diversity in California. An emeritus professor and historian of race and ethnicity, he became the second Mexican-descended scholar to join the faculty of the University of California, Riverside. He supported the measure, even as he understood its limited appeal.

“It’s not going to cause great eruptions of protest,” Dr. Cortés said, speaking of the possible end of affirmative action, which, he noted, is a reliable loser at the ballot box. “If they keep making it a cause, they will just alienate Hispanic and Asian voters.”

Expectations Upended

California’s college officials framed support for Proposition 16 as a matter of social justice. They said it would lead to more diverse campuses and allow students to understand sad historical legacies.

“There is amazing momentum for righting the wrongs caused by centuries of systemic racism in our country,” John A. Pérez, then the chairman of the California Board of Regents, said during the 2020 campaign.

There was the view, too, that California’s 1996 ban deprived Black and Hispanic business owners, who have less generational wealth than white counterparts, of hundreds of millions of dollars in contracts.

“Unconscious bias and institutional racism is embedded,” said Lisa Holder, president of the Equal Justice Society, a nonprofit law firm, and a Proposition 16 supporter. “Unless you take affirmative steps, this continues in perpetuity.”

Supporters believed such arguments held broad appeal. But the Times analysis and interviews showed support for Proposition 16 is often divided along racial lines, with Black voters supporting it, while Asian voters rejected it. In fact, nearly all majority Asian precincts in Los Angeles voted against the proposition. And across racial and ethnic groups, support for the referendum fell short of support for Mr. Biden.

This was true even of majority Black precincts in Los Angeles, which supported Proposition 16 by wide margins. Mr. Biden outpaced that support by an average of about 15 percentage points.

The results were quite different in 1996, when California voters banned affirmative action through [*Proposition 209*](https://lao.ca.gov/ballot/1996/prop209_11_1996.html). The population was majority white, the Republican governor opposed social services for undocumented immigrants, and nativism was in the air.

That year, 63 percent of white voters opposed affirmative action, according to an exit poll by The Los Angeles Times.

Sizable majorities of Black, Latino and Asian voters favored affirmative action, according to that poll, and many viewed the campaign as grounded in white resentment. By 2020, that coalition was greatly diminished.

“The 1996 vote was significantly more racially polarized than the 2020 vote,” noted Richard Sander, a law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a critic of race-conscious affirmative action. “The 1996 campaign was cast in stark racial terms. The Prop 16 campaign was much less so and to the extent that it was, voters did not buy it.”

The No Vote: ‘Why Do We Need This?’

Gloria Romero, a Democrat and former majority leader of the State Senate, was term-limited and left politics in 2010 out of frustration with the poor health of public education and her party’s opposition to charter schools.

Ten years later, she voted against affirmative action.

“Why are we going back to the past?” she said. “We’re no longer in a ‘walk over the bridge in Selma’ phase of our civil rights struggle.”

Like many Hispanic voters interviewed, Ms. Romero worried less about blatant discrimination and more about health care, education and housing.

The Hispanic populations is at an inflection point in California, progress vying with lingering disparity. Slightly [*more than half*](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/ceffingertipfacts.asp) of public school students are Hispanic, and the [*percentage*](https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/admissions-residency-and-ethnicity) of Hispanic undergraduates in the elite University of California system is roughly half that. The well-regarded if less competitive California State system has 23 four-year campuses and almost 460,000 students, and those who are Hispanic make up almost half of the total.

“We’re debating affirmative action when we have more Latinos than ever in college,” Ms. Romero said.

Valerie Contreras, a crane operator, is a proud union member and civic leader in Wilmington, where half the voters were against the referendum. She had little use for the affirmative action campaign.

“It was ridiculous all the racially loaded terms Democrats used,” she said. “It was a distraction from the issues that affect our lives.”

Asian voters spoke of visceral unease. South and East Asians make up just 15 percent of the state population, and 35 percent of the undergraduates in the University of California system.

Affirmative action, to their view, upends traditional measures of merit — grades, test scores and extracurricular activities — and threatens to reduce their numbers.

Sunjay Muralitharan is a voluble freshman and a leader of the Democratic Party chapter at the University of California, San Diego. A Bernie Sanders supporter, he favors universal basic income, a higher minimum wage and national health care.

In 2020, as a 16-year-old, he joined the campaign against race-conscious affirmative action in California. Afterward, he and friends applied to elite private universities outside California and were often surprised by the rejections, reaffirming his view that Asian students need higher grades and scores to gain admission.

“There were lots of students of Indian and Chinese descent who had to settle for schools not of their caliber,” said Mr. Muralitharan, who grew up in Fremont, a predominantly Asian middle-class suburb of San Jose.

“Affirmative action should be about economic status,” he said, arguing for a policy that gives weight to low-income applicants.

Kevin Liao, a consultant and former top Democratic Party aide, supported the affirmative action referendum, arguing it would help Asian American small businesses and was the only way universities could deliver diverse classes. High-achieving Asian students will succeed, he said, even if they settle for third or fourth choices in colleges.

He was not surprised, however, that many Asian Americans balked. “The notion that you would look at anything other than pure academic performance is seen by immigrants as antithetical to American values,” he said.

Black voters often spoke of different calculations in their support of affirmative action. They pointed to the toll of racism: poor schools, lagging incomes and generational wealth a fraction of that of white Americans.

Fola Asebiomo is a junior studying psychology at U.C.L.A. She loves the school’s diversity and takes pride in her achievement. But she recalled Black friends back in Georgia who for reasons of poverty and family disadvantage stumbled when applying to college.

“I’ve seen disadvantage play out,” Ms. Asebiomo said. “The disparities created over centuries don’t just disappear.”

The Move Forward

Before 1996, affirmative action in the University of California system was in ill health. Black and Latino enrollment at top schools had stalled. Applications were falling and graduation rates low. At U.C.L.A. from 1992 to 1994, Black students had a 13.5 percent four-year graduation rate, according to data compiled by Mr. Sander, the U.C.L.A. law professor.

Then the ban was enacted, and the most elite campuses, Berkeley and U.C.L.A., experienced calamitous drops in Black and Latino enrollment. It took a decade for that to reverse for Latinos. Black enrollment recovered much more slowly.

In the U.C. system as a whole, trends were less dire. Latino enrollment soon doubled. Black enrollment fell and recovered. Today, Black enrollment stands at 5 percent. (Black residents make up [*less than 6 percent*](https://www.ppic.org/publication/californias-population/#:~:text=No%20race%20or%20ethnic%20group,according%20to%20the%202020%20Census.) of California’s population.) The overall six-year [*graduation rate*](https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/ug-outcomes) of Black students stands at 77 percent. White enrollment fell to 18 percent today from 35 percent in 1996.

At Berkeley today, Black and Hispanic enrollment [*lags*](https://opa.berkeley.edu/uc-berkeley-fall-enrollment-data-new-undergraduates). Black students accounted for 3.4 percent of the freshman class last September, while Hispanic students were at about 20 percent.

Numbers are [*higher*](https://admission.ucla.edu/apply/freshman/freshman-profile) at U.C.L.A.: Black students are 8 percent and Hispanic students 22 percent of its 2022 freshman class.

All of which perhaps points to a counterintuitive reality. The University of California system seems to have cobbled together a softer version of economically driven affirmative action. By spending about [*$50 million per year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/us/politics/affirmative-action-ban-states.html) and targeting top students from low-income neighborhoods, the universities have attracted a competitive student body that is economically and ethnically diverse.

The system takes in many transfer students from the California State and community college systems. Transfers account for one-third of new students at Berkeley; many are low income and nonwhite.

Some University of California professors divine a semi-hidden success story.

“Many states may be looking at the California example, and what we did and how we responded when affirmative action was ruled out,” noted Sylvia Hurtado, an education professor and former director of the Higher Education Research Institute of U.C.L.A.

Professor Sander, who favors class-based affirmative action, suggested California’s leaders should accept its universities are better for the changes.

“The sky did not fall,” he said. “It was a triumph in many ways.”

Not all accept his verdict.

Thomas A. Saenz, president of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, served as co-chairman of Proposition 16. Black and Latino students, he said, remain marked by bias from kindergarten to high school, from standardized tests and grades to the expectations of teachers and counselors.

What looks like progress — the growing number of Latino students — is attributable mostly to demographic growth, he said.

“Much of what passes for merit-based admissions is influenced by subconscious bias,” he said. “We have to guard against a coronation of color blindness.”

There is reason to wonder if California’s model is replicable. The state has poured money and effort into attracting diverse students. In a post-affirmative action world, other states might balk at such investments.

Electoral politics are another matter. Those who favored Proposition 16 blamed their loss on confusing ballot language, the difficulty of campaigning during the Covid pandemic and too little voter education.

Ruy Teixeira, a political scientist, takes a different view. He noted [*polling*](https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2023/06/08/more-americans-disapprove-than-approve-of-colleges-considering-race-ethnicity-in-admissions-decisions/) consistently demonstrates the unpopularity of race-conscious affirmative action.

A Supreme Court death knell, he said, might save Democratic leaders from themselves, untethering them from affirmative action.

“For years, they have said, ‘We must positively discriminate,’” he said. “Maybe they no longer need to die on that hill.”

Ruth Igielnik contributed data reporting. Alain Delaquérière contributed research.

To estimate how demographic groups voted on Proposition 16, The Times combined precinct-level election results from the [*Statewide Database*](https://statewidedatabase.org/d10/g20.html); a voter file provided by L2, a nonpartisan data vendor; and estimates of the citizen voting-age population by race and ethnicity at the census block level as compiled by the [*ALARM Project at Harvard University*](https://alarm-redist.org/about.html). Those results were then analyzed using multiple methods to determine whether support or opposition to the proposition was tied to factors including the racial and ethnic makeup of each precinct. The analysis included using the [*eiCompare*](https://github.com/RPVote/eiCompare) R package to perform ecological inference using multiple methods; reviewing voting patterns where an ethnic group made up at least 60 percent of the voting population; and regression analysis.

While analyzing precinct-level results can help better understand voting patterns and trends, the conclusions are limited in that there is no way to know how individual voters of certain races or ethnicities voted.

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PHOTOS: Outside the Supreme Court in Washington as the justices listened to arguments about race in college and university admissions. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SHURAN HUANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); “Affirmative action should be about economic status,” said Sunjay Muralitharan, a student and a leader of the Democratic Party chapter at the University of California, San Diego. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN FRANCIS PETERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Valerie Contreras, a civic leader in Los Angeles, said Democrats’ affirmative action campaign “was a distraction from the issues that affect our lives.”; Thomas A. Saenz, co-chairman of Proposition 16, said Black and Latino students remain marked by bias, from kindergarten to high school. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP CHEUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A12) This article appeared in print on page A1, A12.

**Load-Date:** June 12, 2023

**End of Document**



[***California Vote Exposed a Divide Amid Democrats***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68FB-FNV1-DXY4-X4BT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 11, 2023 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 2632 words

**Byline:** By Michael Powell and Ilana Marcus

**Body**

The Supreme Court will soon rule on race-conscious college admissions, a core Democratic issue. But an analysis of a California referendum points to a divide between the party and voters.

The 2020 campaign to restore race-conscious affirmative action in California was close to gospel within the Democratic Party. It drew support from the governor, senators, state legislative leaders and a who's who of business, nonprofit and labor elites, Black, Latino, white and Asian.

The Golden State Warriors, San Francisco Giants and 49ers and Oakland Athletics urged voters to support the referendum, Proposition 16, and remove ''systemic barriers.'' A commercial noted that Kamala Harris, then a U.S. senator, had endorsed the campaign, and the ad also suggested that to oppose it was to side with white supremacy. Supporters raised many millions of dollars for the referendum and outspent opponents by 19 to 1.

''Vote for racial justice!'' urged the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California.

None of these efforts persuaded Jimmie Romero, a 63-year-old barber who grew up in the ***working-class*** Latino neighborhood of Wilmington in Los Angeles. Homelessness, illegal dumping, spiraling rents: He sat in his shop and listed so many problems.

Affirmative action was not one of those.

''I was upset that they tried to push that,'' Mr. Romero recalled in a recent interview. ''It was not what matters.''

Mr. Romero was one of millions of California voters, including about half who are Hispanic and a majority who are Asian American, who voted against Proposition 16, which would have restored race-conscious admissions at public universities, and in government hiring and contracting.

The breadth of that rejection shook supporters. California is a liberal bastion and one of the most diverse states in the country. That year, President Biden swamped Donald Trump by 29 percentage points in California, but Proposition 16 went down, with 57 percent of voters opposing it.

That vote constitutes more than just a historical curiosity. The U.S. Supreme Court is soon expected to rule against, or limit, affirmative action in college admissions, which the court supported for decades.

The Court's decision could test the potency of affirmative action as an electoral issue -- just as its decision last year to end a constitutional right to abortion led to a backlash that contributed to Democratic wins in congressional races and to abortion rights victories in such unlikely corners as Kansas.

But Proposition 16 suggests the politics of affirmative action are different. The results exposed a gulf between the party establishment and its voters.

To make sense of its failure, The New York Times analyzed the 2020 vote, focusing on Los Angeles County, the nation's most populous county, and spoke to dozens of voters across demographic groups.

Los Angeles voters, an ethnically diverse and liberal lot, passed the proposition by a mere whisker, 51 percent to 49 percent. And the Times analysis of electoral precincts found across all races, support for the referendum fell well short of support for Joe Biden on the same ballot.

This was true across majority Black, Asian, Hispanic and white precincts.

In 1996, California voters banned affirmative action, during a more conservative time, with a Republican governor. By 2020, with liberal Californians infuriated about Donald Trump and the murder of George Floyd, Democratic leaders hoped Los Angeles voters would run up big margins and overcome conservative opposition elsewhere in the state.

Democrats have yearned for a demographic deliverance, arguing a multiracial coalition would inevitably elevate their progressive policies. Proposition 16 points to a more uncertain reality.

Carlos E. Cortés has lived the history of diversity in California. An emeritus professor and historian of race and ethnicity, he became the second Mexican-descended scholar to join the faculty of the University of California, Riverside. He supported the measure, even as he understood its limited appeal.

''It's not going to cause great eruptions of protest,'' Dr. Cortés said, speaking of the possible end of affirmative action, which, he noted, is a reliable loser at the ballot box. ''If they keep making it a cause, they will just alienate Hispanic and Asian voters.''

Expectations Upended

California's college officials framed support for Proposition 16 as a matter of social justice. They said it would lead to more diverse campuses and allow students to understand sad historical legacies.

''There is amazing momentum for righting the wrongs caused by centuries of systemic racism in our country,'' John A. Pérez, then the chairman of the California Board of Regents, said during the 2020 campaign.

There was the view, too, that California's 1996 ban deprived Black and Hispanic business owners, who have less generational wealth than white counterparts, of hundreds of millions of dollars in contracts.

''Unconscious bias and institutional racism is embedded,'' said Lisa Holder, president of the Equal Justice Society, a nonprofit law firm, and a Proposition 16 supporter. ''Unless you take affirmative steps, this continues in perpetuity.''

Supporters believed such arguments held broad appeal. But the Times analysis and interviews showed support for Proposition 16 is often divided along racial lines, with Black voters supporting it, while Asian voters rejected it. In fact, nearly all majority Asian precincts in Los Angeles voted against the proposition. And across racial and ethnic groups, support for the referendum fell short of support for Mr. Biden.

This was true even of majority Black precincts in Los Angeles, which supported Proposition 16 by wide margins. Mr. Biden outpaced that support by an average of about 15 percentage points.

The results were quite different in 1996, when California voters banned affirmative action through Proposition 209. The population was majority white, the Republican governor opposed social services for undocumented immigrants, and nativism was in the air.

That year, 63 percent of white voters opposed affirmative action, according to an exit poll by The Los Angeles Times.

Sizable majorities of Black, Latino and Asian voters favored affirmative action, according to that poll, and many viewed the campaign as grounded in white resentment. By 2020, that coalition was greatly diminished.

''The 1996 vote was significantly more racially polarized than the 2020 vote,'' noted Richard Sander, a law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a critic of race-conscious affirmative action. ''The 1996 campaign was cast in stark racial terms. The Prop 16 campaign was much less so and to the extent that it was, voters did not buy it.''

The No Vote: 'Why Do We Need This?'

Gloria Romero, a Democrat and former majority leader of the State Senate, was term-limited and left politics in 2010 out of frustration with the poor health of public education and her party's opposition to charter schools.

Ten years later, she voted against affirmative action.

''Why are we going back to the past?'' she said. ''We're no longer in a 'walk over the bridge in Selma' phase of our civil rights struggle.''

Like many Hispanic voters interviewed, Ms. Romero worried less about blatant discrimination and more about health care, education and housing.

The Hispanic populations is at an inflection point in California, progress vying with lingering disparity. Slightly more than half of public school students are Hispanic, and the percentage of Hispanic undergraduates in the elite University of California system is roughly half that. The well-regarded if less competitive California State system has 23 four-year campuses and almost 460,000 students, and those who are Hispanic make up almost half of the total.

''We're debating affirmative action when we have more Latinos than ever in college,'' Ms. Romero said.

Valerie Contreras, a crane operator, is a proud union member and civic leader in Wilmington, where half the voters were against the referendum. She had little use for the affirmative action campaign.

''It was ridiculous all the racially loaded terms Democrats used,'' she said. ''It was a distraction from the issues that affect our lives.''

Asian voters spoke of visceral unease. South and East Asians make up just 15 percent of the state population, and 35 percent of the undergraduates in the University of California system.

Affirmative action, to their view, upends traditional measures of merit -- grades, test scores and extracurricular activities -- and threatens to reduce their numbers.

Sunjay Muralitharan is a voluble freshman and a leader of the Democratic Party chapter at the University of California, San Diego. A Bernie Sanders supporter, he favors universal basic income, a higher minimum wage and national health care.

In 2020, as a 16-year-old, he joined the campaign against race-conscious affirmative action in California. Afterward, he and friends applied to elite private universities outside California and were often surprised by the rejections, reaffirming his view that Asian students need higher grades and scores to gain admission.

''There were lots of students of Indian and Chinese descent who had to settle for schools not of their caliber,'' said Mr. Muralitharan, who grew up in Fremont, a predominantly Asian middle-class suburb of San Jose.

''Affirmative action should be about economic status,'' he said, arguing for a policy that gives weight to low-income applicants.

Kevin Liao, a consultant and former top Democratic Party aide, supported the affirmative action referendum, arguing it would help Asian American small businesses and was the only way universities could deliver diverse classes. High-achieving Asian students will succeed, he said, even if they settle for third or fourth choices in colleges.

He was not surprised, however, that many Asian Americans balked. ''The notion that you would look at anything other than pure academic performance is seen by immigrants as antithetical to American values,'' he said.

Black voters often spoke of different calculations in their support of affirmative action. They pointed to the toll of racism: poor schools, lagging incomes and generational wealth a fraction of that of white Americans.

Fola Asebiomo is a junior studying psychology at U.C.L.A. She loves the school's diversity and takes pride in her achievement. But she recalled Black friends back in Georgia who for reasons of poverty and family disadvantage stumbled when applying to college.

''I've seen disadvantage play out,'' Ms. Asebiomo said. ''The disparities created over centuries don't just disappear.''

The Move Forward

Before 1996, affirmative action in the University of California system was in ill health. Black and Latino enrollment at top schools had stalled. Applications were falling and graduation rates low. At U.C.L.A. from 1992 to 1994, Black students had a 13.5 percent four-year graduation rate, according to data compiled by Mr. Sander, the U.C.L.A. law professor.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/11/us/supreme-court-affirmative-action.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/11/us/supreme-court-affirmative-action.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Outside the Supreme Court in Washington as the justices listened to arguments about race in college and university admissions. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SHURAN HUANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

''Affirmative action should be about economic status,'' said Sunjay Muralitharan, a student and a leader of the Democratic Party chapter at the University of California, San Diego. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN FRANCIS PETERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Valerie Contreras, a civic leader in Los Angeles, said Democrats' affirmative action campaign ''was a distraction from the issues that affect our lives.''

Thomas A. Saenz, co-chairman of Proposition 16, said Black and Latino students remain marked by bias, from kindergarten to high school. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP CHEUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A12) This article appeared in print on page A1, A12.

**Load-Date:** June 11, 2023

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[***Unknowingly Walking in the Footsteps of Gordon Parks; Times Insider***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:664P-S931-JBG3-6458-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** INSIDER

**Length:** 809 words

**Byline:** Andre D. Wagner

**Highlight:** In a predominantly Black neighborhood in Washington, D.C., Andre D. Wagner found himself shadowing the journey of the groundbreaking civil rights photographer.

**Body**

In a predominantly Black neighborhood in Washington, D.C., Andre D. Wagner found himself shadowing the journey of the groundbreaking civil rights photographer.

[*Times Insider*](https://www.nytimes.com/series/times-insider) explains who we are and what we do and delivers behind-the-scenes insights into how our journalism comes together.

In Washington, D.C., the Anacostia River acts as both a physical and figurative divide. To the west of the river are the wealthy and predominantly white neighborhoods of Navy Yard and Capitol Hill; across the river sit the predominantly Black and low-income Ward 8 neighborhoods of Anacostia and Fairlawn. For over a decade planners have been developing an elevated park, called the 11th Street Bridge Park, to span the divide. Wary of gentrification, residents of Ward 8 have advocated that the bridge be used to bring equity and investment to the existing community instead of pricing it out. If successful, the project could serve as a blueprint for future responsibly developed civic spaces.

[*Andre D. Wagner*](https://www.andredwagner.com/), a Brooklyn-based photographer and a [*Gordon Parks Foundation fellow*](https://www.gordonparksfoundation.org/grants/fellowships-in-art), traveled to Anacostia for a recent [*Times Headway*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/04/insider/stepping-back-to-look-ahead.html) project on the park. Below, he writes about his process, sharing the parallels he drew between his experience and that of Mr. Parks, a photographer known for his work documenting American life, race, civil rights and more.

Anacostia, a neighborhood synonymous with ***working-class*** families, is a place in which the pride of being a resident is evident. That was clear to me as soon as I entered Anacostia at one of its northern corners, where Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and Good Hope Road meet.

Hope was a continuous theme during my visit to Anacostia. It was also a central idea in my conversations with local activists and longtime residents. Sabrina Walls, an Anacostia homeowner, wore a shirt that read “Blessed” when I photographed her and her family, a testament to the unwavering faith shared between the land and its people.

With the exception of reviewing what is to come from the new bridge park with my editor, Eve Lyons, I intentionally refrained from researching Anacostia before this assignment. I was more interested in discovering the place by being there. I wanted to be ready to receive the community without any preconceived ideas, to be completely open to whatever people were willing to share.

The neighborhood is walkable, and with my oversized Rolleiflex in hand it didn’t take long to get noticed by people in Anacostia. Residents struck up conversations, often asking whether or not my camera was still operational. The openness of the neighborhood’s residents allowed all of us to let our guards down and enjoy the Anacostia River Festival, an annual event held along the Anacostia Park grounds to celebrate the city’s history and culture.

Residents were immediately willing to share their stories with me. Some even invited me into their homes for a look into their everyday lives. These residents seemed committed to lifting up the Black community. This was evident when I spoke with people like the activist Kymone Freeman, co-founder of We Act Radio, a station devoted to social justice.

It wasn’t until after departing that I received a call from Eve, who shared that Gordon Parks, a photographer whom I’d studied religiously for the past decade, had photographed Anacostia in the 1940s. As a Gordon Parks fellow, to learn that I had been — quite literally — walking in the footsteps of Parks, and so organically, imbued in me a sense of alignment and purpose, a feeling that I had been exactly where I was supposed to be.

Anacostia, much like the rest of the country, is undergoing a transformation, the 11th Street Bridge Park a sure sign of change. When looking at Parks’s work of the neighborhood in the 1940s, it is clear that the passing of time, as well as deindustrialization and modernization in its many facets, is what differentiates us. His photographs generally feel much slower and more precise; the compositions are tighter and much more methodical, whereas my approach is off-kilter, fluid, spur-of-the-moment.

Though our shooting styles are dissimilar — he has a discerning eye, while I work best when responding to spontaneity — we parallel in our ability to make people feel seen and welcomed and in our love for Black people and Black stories — something we both illuminated in Anacostia, 80 years apart.

The New York Times’s Headway team is exploring change and development in Anacostia. The project kicks off in October. If you’d like to join us and share your thoughts, [*sign up here*](https://timesevents.nytimes.com/anacostia) and we’ll send you details.

PHOTOS: Residents of Anacostia, a neighborhood in D.C. where a new bridge will connect communities. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDRE D. WAGNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Gordon Parks photographed residents in Anacostia in 1942. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GORDON PARKS, FSA VIA THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY)

**Load-Date:** August 13, 2022

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[***Arizona G.O.P. Primary Underscores Class Divisions***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:661G-VCX1-JBG3-654W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 28, 2022 Thursday

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**Length:** 1697 words

**Byline:** By Jack Healy

**Body**

The race has highlighted the gap between G.O.P. voters who have profited from Arizona's prosperity, and those who feel left out and are eager to punish the Republican establishment at the polls.

PRESCOTT VALLEY, Ariz. -- As Shardé Walter's family cut back on everything from camping trips to Eggo waffles to balance their inflation-strained budget this summer, she became more and more fed up with the Republicans who have governed Arizona for more than a decade.

''You've got those hoity-toity Republicans, and then you've got ones like me -- just trying to live,'' Ms. Walter, 36, said as she waited for former President Donald J. Trump to arrive at a rally on Friday for his slate of candidates in Arizona's bitterly fought Republican primaries.

''We're busting our asses off,'' she continued, ''but we're broke for no reason.''

The Aug. 2 Republican primary in Arizona has been cast as a party-defining contest between traditional Republicans and Trump loyalists, with the power to reshape a political battleground at the heart of fights over voting rights and fair elections. Several leading Republican candidates in Arizona for governor, secretary of state, attorney general and U.S. Senate have made lies about the ''stolen'' 2020 election a centerpiece of their campaigns.

But the choice between traditional conservatives and Trump-backed firebrands is also tapping into ***working-class*** conservatives' frustrations with a state economic and political system firmly controlled by Republicans, highlighting the gap between voters who have profited from Arizona's rising home values and tax cuts tilted toward the wealthy, and those who feel left out and are eager to punish the Republican establishment at the ballot box.

''It's like 'The Great Gatsby' -- old versus new,'' said Mike Noble, the chief of research with the polling firm OH Predictive Insights, which is based in Phoenix. ''It's a very telling moment for the G.O.P. Are they going the way of MAGA, or the McCain-Goldwater conservative way that gave them dominance over the state?''

National surveys of Republicans show that voters' views of Mr. Trump and the 2020 election are fracturing along lines of education.

A New York Times/Siena College poll released this month found that 64 percent of Republican primary voters without a college degree believed that Mr. Trump was the legitimate winner of the 2020 election. Forty-four percent of Republican voters with a bachelor's degree or more said Mr. Trump was the winner.

Mr. Trump was still a clear favorite for Republican voters with a high school degree or less, with 62 percent saying they would vote for him in the 2024 Republican presidential primary if the election were held today. Less than 30 percent of Republican primary voters with college degrees said they would vote for Mr. Trump.

In Arizona's race for governor, the Republican establishment has coalesced around Karrin Taylor Robson, a wealthy real estate developer pitching herself as a competent leader who has been reliably conservative ever since her days as a staff member in the Reagan White House.

The Trump wing of the party is locked in behind Kari Lake, a Trump-endorsed former news anchor who has stoked an anti-establishment rebellion fueled by falsehoods about the 2020 election and provocations like vowing to bomb smuggling tunnels on the southern border.

Ms. Robson has cut into Ms. Lake's early lead in the polls, but recent surveys suggest that Ms. Lake is still ahead.

A forthcoming poll of 650 Arizona Republican primary voters by Alloy Analytics found a 10-point lead for Ms. Lake, largely on her strength with ***working-class*** voters, though other surveys show a much tighter race. Ms. Lake had a 15-point edge with voters whose families earn less than $50,000 a year. Republicans earning more than $200,000 a year supported Ms. Robson by a 14-point margin.

Ms. Robson has lent her campaign $15 million and blanketed local television with ads. She has racked up a long list of endorsements from law-enforcement groups, Arizona's three living Republican governors and prominent national Republicans, including former Vice President Mike Pence and former Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey.

Both women are running as anti-abortion, pro-gun, pro-wall conservatives who vow to mobilize law enforcement to address what they call a migrant invasion. Neither misses a chance to excoriate President Biden and Democrats for inflation, crime or culture-war flash points like critical race theory.

Each has tried to claim the mantle of the only true conservative in the race. In a debate, Ms. Lake attacked Ms. Robson for refusing to join other candidates in raising her hand and declaring -- falsely -- that the 2020 election had been stolen. Ms. Robson tells voters that 2020 was ''not fair,'' pointing to news media bias and pandemic-driven changes to voting rules. In a recent CNN appearance, she declined to say whether she would have certified the 2020 results, as Mr. Ducey did.

In an interview, Ms. Robson said Ms. Lake's posture as a conservative ''has no basis in truth,'' and her campaign attacked Ms. Lake for once supporting former President Barack Obama.

''She's a really good actress,'' Ms. Robson said. ''We have real issues we have to deal with, from water to housing to inflation.''

Ms. Lake's populist homilies and story of a Trump-era political awakening resonate with nontraditional conservatives who say they feel left out of mainstream Republican politics. Ms. Lake's campaign did not grant an interview.

Moderates say that they simply want a reliable Republican to hold the governor's seat, and that they are reassured by Ms. Robson's reams of endorsements and policy plans.

On Friday, the divisions between the two candidates came into sharp focus at competing rallies where Ms. Robson was cheered on by Mr. Pence, and Mr. Trump appeared alongside Ms. Lake.

In Peoria, Ariz., a suburb of Phoenix, the rally for Ms. Robson felt like a supersized Chamber of Commerce luncheon.

Hundreds of voters in Casual Friday polo shirts and summer-weight blouses sat eating barbecue inside a plant that makes military-style tactical gear as Mr. Pence and Gov. Doug Ducey gave speeches endorsing Ms. Robson as a keep-the-faith conservative.

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So far, Republican primaries this year have been a mixed bag for Trump-endorsed candidates running on election denialism. J.D. Vance, the ''Hillbilly Elegy'' author, won his primary for U.S. Senate in Ohio. Doug Mastriano won the Republican governor's primary in Pennsylvania after leading efforts to overturn the 2020 election results there.

But last month in Colorado, Republican voters nominated a businessman who accepted the 2020 election results in a competitive U.S. Senate race. In Georgia, voters delivered a stinging defeat to Mr. Trump by overwhelmingly supporting the incumbent Republican governor and secretary of state who both refused to overturn the 2020 election results there.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/27/us/arizona-republican-primary.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/27/us/arizona-republican-primary.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A Trump rally last Friday in Prescott, Ariz. The event also featured Kari Lake, a Trump-backed candidate for governor.

The Trump wing of the party is locked in behind Ms. Lake, a former news anchor who is leading in polls. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA ZEHBRAUSKAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Waiting on July 14 to meet Karrin Taylor Robson, a candidate for governor who worked in the Reagan White House.

The Republican establishment has coalesced around Ms. Robson, a wealthy real estate developer. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY REBECCA NOBLE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Parrish Art Museum Names New Director***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65MX-DS41-DXY4-X16H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 8, 2022 Wednesday 23:36 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 716 words

**Byline:** Zachary Small

**Highlight:** Mónica Ramírez-Montagut will take over in July. The museum’s last director, Kelly Taxter, departed less than a year into the role.

**Body**

Mónica Ramírez-Montagut will take over in July. The museum’s last director, Kelly Taxter, departed less than a year into the role.

Mónica Ramírez-Montagut, a veteran curator from Mexico, will be the new director of the Parrish Art Museum in Water Mill, N.Y., the museum announced Wednesday.

Ramírez-Montagut, the director of the Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University, fills the leadership position left vacant in December when Kelly Taxter announced her departure after less than a year in the role.

“This is a dream come true,” Ramírez-Montagut said in an interview, adding that she plans on deepening the museum’s programming “through a more diverse lens while simultaneously leveraging the arts to serve our immediate communities through exhibitions that engage social justice.”

Ramírez-Montagut is known for work like a [*major retrospective*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/02/arts/design/02hadi.html) of the architect Zaha Hadid in 2006 that she helped organize while she was an assistant curator at the Guggenheim Museum (from 2005-08). She also curated a [*traveling show*](https://newcombartmuseum.tulane.edu/portfolio-item/persister-incarcerated-women-of-louisiana/) in 2019 that included artworks inspired by the stories of women incarcerated in Louisiana’s prison system.

“She has warmth and management experience,” Alexandra Stanton, a lawyer and co-chair of the Parrish board, said in an interview, adding, “She is as committed to stewarding the museum itself as she is to serving our communities.”

Regional institutions like the Parrish, a champion of Long Island artists, have struggled to [*recruit and retain talent*](https://news.artnet.com/art-world/u-s-museums-director-vacancies-2038335) amid the coronavirus pandemic, as visitors have come to expect their museums to act more like community centers, with a greater emphasis on local programming and representation. Over the last couple of years, the Parrish Museum has attempted to make inroads with the growing ***working-class*** Latino population in Suffolk County, home to its sleek 34,400-square-foot facility, situated on 14 acres.

The museum also has a longstanding relationship with the Organización Latino-Americana (OLA), a group committed to promoting the welfare of Latino and Hispanic people on Long Island’s East End. Later this month, the museum will partner with the nonprofit on a Latin dance party, and in September will collaborate on the OLA Film Festival. New exhibitions are spotlighting contributions from Black artists like Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Torkwase Dyson and Hank Willis Thomas. The museum also expects to diversify its board; currently, 14 of its 16 members are white. One board member of color is being appointed soon, and two or three more people of color are expected to be named to the board over the summer.

Changes at the Parrish come as the [*Hamptons arts scene has expanded*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/12/arts/design/eastward-ho-even-art-is-leaving-for-the-hamptons.html). As vacation homes became full-time residences during the pandemic, blue-chip galleries from Manhattan created outposts. And even as some of their wealthy clients returned to Manhattan, those galleries have stayed and built summer programs that have been drawing crowds, said Eric Firestone, a gallerist.

Firestone, who opened his [*namesake East Hampton gallery*](https://www.ericfirestonegallery.com/) in 2010, said that over the last two years, the number of galleries in town has grown to about 15 from about six.

So it was surprising last year when Taxter [*departed*](https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/director-departs-parrish-art-museum-after-less-than-a-year-on-the-job-1234614398/). She declined to comment this week on the circumstances of her resignation, but noted in a text message that the museum installed a new board leadership team after she left. “I wish everyone the best as they move forward,” she wrote.

Ramírez-Montagut starts July 8, and her first day will be just before the summer gala, a main fund-raiser for the museum, which this year is celebrating its 125th anniversary. It is also the 10th anniversary of its building, designed by the Swiss architects Herzog &amp; de Meuron. (Tickets for this year’s party start at $1,500 and go as high as $100,000 for groups of 12.)

The new director is also looking forward to meeting the key stakeholders of the Parrish Museum’s future.

The attendees are part of the “strategy to make our visitors and members feel welcome in the museum,” Ramírez-Montagut said. “We need to get back the institutional capacity we had before Covid.”

PHOTO: Mónica Ramírez-Montagut said the position is “a dream come true,” and said that she plans to deepen the Parrish Museum’s programming “through a more diverse lens.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY Victor Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Class Divisions Harden Into Battle Lines in Arizona’s Republican Primary***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6619-7CD1-DXY4-X2BG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 27, 2022 Wednesday 11:42 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1766 words

**Byline:** Jack Healy

**Highlight:** The race has highlighted the gap between G.O.P. voters who have profited from Arizona’s prosperity, and those who feel left out and are eager to punish the Republican establishment at the polls.

**Body**

The race has highlighted the gap between G.O.P. voters who have profited from Arizona’s prosperity, and those who feel left out and are eager to punish the Republican establishment at the polls.

PRESCOTT VALLEY, Ariz. — As Shardé Walter’s family cut back on everything from camping trips to Eggo waffles to balance their inflation-strained budget this summer, she became more and more fed up with the Republicans who have governed Arizona for more than a decade.

“You’ve got those hoity-toity Republicans, and then you’ve got ones like me — just trying to live,” Ms. Walter, 36, said as she waited for former President Donald J. Trump to arrive at a rally on Friday for his slate of candidates in Arizona’s bitterly fought Republican primaries.

“We’re busting our asses off,” she continued, “but we’re broke for no reason.”

The Aug. 2 Republican primary in Arizona has been cast as a party-defining contest between traditional Republicans and Trump loyalists, with the power to reshape a political battleground at the heart of fights over voting rights and fair elections. Several leading Republican candidates in Arizona for governor, [*secretary of state*](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2022/07/mark-finchem-arizona-midterm-elections/670495/), [*attorney general*](https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/06/14/arizona-attorney-general-race-abe-hamadeh-endorsed-by-trump/7629673001/) and U.S. Senate have made lies about the “stolen” 2020 election a centerpiece of their campaigns.

But the choice between traditional conservatives and Trump-backed firebrands is also tapping into ***working-class*** conservatives’ frustrations with a state economic and political system firmly controlled by Republicans, highlighting the gap between voters who have profited from Arizona’s rising home values and tax cuts [*tilted*](https://www.12news.com/article/news/politics/arizona-flat-tax-would-shower-richest-with-cuts-new-report-shows-heres-whats-in-it-for-you/75-0b47bf27-051a-4d41-b619-89be46b65fb4) toward the wealthy, and those who feel left out and are eager to punish the Republican establishment at the ballot box.

“It’s like ‘The Great Gatsby’ — old versus new,” said Mike Noble, the chief of research with the polling firm OH Predictive Insights, which is based in Phoenix. “It’s a very telling moment for the G.O.P. Are they going the way of MAGA, or the McCain-Goldwater conservative way that gave them dominance over the state?”

National surveys of Republicans show that voters’ views of Mr. Trump and the 2020 election are fracturing along lines of education.

A [*New York Times/Siena College poll*](https://int.nyt.com/data/documenttools/us0722-crosstabs-nyt071222/0f9f399b059138f9/full.pdf) released this month found that 64 percent of Republican primary voters without a college degree believed that Mr. Trump was the legitimate winner of the 2020 election. Forty-four percent of Republican voters with a bachelor’s degree or more said Mr. Trump was the winner.

Mr. Trump was still a clear favorite for Republican voters with a high school degree or less, with 62 percent saying they would vote for him in the 2024 Republican presidential primary if the election were held today. Less than 30 percent of Republican primary voters with college degrees said they would vote for Mr. Trump.

In Arizona’s race for governor, the Republican establishment has coalesced around Karrin Taylor Robson, a wealthy real estate developer pitching herself as a competent leader who has been reliably conservative ever since her days as a staff member in the Reagan White House.

The Trump wing of the party is locked in behind Kari Lake, a Trump-endorsed former news anchor who has stoked an anti-establishment rebellion fueled by falsehoods about the 2020 election and provocations like vowing to bomb smuggling tunnels on the southern border.

Ms. Robson has cut into Ms. Lake’s early lead in the polls, but recent surveys suggest that Ms. Lake is still ahead.

A forthcoming poll of 650 Arizona Republican primary voters by Alloy Analytics found a 10-point lead for Ms. Lake, largely on her strength with ***working-class*** voters, though other surveys show a much tighter race. Ms. Lake had a 15-point edge with voters whose families earn less than $50,000 a year. Republicans earning more than $200,000 a year supported Ms. Robson by a 14-point margin.

Ms. Robson has lent her campaign [*$15 million*](https://seethemoney.az.gov/PublicReports/2022/B5974ECD-637C-4778-82C6-A0E492241B86.pdf) and blanketed local television with ads. She has racked up a long list of endorsements from law-enforcement groups, Arizona’s three living Republican governors and prominent national Republicans, including former Vice President Mike Pence and former Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey.

Both women are running as anti-abortion, pro-gun, pro-wall conservatives who vow to mobilize law enforcement to address what they call a migrant invasion. Neither misses a chance to excoriate President Biden and Democrats for inflation, crime or culture-war flash points like critical race theory.

Each has tried to claim the mantle of the only true conservative in the race. In a debate, Ms. Lake attacked Ms. Robson for refusing to join other candidates in [*raising her hand*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgkoNLPIAc0) and declaring — falsely — that the 2020 election had been stolen. Ms. Robson tells voters that 2020 was “not fair,” pointing to news media bias and pandemic-driven changes to voting rules. In a recent CNN appearance, she declined to say whether she would have certified the 2020 results, as Mr. Ducey did.

In an interview, Ms. Robson said Ms. Lake’s posture as a conservative “has no basis in truth,” and her campaign attacked Ms. Lake for once supporting former President Barack Obama.

“She’s a really good actress,” Ms. Robson said. “We have real issues we have to deal with, from water to housing to inflation.”

Ms. Lake’s populist homilies and story of a Trump-era political awakening resonate with nontraditional conservatives who say they feel left out of mainstream Republican politics. Ms. Lake’s campaign did not grant an interview.

Moderates say that they simply want a reliable Republican to hold the governor’s seat, and that they are reassured by Ms. Robson’s reams of endorsements and policy plans.

On Friday, the divisions between the two candidates came into sharp focus at competing rallies where Ms. Robson was cheered on by Mr. Pence, and Mr. Trump appeared alongside Ms. Lake.

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But last month [*in Colorado*](https://www.cpr.org/2022/06/29/election-denial-is-a-losing-message-as-centrist-republicans-sweep-statewide-colorado-primaries/), Republican voters nominated a businessman who accepted the 2020 election results in a competitive U.S. Senate race. In Georgia, voters delivered a stinging defeat to Mr. Trump by overwhelmingly supporting the incumbent Republican governor and secretary of state who both refused to overturn the 2020 election results there.

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PHOTOS: A Trump rally last Friday in Prescott, Ariz. The event also featured Kari Lake, a Trump-backed candidate for governor.; The Trump wing of the party is locked in behind Ms. Lake, a former news anchor who is leading in polls. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA ZEHBRAUSKAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Waiting on July 14 to meet Karrin Taylor Robson, a candidate for governor who worked in the Reagan White House.; The Republican establishment has coalesced around Ms. Robson, a wealthy real estate developer. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY REBECCA NOBLE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[***An Experiment on the Economy Is About to Begin***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67KF-WNB1-JBG3-6284-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 19, 2023 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 10; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1548 words

**Byline:** By Robinson Meyer

**Body**

If you want to understand the immense windfall the Biden administration is about to bestow on green industries, take a look at hydrogen. Engineers still aren't exactly sure what role the gas will play in a climate-friendly economy, but they're pretty sure that (contra the ridicule in ''Glass Onion'') it will be useful for something. We might burn it to generate heat in factories, for instance, or use it to make high-tech chemicals.

And thanks to three laws Congress passed over the past two years -- the bipartisan infrastructure law, the CHIPS and Science Act and the climate-focused Inflation Reduction Act -- the industry will be very well taken care of. Over the next decade, the government is going to invest $8 billion in hydrogen ''hubs'' across the country, special zones where companies, universities and local governments can build the machinery and expertise that the new industry needs. Other hydrogen projects will qualify for a $10 billion pot of money in the Inflation Reduction Act or $1.5 billion in the infrastructure bill. Still others could draw from a new $6.3 billion program that will help industrial firms develop financially risky demonstration projects.

So that's up to $25.8 billion before you get to the bazooka: an uncapped tax credit for hydrogen that could pay out perhaps $100 billion or more over the next decades.

Few Americans realize it yet, but the trifecta of the Biden-era laws amounts to one of the biggest experiments in how the American government oversees the economy in a generation. If this experiment is successful, it will change how politicians think about managing the market for years to come. If it fails or misfires, then it will greatly limit the number of tools to fight climate change or a recession. The story of the 21st-century American economy is being shaped now.

I say ''experiment,'' but, really, there are two. The first concerns the economy. President Biden's team believes that it can move the United States toward a more robust, high-capacity and even re-industrialized economy. Can it? And can it use policy moreover to make sure that innovative ideas don't get lost in the research lab or patent office, but instead make their way to the factory floor and corporate showroom, generating jobs and economic value along the way?

The second experiment: Can the same economy -- which has, virtually since the abolition of slavery, derived a good deal of its industrial energy from extracting hydrocarbons from the ground and setting them on fire -- find a new primary energy source? Even today, America generates 79 percent of its energy from fossil fuels. The administration is, in a sense, trying to conduct a high-stakes heart transplant on the economy while the patient remains alive on the table.

Don't get me wrong: Some kind of climate boom is now all but assured. The investment bank Credit Suisse predicted last year that the Inflation Reduction Act would put more than $800 billion into the economy by the end of the decade, galvanizing more than $1.7 trillion in climate-friendly public and private spending overall. The law will transform the United States into the ''world's leading energy provider,'' the bank said. The American renewable industry alone could attract 78 percent more investment per year by 2031, according to the energy-research firm Wood Mackenzie.

But I worry that the federal government has started its experiments too haphazardly. The Inflation Reduction Act did not emerge from careful study and bipartisan consensus building, but from intraparty haggling and a harried legislative process. Even the bipartisan CHIPS Act was more of a crisis measure than a strategic intervention. These shortcomings are forgivable; in the Inflation Reduction Act's case, it's not like Republicans were ever going to help pass a climate bill. But these constraints have deprived the government of the strong institutions, internal expertise and administrative capacity that have made similar experiments successful in other countries.

For practical purposes, that means, first, that the government won't be able to spend all this money in the right place. The U.S. financial system persistently struggles to fund projects that take a long time to turn a profit and that can expect to have only modest returns. Unfortunately, the biggest and most important physical infrastructure -- factories, transmission lines -- often fall under that category. In other countries, industrial policy has entailed creating an agile, entrepreneurial agency that can get money to the right companies in the right ways -- as a loan, as equity, as a purchase guarantee.

Congress took some steps in that direction last year. The Inflation Reduction Act beefed up the Loan Programs Office, the Department of Energy's in-house bank, and it established a new green lending office within the Environmental Protection Agency. But Congress has put these institutions on a short leash with a limited mandate. This means that the government can't support as many risky investments as it should.

Second, the government may lack the ability to coordinate its own actions. Late last year, the Biden administration declined to help reopen a ''green'' aluminum factory in Ferndale, Wash., that was exactly the kind of low-carbon industry it wants to champion. The local union, electric vehicle makers and the state's Democratic leadership all wanted to revive the factory. The project even has national-security relevance, since the United States currently imports aluminum from Russia. But Mr. Biden chose not to intercede with the local electricity provider, the Bonneville Power Administration, to supply the plant with enough cheap power to operate even though it is a federal agency ostensibly under the president's control. Never mind the right hand not knowing what the left hand is doing: The right hand couldn't get the left hand to plug the cord in.

Finally, the government may not understand enough about the companies it's trying to help. In Taiwan and South Korea, industrial-policy agencies don't only hand out money; they constantly gather information from the private sector and use it to adjust goals and policies over time. The Inflation Reduction Act contains very few mechanisms for this kind of in-flight course adjustment. Its main incentives are tax credits, which are hard to repeal once they're in place and hard to fix if they're not working. They are an unusually mindless way to incentivize companies to change their behavior.

And this points to a related concern: that we have underestimated just how hard decarbonization will be. One of the most cherished and widely held ideas in climate activism is that we could have solved climate change by now if only we'd had the ''political will.''

This idea, once true enough, may soon outlive its utility. Mr. Biden and his successors will discover that decarbonization is an inherently difficult and complex societal challenge that cannot be solved with money alone. Some important activities will be legitimately hard to do without emitting carbon pollution; there will be some trade-offs that flummox even the most committed progressives.

Which is to say: Even if the U.S. had an agency that could finance or approve any industrial project in the exact right way at the precise right time, it would still be legitimately unclear which projects it should support. Will a new lithium mine create jobs and build political support for decarbonization, or will its local pollution effects provoke backlash? If a new hydrogen hub opens in your hometown, will you love the growth or hate the higher housing costs?

The Biden experiments bear the mark of a particular set of lawmakers and White House staff members who needed to meet a particular set of goals. They sought to stimulate the pandemic-depleted economy, reduce carbon pollution in a durable way, respond to what they saw as the Chinese manufacturing juggernaut and -- perhaps above all -- revitalize the American ***working class*** to prevent the next Trumpian crisis. They stumbled on a germ of an idea, a climate-friendly ''industrial strategy,'' and after 18 months of excruciating legislative wrangling, they have somehow made it the law of the land.

But the lawmakers who wrote that policy are not charged with carrying it out, and many of the officials who championed it most -- like Brian Deese, the director of the National Economic Council -- are now leaving the White House. Will the next crew understand what they've inherited? In order for Mr. Biden's two experiments to have a chance of success, the officials must not go on autopilot or disarm the parts of the Inflation Reduction Act meant to build domestic political support. And they cannot assume that everything about the coming climate boom will work out in the end. More than just the country's fate depends on it.

Robinson Meyer is a climate change reporter in Washington, D.C., and a contributing writer at The Atlantic.

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**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page SR10.

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[***The Queue***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63W0-1441-DXY4-X52X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 17, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section AR; Column 0; Arts and Leisure Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 378 words

**Byline:** By Scott Heller

**Body**

Scott Heller, who oversees Arts & Leisure, hasn't seen ''Squid Game,'' has read the Franzen novel and is excited to contemplate Frances McDormand, Saiorse Ronan and Ruth Negga all playing Lady Macbeth over the next year. In the meantime: 'Mr. Corman'

The impassive face of Joseph Gordon-Levitt, struggling to stay hopeful as he fights anxiety, will be among the most memorable screen images of my year. His soulful performance as a fifth-grade teacher is enough to recommend this tender Apple TV+ series, which he created. But look out, too, for Arturo Castro as the ***working-class*** roommate reminding Mr. Corman of his privilege; Debra Winger as his seen-it-all mother; and, late in the series, a titanic turn by Hugo Weaving as an unwelcome face from the past.

Winfred Rembert: 1945-2021

The New Yorker introduced me to this heroic artist with a multi-page spread of his wrenching work in a May issue. Now Fort Gansevoort Gallery in the Meatpacking District will allow a closer look at his often autobiographical images of chain gangs and other episodes of injustice in the Jim Crow south, fashioned from colored dye and carved leather.

'Saint Maud'

Early Halloween tip: Step into the shadows with Morfydd Clark as a tormented hospice nurse looking after (or holding captive?) a dying former dancer played by Jennifer Ehle. Just whose soul needs saving? Rose Glass's beautifully controlled, ultra-creepy directorial debut -- streaming on Hulu, Paramount+ and elsewhere -- will keep you guessing.

Welcome to Your Fantasy

Did you know that in 1987 the founder of Chippendales put out a hit on his business partner, the pec-tacular strip-fest's artistic impresario? I didn't, until I got hooked on this dishy nine-part podcast during a long drive. And in Natalia Petrzela the series has an ideal host: a professor with expertise in gender and fitness culture who is not above fangirling as she anticipates the ''tip and kiss.''

Serpentwithfeet

The queer soul singer's luscious album ''Deacon'' has been a necessary balm during the pandemic. Now, after listening on repeat over a moody summer, it's the sly wit in lines like this (from ''Malik'') that keep me smiling: ''Blessed is the man who gambles/Blessed is the man who wears socks with his sandals.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/arts/a-few-favorites-winfred-rembert-and-a-history-of-chippendales.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/arts/a-few-favorites-winfred-rembert-and-a-history-of-chippendales.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Juno Temple and Joseph Gordon-Levitt in the series ''Mr. Corman'' on Apple TV+. (PHOTOGRAPH BY APPLE TV+)

Jennifer Ehle in ''Saint Maud.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANGUS YOUNG/A24 FILMS)

The singer Serpentwithfeet. (PHOTOGRAPH BY FRAZER HARRISON/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** October 17, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Lorelei***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6383-V0V1-DXY4-X0W6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 30, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 347 words

**Byline:** By Teo Bugbee

**Body**

Pablo Schreiber and Jena Malone attempt to provide an anchor for this listless character drama.

In one of the more fanciful sequences in the melodrama ''Lorelei,'' the film's protagonist, Wayland (Pablo Schreiber), dreams of his lover, Dolores (Jena Malone), on the beach. She beckons like a siren, beautiful until he gets close. Then Dolores screams, becoming a monster. The image presents a ham-handed metaphor, and it's indicative of the lack of imagination that hampers the literal-minded drama.

When the movie begins, Wayland has just been released from a 15-year prison sentence. He returns home to rural Oregon, a world of dirty dive bars and motorcycle gangs. It's also where Wayland met his first love, Dolores, who is now a single mother of three, scraping by on not enough money and not enough social support.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The pair rekindle their romance, but Dolores is erratic, prone to mood swings, quick to accuse both Wayland and her kids of betrayals. Wayland is thrust into becoming the stabilizing force for an entire family, a responsibility he resents.

As a first time feature filmmaker, the director Sabrina Doyle demonstrates an ability to create an environment for her rural, ***working class*** characters that feels specific and lived-in. Couches are never clear from clutter, wood-paneled homes have been stained by too many hard rains. Schreiber is hulking and tender, and Malone astutely plays her character as an overburdened adolescent, lost in the expectations of adulthood.

But Doyle displays less adeptness with creating memorable images or narrative momentum. Her film plods through Wayland's disillusionment, with conflicts that feel repetitive and dreams that are mired in self-consciousness. The film is invested in accurately depicting the details of its character's lives, but its collection of studied impressions doesn't coalesce into a coherent final portrait.

LoreleiNot rated. Running time: 1 hour 51 minutes. In theaters and available to rent or buy on Apple TV, Google Play and other streaming platforms and pay TV operators.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/29/movies/lorelei-review-a-rural-melodrama-lost-at-sea.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/29/movies/lorelei-review-a-rural-melodrama-lost-at-sea.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Jena Malone and Pablo Schreiber in ''Lorelei.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY Vertical Entertainment FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 30, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘Lorelei’ Review: A Rural Melodrama, Lost at Sea***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:637X-3RR1-DXY4-X4X3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 29, 2021 Thursday 00:25 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 364 words

**Byline:** Teo Bugbee

**Highlight:** Pablo Schreiber and Jena Malone attempt to provide an anchor for this listless character drama.

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[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/aXR1gDNPhT4)]

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Lorelei

Not rated. Running time: 1 hour 51 minutes. In theaters and available to rent or buy on Apple TV, Google Play and other streaming platforms and pay TV operators.

PHOTO: Jena Malone and Pablo Schreiber in “Lorelei.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY Vertical Entertainment FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 30, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Way You Get Around New York City Is About to Change; Mara Gay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:669M-KBB1-JBG3-64XD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 4, 2022 Sunday 13:28 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 909 words

**Byline:** Mara Gay and Timothy Mulcare

**Highlight:** The city’s crumbling infrastructure is finally getting some upgrades.

**Body**

Like an old, well-loved couch, crumbling infrastructure is a fixture of life in New York City.

Finally, that’s about to change. Over the next several years, the city is set to receive billions for its aging railways, tunnels and bridges, including funds from the [*federal spending package*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/15/nyregion/infrastructure-bill-new-york.html) approved in Washington late last year, which will support some of the city’s most urgent transit needs. These investments, along with other federal and state support for infrastructure, are long overdue. They stand to improve life in America’s biggest city, helping reduce commute times for millions and presenting an opportunity to ease the city’s housing crisis by better connecting more affordable areas of the region to jobs and transit. Together, these ambitious projects are a reminder of the critical role that public money plays in building America’s most essential infrastructure, in large cities like New York and elsewhere. The private sector can’t do it all.

One reason big public works projects are hard to execute is that they often take years to complete, making them less appealing to politicians looking to deliver quick, obvious results to constituents and to take credit for a finished project. That’s why efforts like fixing the signal system in New York City’s subway have sometimes taken a back seat to sprucing up stations or installing new bus stops. The best way to ensure the completion of less sexy but still vital infrastructure projects is to build strong public support for them. Here’s a look at some of the biggest projects on the way and how these investments could transform life in New York.

A NEW LINK BETWEEN NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

The Gateway project calls for digging a new two-track tunnel between New York’s Penn Station and New Jersey’s Newark Penn Station. The huge undertaking is to include repairs to the existing tunnel under the Hudson River, which is more than 110 years old and sustained significant damage during Superstorm Sandy in 2012. Once that tunnel is rehabilitated and the new tunnel is in operation, capacity along one of the country’s busiest commuter routes should be doubled. The complex project is expected to take more than a decade. But once completed, Gateway would mean better train service from the New Jersey suburbs, helping take cars off the road. And by making the more affordable parts of New Jersey better connected to New York City, it could help ease the regional housing crisis.

GETTING THE SECOND AVENUE SUBWAY TO HARLEM

The first phase of the Second Avenue subway project vastly improved subway access on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. An infusion of federal dollars could finally allow the M.T.A. to move forward on extending the Q line from 96th Street and Second Avenue to central Harlem, at 125th Street and Lexington Avenue. This is a critical upgrade for a system that needs to improve rapid transit service to high-poverty areas.

CONNECTING THE NORTHERN SUBURBS

The Penn Station Access project is to connect Westchester County, Connecticut and the Bronx directly with Manhattan’s west side, creating an alternative to Grand Central Terminal for those heading to the city from some northern suburbs. It would also add four Metro-North stations in underserved areas of the Bronx, to better connect ***working-class*** and poor residents of those areas with Manhattan and the rest of the city.

MORE SERVICE BETWEEN BROOKLYN AND QUEENS

The Interborough Express project would join existing but underused railway lines to connect parts of Brooklyn and Queens to each other, rather than taking commuters to Manhattan, as most of New York City’s subway lines do. The project would directly connect neighborhoods from Bay Ridge in Brooklyn to Jackson Heights in Queens, reducing commuting times in fast-growing parts of New York City. Building the Interborough Express would involve bringing passenger service alongside some of the city’s freight railways, like the Bay Ridge Branch, which hasn’t carried passenger trains since 1924.

A BETTER HUB FOR BUSES

The Port Authority Bus Terminal in midtown, which connects New Jersey commuters to Manhattan, is being rebuilt. What might be the nation’s ugliest bus terminal will be replaced by a modern facility with increased capacity for buses, as well as infrastructure for an electric fleet. The project will also improve the streetscape around the terminal, adding much-needed green space. Though the project is likely to be funded largely with Port Authority revenue, officials there say they hope to compete for federal infrastructure dollars.

EASIER ACCESS FROM LONG ISLAND

The East Side Access project connects the Long Island Rail Road to Grand Central Terminal, where train capacity has already been greatly increased. Its completion will make for an easier commute from Long Island to the city’s East Side while improving access to Long Island for more New York City residents. The decades-long project has been plagued by budget overruns and is expected to cost taxpayers more than [*$11 billion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/25/nyregion/mta-east-side-access-11-billion.html) and to be completed in December.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/31/opinion/letters/letters-to-editor-new-york-times-women.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://help.nytimes.com/hc/en-us/articles/115014925288-How-to-submit-a-letter-to-the-editor). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](mailto:letters@nytimes.com).

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PHOTO: Looking north through a portion of the subway tunnel below Second Avenue in Harlem. (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Sanders Is Counting on His Own Firewall: Michigan’s Blue-Collar Voters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YCV-VRC1-JBG3-61WD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 9, 2020 Monday 18:23 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1640 words

**Byline:** Trip Gabriel

**Highlight:** White ***working-class*** voters lifted Bernie Sanders to victory over Hillary Clinton in Michigan four years ago, but Joe Biden won that demographic on Super Tuesday, as well as African-Americans.

**Body**

White ***working-class*** voters lifted Bernie Sanders to victory over Hillary Clinton in Michigan four years ago, but Joe Biden won that demographic on Super Tuesday, as well as African-Americans.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Dave Burdick has supported Vermont’s democratic socialist in Congress since 2005, a full decade before [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html)’s first presidential race.

“I’ve been very fortunate, I’ve been the beneficiary of white male privilege my whole life,” said Mr. Burdick, 65, who owns a small business in Western Michigan. “It’s not fair. We’ve got to change the dynamics.”

He and his wife, Mary Lukens, are anxious about putting a daughter through college, saving for retirement and shouldering up to $30,000 a year in health costs. “All these economic issues that Sanders brings up are something that we experience daily,” Ms. Lukens said.

At a Sanders rally here on Sunday, the couple skewed older than most others by about a generation, though they shared the disdain of the Sanders youth brigade for moderate Democrats like [*Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) “Growing up during Nam, you look around and just want a choice for a change,” Mr. Burdick said. “You know what — we were right back then and we’re right now.”

With Mr. Biden the beneficiary of a surge after carrying 10 states on Super Tuesday last week, Sanders supporters in Michigan, which votes Tuesday, know they are his firewall in the first of several Midwest states going to the polls in the next two weeks, likely writing his fate.

Even as Mr. Biden is heading a bandwagon with former 2020 rivals and moderate Democratic voters [*clambering aboard*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html), Mr. Sanders has a loyal base that is emotionally bound to him, an attachment rooted in their own economic struggles and lived experiences, rather than triangulating the most electable candidate.

Tuesday’s primary contests, in six states including Missouri and Washington, are unfolding against a backdrop of high anxiety over the economic and health consequences of the coronavirus outbreak. For most Sanders voters, plummeting stock prices matter less than the broader injustices he champions around wage inequality, health care and student loan debt.

If Mr. Sanders defies [*expectations*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) in Michigan, a state he won in the 2016 primary, it will be because his all-out efforts here over the last four days succeeded in broadening his support, reversing the demographic trends that broke against him on Super Tuesday.

While doubling his organizing staff in the state to 25, he is running TV ads that attack Mr. Biden on trade and Social Security, expanding his outreach to voters and holding a multitude of events.

Meanwhile, a confident Mr. Biden scheduled only one visit to the state in recent days, on Monday, when he planned a rally in Detroit with Senators Kamala Harris and Cory Booker. [*Mr. Booker endorsed the former vice president on Monday*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html). Earlier he sent Senator Amy Klobuchar for a couple of low-key events.

“If you look at what Joe’s running here versus what we’re running here,” Bill Neidhardt, a Sanders spokesman, said over the weekend, “they’ll send a surrogate or two out here, but we’re going to have Bernie talk to as many people as possible, and then we’re going to have door knockers talk to as many people as possible.”

On Sunday, according to campaign counts, Mr. Sanders drew crowds of more than 7,000 in Grand Rapids, where the Rev. Jesse Jackson, the two-time presidential candidate, [*endorsed him,*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) and over 10,000 in Ann Arbor, where he was introduced by America’s second most popular democratic socialist, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York.

“In order for us to win we have to grow, we must be inclusive, we must bring more people into this movement,” Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said.

One possible sign of progress in widening his coalition is that former supporters of Senator Elizabeth Warren, who [*dropped out of the Democratic presidential race*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) last week but has yet to make an endorsement, were not hard to find in the Sanders multitudes. One of them, Tom Sapkowski, said, “I don’t think Biden’s a hard enough left turn.”

Mr. Sapkowski, who worked 35 years “turning wrenches” as an auto mechanic, has lived the contradictions of the American economy, where unemployment is low but incomes for those who aren’t rich feel like they’ve flatlined. “Things have not changed for the middle class for the past 50 years,” he said. He remembered “during the Clinton administration where I made like 80, 90 grand, but apparently that was too much.”

His wife, Kim, who lost her job as an education administrator in January, said: “I was just thinking this morning, my dad, he was 58 when he retired from the telephone company. He had a very nice retirement. Belonged to the union. And here I am 55 and nowhere near to retiring.”

Younger voters often brought up the huge burden of college debt for their generation, which Mr. Sanders proposes to cancel.

At a rally on Saturday in Flint, as well as one on Friday in Detroit — both cities with majority black populations — the Sanders supporters were largely a sea of white faces. They revealed that Mr. Sanders has not overcome his weakness with black voters. Despite years of outreach to African-Americans since his loss to Hillary Clinton in the 2016 Democratic race, Mr. Sanders saw black voters choosing his rival in Southern states on Super Tuesday.

He won Michigan that year — the high-water mark of his campaign — by carrying white voters, especially whites without a college degree, who represented more than one in three voters. Winning those voters again not just in Michigan but in Ohio and Illinois, which vote on March 17, undergirds Mr. Sanders’s hope for a comeback.

His TV ads and his speeches hammer Mr. Biden for supporting trade deals including the North American Free Trade Agreement, reviled by many factory workers, and for past statements suggesting an openness to cutting Social Security.

“This city got destroyed by NAFTA,” said Glenn Chatters, a Sanders supporter in Flint, who works as a heating and air conditioning installer. In 1992, he voted for the third-party candidate Ross Perot because of his warnings about trade deals.

He is hopeful, if not entirely optimistic, that Mr. Sanders can again win ***working-class*** white voters in Michigan, many of whom in 2016 may have been voting against Mrs. Clinton and have since been lost to President Trump.

“I hope that people actually stop and listen to what he actually has to say, instead of the party lines,” Mr. Chatters said. “Sometimes people are so swayed by the term ‘socialism’ when they’re driving on their free roads, they’re taking their kids to the free school.”

In the Super Tuesday primaries, it was Mr. Biden who won ***working-class*** white voters, helping him to carry Northern states including Maine and Minnesota, [*an ominous sign for Mr. Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html). Stanley Greenberg, a Democratic pollster, said he was skeptical of Mr. Sanders’s ability to repeat his 2016 Michigan win, or his chances elsewhere in the Midwest, because Democrats this year, who singularly want to beat Mr. Trump, are less open to revisiting arguments over trade or Social Security.

“Voters, astonishingly, have taken over the nominating process,” he said. “Biden did well among blacks, suburban whites and white ***working-class*** voters because they want him to take on Trump. That was so powerful on Super Tuesday.”

Most Sanders supporters said they would grieve his failure to win the nomination if it comes to that, but they would vote for Mr. Biden in November. But not all.

In Flint, the fiery Harvard professor Cornel West, a Sanders surrogate, [*wound up the crowd*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) by accusing Mr. Biden of being “a neoliberal,” eliciting hearty boos. Afterward, an audience member, Bob Granville, echoed the critique. Neoliberalism, he said, “means socialism for the rich and a rugged capitalism for everyone else.”

If Mr. Biden is the nominee, said Mr. Granville, a retired work-force trainer, he plans to vote for a third-party candidate in protest. “People say, oh, you’re going to be part of letting Trump in there. I say, if you’re going to run Biden, we deserve Trump.”

Despite the avowed desire of the Sanders campaign to broaden his appeal, Mr. Sanders himself has a penchant for pushing away moderate voters he needs by frequently attacking the Democratic “establishment.” On Sunday, he [*accused*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) party leaders of forcing Ms. Klobuchar and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., out of the race to help Mr. Biden “and try to defeat me.”

David Betras, a former Democratic chairman of Mahoning County, Ohio, in an industrial region where Mr. Trump did well in 2016, said he feared that the more Mr. Sanders attacks “the establishment,” the more enraged his supporters will become, with many likely to sit out the general election. “His supporters are fervent and will feel betrayed by Democrats.”

That is not an inevitability. Mr. Sanders explicitly tells supporters in nearly every speech that he will back Mr. Biden as the nominee.

And there are anecdotal signs that Mr. Sanders may be growing support.

Eric Mays, a city councilman in Flint, arrived as an undecided voter to his rally there on Saturday, which was billed as “a town hall on racial and economic justice.”

“Bernie has got me fired up,” he said. “I might very well be voting Bernie on Tuesday.”

Mr. Mays said that despite the overwhelming support of black voters in Southern states for Mr. Biden, Michigan could break differently. “We know Bernie Sanders will get black voters out of Flint,” he said.

“I hope that we see him all the way through this year.”

PHOTOS: White ***working-class*** voters lifted Bernie Sanders past Hillary Clinton in Michigan four years ago, but Joe Biden won that demographic on Super Tuesday.; Mr. Sanders at a rally Saturday in Grand Rapids, Mich. He has stepped up his efforts in the state in recent days. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Essential Patricia Highsmith***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67R2-W7K1-JBG3-64YC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 8, 2023 Wednesday 15:38 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1677 words

**Byline:** Sarah Weinman

**Highlight:** Known for her psychopathic antiheroes and novels such as “The Talented Mr. Ripley” and “The Price of Salt,” Highsmith was a tangle of contradictions.

**Body**

Though I have been a reader of crime fiction all of my adult life, I avoided the work of [*Patricia Highsmith*](https://www.nytimes.com/1995/02/05/obituaries/patricia-highsmith-writer-of-crime-tales-dies-at-74.html) (1921-95) until my early 30s. Bleak worldviews weren’t the issue; perhaps it was the unconscious feeling that spending too much time in Highsmith’s brain might alter mine irrevocably.

What finally opened the trapdoor was Joan Schenkar’s nonlinear, idiosyncratic biography, “[*The Talented Miss Highsmith*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/20/books/review/Winterson-t.html)” (2009). (Another Highsmith biography, released in 2003, Andrew Wilson’s “Beautiful Shadow,” is also worth seeking out, though I’d skip Richard Bradford’s 2021 effort, “Devils, Lusts, and Strange Desires.”) Schenkar, who [*died in 2021*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/21/books/joan-schenkar-dead.html), made Highsmith seem so relentlessly complicated, maddening and fascinating that I had to know how that specific mind produced her books.

So what is it about Patricia Highsmith that keeps us reading? I’ll answer strictly for myself: Her concepts are daring, her portrayals of men in the throes of personality disorder and psychopathic leanings are equally repulsive and propulsive, and there is enough sublimated autobiography in her work that searching out the facts of her life reveals all manner of infuriating contradictions.

She was a lesbian who identified more with men; an ardent pursuer of pleasure, especially in her youth (which emerges more wholly in a new documentary, “Loving Highsmith”); a devotee of cats and snails; a raging antisemite; and a longtime expat still deeply and identifiably American. Because she could never hold on to happiness, Highsmith subsumed it in her work, always her best and most lasting love.

I’m glad I waited until well into adulthood to read Highsmith, because danger lurks for anyone who might take life lessons from her memorable male antiheroes. Now I have only a handful of later volumes left to read, which I will dole out over the coming years: The thought of having no new Highsmith to read leaves me a little bereft.

Where should I begin if I’m totally new to her work?

Consider “Strangers on a Train” (1950). The setup, of course, is now deeply embedded in popular culture. Two men meet on a train. One, Guy Haines, admits to unhappiness in his marriage and the other, Charles Anthony Bruno, blithely proposes a murder exchange: Guy’s wife for Bruno’s father. Alfred Hitchcock immortalized the story in his film adaptation, and countless books, movies and television shows have repurposed this concept.

Revisiting Highsmith’s novel reveals the true astringency of the premise, that a seemingly cavalier proposition has the power to cause serious and permanent ruin. Just by listening to Bruno, Guy is marked, and Highsmith wrings out every available facet of this cat-and-mouse game that is fated to end badly for all.

I’d like a classic.

“The Talented Mr. Ripley” (1955) is a standard-bearer, indelibly woven into the fabric of contemporary crime fiction. (And it’s been turned into two noteworthy films — I prefer “Purple Noon” (1960) and Alain Delon’s bewitching performance to the more cinematically expansive 1999 Anthony Minghella film.)

Tom Ripley, whom Highsmith identified with, is a shape-shifter, con artist and sociopath who insinuates himself into the life of Dickie Greenleaf, whose rich and fabulous existence he would kill for. Marge, Dickie’s girlfriend and a writer, takes notes even when she knows better. Highsmith compared herself to Ripley, of course, but I’d argue she and Marge resemble each other more than she ever admitted.

There’s so much to sink into: gorgeous descriptions of seaside Italy; homoerotic love sublimated into cold rage; the rich’s casual disdain for the ***working class***; abrupt murder and identity theft. No wonder Highsmith returned to the character four more times; my favorite of the later books is “The Boy Who Followed Ripley” (1980).

I loved the movie ‘Carol.’

In “The Price of Salt” (1952), the movie’s source material, the romance between Therese, a shopgirl, and Carol, a glamorous but deeply unhappy married woman, displays Highsmith at her most vulnerable and autobiographical. The road trip chapters are a special wonder, highlighting the pair’s growing bond in tandem with the expansiveness and possibility of the American landscape. Highsmith wouldn’t claim responsibility for the novel, which she first published under a pseudonym, until the early 1990s, by which time it had sold millions of copies and wowed readers for its happy ending — a rarity for lesbian fiction then and for many years thereafter.

I’m in the mood for creative and destructive examinations of marriage.

My fondness for Highsmith’s third novel, “The Blunderer” (1954), is no secret: I reprinted it in the Library of America collection I edited in 2015, “Women Crime Writers: Eight Suspense Novels of the 1940s &amp; 50s.” She puts her protagonist, Walter Stackhouse, through some serious machinations. Frustrated in marriage, he drifts toward malevolent fantasies about murdering his wife. But when he reads a newspaper article about an actual wife-killer, Walter begins to stalk the other man. Things grow even weirder, alternately pitch-black to the point of slapstick, when Walter’s wife dies and the two men engage in a strange pas de deux.

What stands out for me, though, is the novel’s depiction of police brutality. Lawrence Corby, the police lieutenant bent on arresting both men, revels in the power afforded to him by the badge. Law, in Highsmith’s world, is never tied to order.

How about even more creative and destructive examinations of marriage?

Few authors begin their careers with such sustained brilliance as did Highsmith with her first five novels, all listed here. “Deep Water” (1957) is a particular standout, exploring the vicissitudes of male impotence, misogyny and murder through the story of Vic and Melinda Van Allen, a married couple whose toxicity rivals that of Nick and Amy Dunne in Gillian Flynn’s thriller “[*Gone Girl*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/30/books/gone-girl-by-gillian-flynn.htmlhttps://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/30/books/gone-girl-by-gillian-flynn.html).” (Indeed, Flynn [*cites*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/wall-street-journal-book-club-gillian-flynn-on-patricia-highsmith-1398362234) “Deep Water” as her favorite Highsmith novel.)

Melinda’s penchant for extramarital affairs provokes Vic to maximum jealousy levels, to the point where he brags, falsely, about killing one of her lovers. Actual murder is inevitable, though shocking nonetheless. “Deep Water” may be Highsmith at her darkest and finest. As a bonus, there’s a recent (albeit uneven) film adaptation starring Ana de Armas and Ben Affleck.

What is Highsmith’s most underrated novel?

Highsmith’s 1960s novels are for the most part good, but not as memorable as her earlier work. “The Glass Cell” (1964), however, is an exception, in part because of its unusual back story: Highsmith had exchanged correspondence with an inmate who was a fan of her work, and used his experience as the basis for a novel about what incarceration, especially wrongful, does to a man’s mind. The opening scene of extended prison violence is wrenching and graphic, and the entire story resonates today.

Is there anything for a nonfiction lover?

It may seem counterintuitive, but don’t approach “Plotting and Writing Suspense Fiction” (1966) thinking it’s a guide to writing fiction. Rather, it’s a blueprint of how Highsmith conceived of her own work, and a window into some of the distinct aspects of her intelligence that led to her greatest successes — and books that didn’t quite work. (The chapter on “The Glass Cell” is particularly informative.) Only Patricia Highsmith could write a Highsmith novel, no matter how many subsequent generations of writers attempt to do so.

Give me something short and bitter.

Highsmith was a superb short story writer, dating all the way to her first, award-winning 1945 tale, “The Heroine.” (I reprinted it in my 2013 anthology “Troubled Daughters, Twisted Wives.”) Most of her stories, like the harrowing “The Terrapin,” found an initial home in Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine before their book reprints. But “Little Tales of Misogyny” (1975) is a different animal: Originally published in German years before it was translated into English, this collection of linked stories, some just a page or two long, probes all manner of ways that men hate women, women hate themselves and everyone struggles under the weight of patriarchy. Sympathy is in short supply and the pH balance skews wildly acidic. Highsmith spares no one, including herself.

I’ve read plenty about Tom Ripley. What else should I try?

Because Highsmith is so commonly associated with male characters and alter egos, it is something of a shock to encounter “Edith’s Diary” (1977). The book follows Edith Howland, a mid-20th-century, middle-aged woman desperate to hang on to her role as a housewife and mother. In her journals, she comes off as a success, as does her son, Cliffie, and nothing much troubles them. Reality, however, is far more fractured, and the degree to which Edith succumbs to the dreamlike qualities of her diary causes even more damage than staying true to the messiness and ugliness of the real world.

I want to see Highsmith’s complications up close.

Anna von Planta, Highsmith’s longtime European editor, assembled a mammoth volume of Highsmith’s diaries, “[*Patricia Highsmith: Her Diaries and Notebooks, 1941-1995*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/08/books/review-patricia-highsmith-diaries-notebooks.html)” (2021), distilled from thousands of pages Highsmith kept over the course of her life. As the New York Times critic Dwight Garner [*noted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/08/books/review-patricia-highsmith-diaries-notebooks.html) in his review, the early sections “comprise one of the most observant and ecstatic accounts I’ve read — and it’s a crowded field! — about being young and alive in New York City.”

I, too, was captivated by Highsmith’s chronicling of what it was like to be a young, queer woman out and about in wartime Manhattan, when the rules were being rewritten, albeit fleetingly. But the later sections of her diaries carry great power, too, illuminating her pursuit of art, her self-destructive streaks, her increasingly virulent anti-Semitism and the costs — to herself and especially to others — of how she created her work.

This marvelous collection will appeal to Highsmith completists, as well as readers tentatively wading into the author’s deeper waters for the first time.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Photo: Swiss Literary Archives, Bern FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***Milking the Heartache From Bachata's Soul***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:668Y-TJT1-JBG3-601M-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 899 words

**Byline:** By Isabelia Herrera

**Body**

''Fórmula Vol. 3'' soars when it expands the scope of the genre and the singer's own approaches to its trademarks, but falls flat when it relies on backward-looking tropes.

Ever since he left the Bronx boy band Aventura a decade ago to go solo, the bachata luminary Romeo Santos has been teaching a graduate seminar in melodrama. He is a disciplined thespian, especially across his ''Fórmula'' series, a collection of albums driven by audacious, genre-crossing collaborations and intrepid experiments with pop, hip-hop and reggaeton.

Santos, 41, has an unwavering devotion to bachata -- a Dominican genre with Black and ***working-class*** origins known for its bedrock of amargue, a peerless brand of bleeding-heart bitterness. Still, he has never really been a traditionalist. (His 2019 album, ''Utopía,'' was a rare exception, an LP that genuflected to and recruited genre-defining forebears like Raulín Rodriguez and Anthony Santos.)

Instead, he has consistently sought out new ways of refreshing bachata's templates while developing some of his own trademarks -- signature catchphrases, caustic disses and salacious onstage antics. He has brought in English lyrics and hints of R&B, and ventured into the world of reggaeton, most memorably alongside Don Omar (''Ella y Yo'' from 2005) and Daddy Yankee and Nicky Jam (''Bella y Sensual'' from 2017). Years before the music industry became obsessed with Anglo pop artists singing in Spanish, he had A-list figures from the world of hip-hop and R&B appearing on his albums, including Usher, Nicki Minaj and Drake. At a moment when other high-profile stars are experimenting with bachata (see Rosalía and the Weeknd on ''La Fama,'' as well as the intro to Bad Bunny's ''Tití Me Preguntó), it feels even more urgent to recognize that Santos saw its potential for global popularity and creative reimagining all along.

On ''Fórmula Vol. 3,'' the latest, 21-track installment of the series and his fifth solo album overall, Santos includes unexpected team-ups with Justin Timberlake and the regional Mexican star Christian Nodal. He also doubles down on the theatrics, submerging listeners further into his acerbic torch songs about cruel betrayal, bitter revenge and unrequited love, sometimes with mixed success.

Of the collaborations, ''El Pañuelo'' with the Spanish star Rosalía is an immediate standout: Her melismatic vocal runs flutter into focus in the intro, and in the chorus, a call-and-response lament between the two singers recalls the 2002 hit ''Te Quiero Igual Que Ayer'' by Monchy y Alexandra. The misty-eyed merengue ''15,550 Noches,'' which unites the genre stalwarts Toño Rosario, Rubby Pérez and Fernandito Villalona, is nostalgic, doleful and explosive all at once. And on the booming Christian Nodal feature ''Me Extraño,'' a song about returning to yourself after being wronged by a paramour, Santos finds a perfect balance between the thematic commonalities of mariachi and bachata.

His dramatic flourishes are most palpable when he makes full use of cohesive metaphors and potent storytelling as on ''Ciudadana,'' a diaspora tale about a romance separated by borders, complete with aerial sound effects, like a flight attendant announcing a landing. Santos's yearning, crisp falsetto is most effective in these contexts: On the corrosive opener ''Bebo,'' an alcohol-soaked send-off to a duplicitous lover, his voice trembles with despair, and he feigns intoxication in a spoken outro. It's a vocal performance that magnifies the best parts of bachata's theatrical core.

But Santos missteps when he falls into religious and gendered tropes. On ''Nirvana,'' a ballad written as a monologue to God, he attempts to reconcile the existence of social and political injustice with God's assumed benevolence. It descends into low-level political signaling, with an exculpatory name-drop of the Dominican dembow star Tokischa and the Puerto Rican rapper Anuel AA, who have been blamed for promoting crime and drug use.

Both ''La Última Vez'' and ''Suegra'' reproduce antediluvian gender stereotypes. ''Suegra'' is the bigger disappointment, though it is expertly produced and arranged by Iván ''MateTraxx'' Chévere, Martires De León and Santos. The nylon-string guitar-picking complements his high-pitched tenor as Santos sings about the clichéd image of an overbearing mother-in-law. But then his lyrics turn violent, as he describes poisoning her coffee and pushing her body off the side of a cliff in a car (the song even ends with a car crashing sound effect). In a country that currently has the second highest rate of femicide in Latin America, the gag doesn't land as a lighthearted farce; it just feels irresponsible and out-of-touch.

''Sin Fin,'' a collaboration with Timberlake, is perhaps the most paradigmatic song on an album rooted in both the past and future. Its syrupy celebration of endless love sometimes verges on sappy idolatry, but it also maximizes Timberlake and Santos's talent for pop sentimentality. The track is a full-circle moment for Santos: On Aventura's second album, the band transformed 'N Sync's ''Gone'' into a bilingual bachata requiem. Here he once again finds common ground between two worlds once thought irreconcilable, demonstrating how bachata can stretch beyond both its real and imagined borders.

Romeo Santos''Fórmula Vol. 3''(Sony Latin)Romeo Santos''Fórmula Vol. 3''(Sony Latin)

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/31/arts/music/romeo-santos-formula-vol-3-review.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/31/arts/music/romeo-santos-formula-vol-3-review.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Romeo Santos's fifth solo album is the third in a series that features experimentation. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MANUEL VÉLEZ)

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**End of Document**



[***For Many G.O.P. Voters in Pennsylvania, Trumpism Is Bigger Than Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65FH-19N1-DXY4-X0SX-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jennifer Medina

**Body**

Interviews show Dr. Mehmet Oz struggling in the G.O.P. Senate primary, despite a Trump endorsement. Voters remain devoted to Donald Trump but seem less swayed by his guidance.

LAUGHLINTOWN, Pa. -- Michael Testa, 51, an Army veteran and handyman, drives a minivan plastered with stickers reading ''Trump Won.''

He recently stood in the rain and mud for hours to attend Donald Trump's Pennsylvania rally. He calls himself a ''conspiracy realist'' and said he's one of millions who believe the 2020 election was stolen from the former president.

But as he sat on his front porch in Laughlintown, a small borough of Westmoreland County outside Pittsburgh that was once home to the Mellon family fortune, he was undecided about which candidate to vote for on Tuesday in Pennsylvania's Republican primary for Senate. He has misgivings about supporting Mehmet Oz, the celebrity doctor Mr. Trump has endorsed.

''I'm not going to be somebody who does something just because one person says so, even if that person is Trump,'' Mr. Testa said.

Like other Republican primaries throughout the country, the Pennsylvania Senate race is testing just how strong Mr. Trump's grip remains on the party. But unlike other primaries this year, the Senate contest in Pennsylvania has suddenly pivoted into something else -- a case study of whether the movement Mr. Trump created remains within his control.

In interviews with more than two dozen Republican voters in western Pennsylvania, many echoed Mr. Testa's ambivalence and uncertainty about Dr. Oz -- despite Mr. Trump's backing, they view him with suspicion, call him ''too Hollywood'' and question his ties to the state. Those Republicans, including Mr. Testa, said they were instead voting for or considering voting for Kathy Barnette, the far-right author and conservative-media commentator who has surged in the polls on a shoestring budget.

In a race that could determine control of the Senate, many Republicans in the state find themselves deeply devoted to Mr. Trump yet, at the same time, less swayed by his guidance. Trumpism, as Ms. Barnette herself has put it on the campaign trail, is bigger than Trump.

Many voters said they were choosing who they believed would carry out Mr. Trump's ideals, even if they and the former president disagreed on who could best accomplish that. And interviews showed how effectively Ms. Barnette, who has never held public office, had used her life story as a poor, Black child of the South to connect with white ***working-class*** voters in western Pennsylvania. At events and in her ads, Ms. Barnette often invokes the phrase ''I am you.''

Many voters who said they planned to vote for Ms. Barnette struggled to remember her name and said they were supporting ''that Black woman.'' Those who said they were voting for her said they were unaware of or unbothered by her history of homophobic and anti-Muslim views. But her strong anti-abortion beliefs -- Ms. Barnette calls herself a ''byproduct of rape''-- have been a key part of her appeal to white conservatives.

''I like what she stands for,'' said Dolores Mrozinski, 83, who first watched Ms. Barnette on the Christian Television Network and was immediately impressed. ''She's no-nonsense and the real thing.''

Years ago, Ms. Mrozinski and her daughter, Janey Mrozinski, a 62-year-old physical therapist, watched Dr. Oz on television and even admired him. Now, the elder Ms. Mrozinski said, ''he just doesn't seem genuine.''

''I don't even know if he really lives in Pennsylvania,'' she said, referring to Dr. Oz's long history, until recent years, of living and voting in New Jersey. ''He seems more Hollywood than here and it doesn't impress me.''

Her daughter added, ''He looks like he had a face lift.'' On the other hand, David McCormick, a former hedge fund executive who is also running in the primary, was simply, she said, ''too much, too proud of himself.''

In many ways, the vote for the Senate seat is as much a battle over the perception of authenticity as any ideological or policy debate. For months now, the leading candidates have each tried to align themselves closely with Mr. Trump and promote their conservative credentials. In the tight contest between the leading contenders -- Dr. Oz, Ms. Barnette and Mr. McCormick -- all three of them have tried hard to cast themselves as the true MAGA warrior.

Some voters have clearly made up their minds about which one they believe is more authentic. But others are still deciding.

One glance at John Artzberger's auto body shop along Highway 8 in Butler County makes his political leanings clear: A ''Let's Go Brandon'' flag flies from the shop's marquee, and Trump paraphernalia covers a large wall near the entrance. When one customer asked him to place a Barnette lawn sign out front, he did not hesitate to agree. Still, the sign was just a sign -- he said he was undecided and considering voting for either Ms. Barnette or Dr. Oz.

''She's 100 percent on our side -- close the border, pro-life,'' Mr. Artzberger, 68, said of Ms. Barnette. ''If she gets it, she's going to be for the people.'' Like many other Republicans in Butler County, Mr. Artzberger views Dr. Oz's previous time in the spotlight with disdain.

''But then again, Trump had been in the public eye, too, and he ended up being really with us,'' he said. ''I've changed, so maybe he changed, too.''

In Laughlintown in Westmoreland County, it takes about 10 steps to travel from the front porch of Mr. Testa's old Craftsman to the front doors of the small brick church next door. In that short distance lies a glimpse of the Republican Party's identity crisis.

Jonathan Huddleston, 48, the minister of Laughlintown Christian Church, calls himself a Never-Trump Republican but remains committed to the party to, in part, ''help vote the wackos out.'' He, too, is undecided -- he is considering voting for Mr. McCormick, who tried but failed to win the Trump endorsement.

''I want to support the Romneys of the world, the reasonable leaders, the ones who drew me to begin with,'' Mr. Huddleston said. ''Now I'm searching to find people like that. All of the other voices are drowning them out.''

Some Republican voters said they had tried to tune out the deluge of attack ads on television from Mr. McCormick and Dr. Oz, who have each spent millions of dollars of their own wealth in the race. The backlash against the Oz and McCormick ads appeared to benefit Ms. Barnette, who has spent less than $200,000 in her campaign.

''It's just every moment and nothing about what they say they're going to do or how they're going to help people,'' said Jeannie Gsell, 70, who lives in Greensburg, about 30 miles east of Pittsburgh.

In 2020, Ms. Gsell, a registered Republican, voted for President Biden, after some convincing from her liberal daughter. But she said she had been disappointed by his time in the White House. She plans to vote in Tuesday's Republican primary but is still undecided. She said she would make up her mind by deciding whom she finds most sincere.

''People should be going to Washington to take care of regular people's priorities, not taking care of themselves and getting more rich or more famous,'' Ms. Gsell said.

In downtown Butler, a ***working-class*** city north of Pittsburgh, Brittney Meehan, a 34-year-old waitress, said the two most important issues for her were ''guns and weed -- two that don't usually go together.''

Ms. Meehan said she was ''not absolutely sold on voting Republican,'' citing her commitment to supporting both gun rights and abortion rights. ''What I want is a real person, not people who are up on that level, but are just in touch as human beings,'' she added.

Ms. Meehan said she wished ''people would just hear each other out when they disagree,'' a sentiment shared by Mr. Huddleston, the minister in Laughlintown.

''I want to have honesty and respect, is that really so impossible now?'' Mr. Huddleston said as he sat in the church pews one recent afternoon.

He thinks about voters like his next-door neighbor Mr. Testa and wonders what will become of moderate Republicans like himself. The two men know each other, but they haven't spoken about politics directly. He noticed his neighbor's many bumper stickers. One of them reads, ''I pledged an oath to protect against foreign and domestic.'' He wondered about the meaning. For now, though, he said, ''I haven't felt it was the neighborly thing to do to ask.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/13/us/politics/pennsylvania-gop-primary-voters.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/13/us/politics/pennsylvania-gop-primary-voters.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Michael Testa, 51, an Army veteran, calls himself a ''conspiracy realist.'' He was undecided about which candidate to support.

Jonathan Huddleston, 48, a minister, calls himself a NeverTrump Republican but remains committed to the party.

Brittney Meehan, 34, said the two most important issues for her are ''guns and weed -- two that don't usually go together.''

Dolores Mrozinski, 83, with her daughter, Janey Mrozinski, 62, watched Dr. Oz's show, but now ''he just doesn't seem genuine.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF SWENSEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***Read Your Way Through São Paulo***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67JK-F3M1-JBG3-621D-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1633 words

**Byline:** Paulo Scott

**Highlight:** Brazil’s ultra urban megacity overwhelms the landscape and the imagination. Paulo Scott recommends books that peel back its layers.

**Body**

Brazil’s ultra urban megacity overwhelms the landscape and the imagination. Paulo Scott recommends books that peel back its layers.

[*Read Your Way Around the World*](https://www.nytimes.com/series/literary-guides) is a series exploring the globe through books.

The fifth largest city in the world, São Paulo is not only the richest urban center in Brazil: It is a rhizome fed by conflicting moral, ethical and aesthetic ambitions and imaginations, which lead and influence an entire country’s cultural production.

Absorbing, concentrating, dominating and replicating other collective imaginations in an ongoing colonizing project, today São Paulo is, for better or worse, the place where many decisions are made about what Brazilian cultural identity and Brazilian culture are understood to be. This causes an important number of artists from all over Brazil to migrate here. Among them are writers — including the young Black and Indigenous writers whose fictional narratives are, increasingly, and in ways not yet fully understood, opposing this colonizing project in ambitious ways, with language and characters that would have been unacceptable a few years ago.

São Paulo is a daunting metropolis. What are some books that can help me approach the city?

Conceição Evaristo’s powerful first novel, “Ponciá Vicencio,” translated by Paloma Martinez-Cruz, addresses the emotional impact of structural racism on Black Brazilian people. The eponymous main character, Ponciá, grows up in a small town, Vila Vicêncio, in a Black family working on a small subsistence farm. Her grandfather had been enslaved. Facing racism, Ponciá takes a train to the big city to find a new life. The name of the city is not mentioned, but there is no doubt it is São Paulo.

The São Paulo explored in the literature of the 21st century, as in Evaristo’s novel, is a space in which extreme situations unfold under a regime of oppression directed against those who are outside privileged social groups. This, in a dystopian way, is very well addressed by the writer Ignácio de Loyola Brandão in his novel “[*And Still the Earth*](https://www.nytimes.com/1985/09/29/books/paperbacks-life-under-the-mili-techs.html),” in a translation by Ellen Watson. In this work of speculative fiction, set in a future São Paulo, “the System” governs its subjects’ every movement and thought.

Another important author for understanding São Paulo, and Brazil, is Carolina Maria de Jesus. Among her books, “[*Child of the Dark: The Diary of Carolina Maria de Jesus*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1962/09/23/93838033.html?pageNumber=306),” in a translation by David St. Clair, stands out. De Jesus was a contemporary of the world-renowned novelist [*Clarice Lispector*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/18/obituaries/clarice-lispector-overlooked.html), whose works capture that other important Brazilian city, Rio de Janeiro. There is an interesting dialectic between these two great writers that reveals Brazilian subjectivities.

The city is known for its bookstores. What are some of your favorites?

While it may not have the natural beauty of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo is a metropolis where encounters, conviviality and affection are fostered by its parks, theaters, museums, cultural spaces, cinemas, restaurants and bookstores. I cannot imagine São Paulo without the charm of its bookshops.

I live a few yards away from what I consider the best bookstore in town: the [*Ria Livraria*](https://www.instagram.com/rialivraria_/) in Vila Madalena, in the western part of São Paulo. It stocks nearly exclusively books by independent publishers. More than a place that sells books, it’s also a bar where you can find cheap beer and the best pastel de carne, a kind of [*meat-filled pastry*](https://www.today.com/recipes/pastel-meat-cheese-pastel-de-carne-con-queijo-t101520) (it’s hard to explain in a few words the magical experience of eating a Brazilian pastel). It is a place where concerts, readings and debates take place. It is where the newest generation of writers, as well as more established and acclaimed writers, can be found.

Another bookstore that deserves your attention is [*1DASUL*](https://www.instagram.com/1dasuloficial/?hl=en), run by the writer Ferréz — a bookstore that serves a ***working-class*** neighborhood on the outskirts of São Paulo.

[*Martins Fontes*](https://www.instagram.com/martinsfontespaulista/?hl=en), on Avenida Paulista, a major avenue lined with big glass buildings housing banks and cultural centers, has perhaps the largest collection of books by Brazilian authors translated into English, including a great collection of children’s books and art books about Brazil and Brazilian culture written in English.

There’s also [*Megafauna*](https://www.instagram.com/livrariamegafauna/?hl=en), in the historic center of São Paulo, on the ground floor of the city’s most emblematic residential building — the snaking, Modernist housing block called [*Edifício Copan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/01/world/americas/brazil-sao-paulo-edificio-copan.html). The building itself is well worth visiting: It was designed by Oscar Niemeyer, the architect who also designed the country’s capital, Brasília, and the United Nations building in New York. His thoughts and impressions of Brazil and São Paulo can be found in his memoir, “The Curves of Time,” in a translation by Izabel Murat Burbridge.

And there’s more. [*Mandarina*](https://www.instagram.com/livraria_mandarina/) offers the best home delivery options in town. [*Gato Sem Rabo*](https://www.instagram.com/gato.sem.rabo/?hl=en) only sells books written by women, including Sueli Carneiro, one of the most important Brazilian thinkers, as well as Andréa del Fuego, Eliana Alves Cruz and Cidinha da Silva, three of the most celebrated Brazilian writers in recent years. And [*Patuscada*](https://www.instagram.com/livrariapatuscada/?hl=en), which is run by the poet Eduardo Lacerda and his wife, Pricila Gunutzmann, belongs to Patuá, perhaps the most important independent publishing house in Brazil. Among their books — unfortunately not available in English translation yet, so you’ll have to wait! — are “Ao pó,” by Morgana Kretzmann, and “Nossa Teresa: Vida e Morte de Uma Santa Suicida,” by Micheliny Verunschk, both of which are winners of the Prêmio São Paulo, one of the three most important literary prizes in Brazil.

And what about the libraries? I’ve heard the city has a particularly wide range.

Also in the historic center of São Paulo, a few steps from Edifício Copan, is the Mário de Andrade Library, the first and main public library in the city, which houses an important collection as well as a theater and study and meeting spaces. Mário de Andrade was an important Brazilian writer who, among other fundamental works, wrote the foundational work of Brazilian Modernism, the poetry collection “Hallucinated City,” which explores the increasingly urban and chaotic metropolis.

Also close to my house is the Alceu Amoroso Lima Public Library, which is the only large public library in Brazil dedicated exclusively to poetry. There you can find many poetry books by Brazilian authors translated into English — for example, “Rilke Shake,” by Angélica Freitas, whose work is an example of how some of the best Brazilian poetry today is being written by women and transgender authors. The English translation of the book, by Hilary Kaplan, was a deserving winner in 2016 of the [*Best Translated Book Award*](http://www.rochester.edu/College/translation/threepercent/2016/04/06/rilke-shake-by-angelica-freitas-why-this-book-should-win/) given by Three Percent, the literary magazine of Open Letter Books, and the [*National Translation Award*](https://literarytranslators.wordpress.com/2016/11/01/2016-nta-winners/), given by the American Literary Translators Association.

Another library that cannot be missed is the [*Biblioteca de São Paulo*](https://architizer.com/projects/biblioteca-sao-paulo-san-paolo-library/https://architizer.com/projects/biblioteca-sao-paulo-san-paolo-library/), built where one of the largest prisons in the country, the Complexo Penitenciário do Carandiru, used to be. The routine and idiosyncrasies of the prison, [*where a security crackdown left 111 inmates dead*](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2013/04/carandiru-and-scandal-brazil-s-medieval-prison-system/) in 1992, was transfigured into fiction by Drauzio Varella, who volunteered as a doctor in the prison for over a decade, in a book that was a best seller in Brazil: “Lockdown: Inside Brazil’s Most Dangerous Prison.”

If the weather is beautiful, what are some parks where I could sit outside with a book?

I can’t talk about São Paulo without mentioning its parks, in particular: Ibirapuera, Villa-Lobos and Água Branca. Ibirapuera Park, with its concert venues, planetarium, library, museums and exhibition spaces, is a favorite of residents of the city. If there is time to visit just one of the city’s many parks, make it Ibirapuera.

In Villa-Lobos Park, you’ll find one of the most modern libraries in São Paulo. The park itself is part of an environmental recovery project on the west side of the city.

Originally designed for agricultural research and animal exhibitions, Água Branca Park, one of the oldest parks in São Paulo, is home to one of the city’s main organic farmer’s markets. It also has a reading space with children’s books. (Speaking of children’s book, I’d recommend the work of Ana Maria Machado, a winner of the Hans Christian Andersen Medal for lifetime achievement, given by the International Board on Books for Young People, for books that include “The History Mystery.”) The park is also the setting for one of the most important passages in “[*Resistance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/24/books/review/brazil-resistance-julian-fuks-collector-of-leftover-souls-eliane-brum.html),” by Julián Fuks, which won awards in Brazil and abroad.

One more note: Do get around the city using the public transport system. São Paulo’s subway, trains and buses are the best in Brazil. Much more of the city — this city that is so complex and exciting — will be revealed as you travel.

Paulo Scott’s São Paulo Reading List

“Ponciá Vicencio,” Conceição Evaristo, translated by Paloma Martinez-Cruz

“And Still the Earth,” Ignácio de Loyola Brandão, translated by Ellen Watson

“Child of the Dark,” Carolina Maria de Jesus, translated by David St. Clair

“The Curves of Time,” Oscar Niemeyer, translated by Izabel Murat Burbridge

The works of Sueli Carneiro

The works of Andréa del Fuego

The works of Eliana Alves Cruz

The works of Cidinha da Silva

“Ao pó,” Morgana Kretzmann

“Nossa Teresa: Vida e Morte de Uma Santa Suicida,” Micheliny Verunschk

“Hallucinated City,” Mário de Andrade, translated by Jack E. Tomlins

“Rilke Shake,” Angélica Freitas, translated by Hilary Kaplan

“Lockdown: Inside Brazil’s Most Dangerous Prison,” Drauzio Varella

“The History Mystery,” Ana Maria Machado

“Resistance,” Julián Fuks, translated by Daniel Hahn

Paulo Scott is the author of, among many works, the novels “[*Phenotypes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/04/books/review/phenotypes-paulo-scott.html),” which was longlisted for the International Booker Prize, and “[*Nowhere People,*](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/oct/16/paulo-scott-interview-books-nowhere-people-brazil)” which won the Machado de Assis Prize, given by the Brazilian Academy of Letters.

This article appeared in print on page BR14.

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**End of Document**



[***For Many Pennsylvania Voters, Trumpism Is Bigger Than Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65FC-DTS1-DXY4-X025-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 13, 2022 Friday 06:02 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1490 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Medina

**Highlight:** Interviews show Dr. Mehmet Oz struggling in the G.O.P. Senate primary, despite a Trump endorsement. Voters remain devoted to Donald Trump but seem less swayed by his guidance.

**Body**

Interviews show Dr. Mehmet Oz struggling in the G.O.P. Senate primary, despite a Trump endorsement. Voters remain devoted to Donald Trump but seem less swayed by his guidance.

Follow our live updates on [*primary elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/18/us/pa-primary-elections-midterms) and [*results in Pennsylvania*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/05/17/us/elections/results-pennsylvania.html).

LAUGHLINTOWN, Pa. — Michael Testa, 51, an Army veteran and handyman, drives a minivan plastered with stickers reading “Trump Won.”

He recently stood in the rain and mud for hours to attend Donald Trump’s Pennsylvania rally. He calls himself a “conspiracy realist” and said he’s one of millions who believe the 2020 election was stolen from the former president.

But as he sat on his front porch in Laughlintown, a small borough of Westmoreland County outside Pittsburgh that was once home to the Mellon family fortune, he was undecided about which candidate to vote for on Tuesday in Pennsylvania’s Republican primary for Senate. He has misgivings about supporting Mehmet Oz, the celebrity doctor Mr. Trump has endorsed.

“I’m not going to be somebody who does something just because one person says so, even if that person is Trump,” Mr. Testa said.

Like other Republican primaries throughout the country, the Pennsylvania Senate race is testing just how strong Mr. Trump’s grip remains on the party. But unlike other primaries this year, the Senate contest in Pennsylvania has suddenly pivoted into something else — a case study of whether the movement Mr. Trump created remains within his control.

In interviews with more than two dozen Republican voters in western Pennsylvania, many echoed Mr. Testa’s ambivalence and uncertainty about Dr. Oz — despite Mr. Trump’s backing, they view him with suspicion, call him “too Hollywood” and question his ties to the state. Those Republicans, including Mr. Testa, said they were instead voting for or considering voting for Kathy Barnette, the far-right author and conservative-media commentator who has surged in the polls on a shoestring budget.

In a race that could determine control of the Senate, many Republicans in the state find themselves deeply devoted to Mr. Trump yet, at the same time, less swayed by his guidance. Trumpism, as Ms. Barnette herself has put it on the campaign trail, is bigger than Trump.

Many voters said they were choosing who they believed would carry out Mr. Trump’s ideals, even if they and the former president disagreed on who could best accomplish that. And interviews showed how effectively Ms. Barnette, who has never held public office, had used her life story as a poor, Black child of the South to connect with white ***working-class*** voters in western Pennsylvania. At events and in her ads, Ms. Barnette often invokes the phrase “I am you.”

Many voters who said they planned to vote for Ms. Barnette struggled to remember her name and said they were supporting “that Black woman.” Those who said they were voting for her said they were unaware of or unbothered by her history of [*homophobic*](https://canadafreepress.com/article/can-christianity-and-the-homosexual-agenda-co-exist) and [*anti-Muslim*](https://twitter.com/JacobRubashkin/status/1524140411475877889) views. But her strong anti-abortion beliefs — Ms. Barnette calls herself a “byproduct of rape”— have been a key part of her appeal to white conservatives.

“I like what she stands for,” said Dolores Mrozinski, 83, who first watched Ms. Barnette on the Christian Television Network and was immediately impressed. “She’s no-nonsense and the real thing.”

Years ago, Ms. Mrozinski and her daughter, Janey Mrozinski, a 62-year-old physical therapist, watched Dr. Oz on television and even admired him. Now, the elder Ms. Mrozinski said, “he just doesn’t seem genuine.”

“I don’t even know if he really lives in Pennsylvania,” she said, referring to Dr. Oz’s long history, until recent years, of living and voting in New Jersey. “He seems more Hollywood than here and it doesn’t impress me.”

Her daughter added, “He looks like he had a face lift.” On the other hand, David McCormick, a former hedge fund executive who is also running in the primary, was simply, she said, “too much, too proud of himself.”

In many ways, the vote for the Senate seat is as much a battle over the perception of authenticity as any ideological or policy debate. For months now, the leading candidates have each tried to align themselves closely with Mr. Trump and promote their conservative credentials. In the tight contest between the leading contenders — Dr. Oz, Ms. Barnette and Mr. McCormick — all three of them have tried hard to cast themselves as the true MAGA warrior.

Some voters have clearly made up their minds about which one they believe is more authentic. But others are still deciding.

One glance at John Artzberger’s auto body shop along Highway 8 in Butler County makes his political leanings clear: A “Let’s Go Brandon” flag flies from the shop’s marquee, and Trump paraphernalia covers a large wall near the entrance. When one customer asked him to place a Barnette lawn sign out front, he did not hesitate to agree. Still, the sign was just a sign — he said he was undecided and considering voting for either Ms. Barnette or Dr. Oz.

“She’s 100 percent on our side — close the border, pro-life,” Mr. Artzberger, 68, said of Ms. Barnette. “If she gets it, she’s going to be for the people.” Like many other Republicans in Butler County, Mr. Artzberger views Dr. Oz’s previous time in the spotlight with disdain.

“But then again, Trump had been in the public eye, too, and he ended up being really with us,” he said. “I’ve changed, so maybe he changed, too.”

In Laughlintown in Westmoreland County, it takes about 10 steps to travel from the front porch of Mr. Testa’s old Craftsman to the front doors of the small brick church next door. In that short distance lies a glimpse of the Republican Party’s identity crisis.

Jonathan Huddleston, 48, the minister of Laughlintown Christian Church, calls himself a Never-Trump Republican but remains committed to the party to, in part, “help vote the wackos out.” He, too, is undecided — he is considering voting for Mr. McCormick, who tried but failed to win the Trump endorsement.

“I want to support the Romneys of the world, the reasonable leaders, the ones who drew me to begin with,” Mr. Huddleston said. “Now I’m searching to find people like that. All of the other voices are drowning them out.”

Some Republican voters said they had tried to tune out the deluge of attack ads on television from Mr. McCormick and Dr. Oz, who have each spent millions of dollars of their own wealth in the race. The backlash against the Oz and McCormick ads appeared to benefit Ms. Barnette, who has spent less than $200,000 in her campaign.

“It’s just every moment and nothing about what they say they’re going to do or how they’re going to help people,” said Jeannie Gsell, 70, who lives in Greensburg, about 30 miles east of Pittsburgh.

In 2020, Ms. Gsell, a registered Republican, voted for President Biden, after some convincing from her liberal daughter. But she said she had been disappointed by his time in the White House. She plans to vote in Tuesday’s Republican primary but is still undecided. She said she would make up her mind by deciding whom she finds most sincere.

“People should be going to Washington to take care of regular people’s priorities, not taking care of themselves and getting more rich or more famous,” Ms. Gsell said.

In downtown Butler, a ***working-class*** city north of Pittsburgh, Brittney Meehan, a 34-year-old waitress, said the two most important issues for her were “guns and weed — two that don’t usually go together.”

Ms. Meehan said she was “not absolutely sold on voting Republican,” citing her commitment to supporting both gun rights and abortion rights. “What I want is a real person, not people who are up on that level, but are just in touch as human beings,” she added.

Ms. Meehan said she wished “people would just hear each other out when they disagree,” a sentiment shared by Mr. Huddleston, the minister in Laughlintown.

“I want to have honesty and respect, is that really so impossible now?” Mr. Huddleston said as he sat in the church pews one recent afternoon.

He thinks about voters like his next-door neighbor Mr. Testa and wonders what will become of moderate Republicans like himself. The two men know each other, but they haven’t spoken about politics directly. He noticed his neighbor’s many bumper stickers. One of them reads, “I pledged an oath to protect against foreign and domestic.” He wondered about the meaning. For now, though, he said, “I haven’t felt it was the neighborly thing to do to ask.”

PHOTOS: Michael Testa, 51, an Army veteran, calls himself a “conspiracy realist.” He was undecided about which candidate to support.; Jonathan Huddleston, 48, a minister, calls himself a NeverTrump Republican but remains committed to the party.; Brittney Meehan, 34, said the two most important issues for her are “guns and weed — two that don’t usually go together.”; Dolores Mrozinski, 83, with her daughter, Janey Mrozinski, 62, watched Dr. Oz’s show, but now “he just doesn’t seem genuine.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF SWENSEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2022

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[***A Florida Senator Is Proposing Income Taxes for All, and That's a Problem***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654B-87V1-JBG3-622C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 1, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 21

**Length:** 1383 words

**Byline:** By Jonathan Weisman

**Body**

The ''Plan to Rescue America'' is dividing the party and cheering Democrats, and its author, Senate Republicans' top campaign official, won't stop talking about it.

WASHINGTON -- Senator Rick Scott of Florida, the somewhat embattled head of the Senate Republicans' campaign arm, said one utterly indisputable thing on Thursday when he stood before a packed auditorium of supporters at the conservative Heritage Foundation: His plan for a G.O.P. majority would make everyone angry at him, Republicans included.

It was an odd admission for the chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee. His leader, Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, has repeatedly told Mr. Scott to pipe down about his ''11-Point Plan to Rescue America,'' with its call to impose income taxes on more than half of Americans who pay none now, and to sunset all legislation after five years, presumably including Social Security and Medicare.

It has divided his party, put Mr. Scott's own candidates in awkward positions, and is already featured prominently in Democratic advertising. But after Thursday, it is clear the Republicans have not figured out how to address their Rick Scott problem.

''Washington's full of a bunch of do-nothing people who believe that no conservative idea can ever happen, nothing will change for the better as long as they're in charge, and that's why we're going to get rid of them,'' the senator said, ambiguous about who exactly ''they'' were. ''So Republicans are going to complain about the plan. They'll do it with anonymous quotes, some not so anonymous. They'll argue that Democrats will use it against us in the election. I hope they do.''

The senator insisted on the Heritage Foundation stage that his plan would raise taxes on no one, only to concede to reporters after the talk that it would -- or that it wouldn't, he couldn't decide.

''The people that are paying taxes right now -- I'm not going to raise their rates; I've never done it,'' he said, before adding: ''I'm focused on the people that can go to work, and decided to be on a government program and not participate in this. I believe whether it's just a dollar, we all are in this together.''

But most adults who pay no income tax do work, and the plan makes no distinctions. ''All Americans should pay some income tax to have skin in the game, even if a small amount. Currently over half of Americans pay no income tax,'' it states.

Last year, 57 percent of U.S. households paid no income tax, but that was by design. Successive Republican tax cuts, including President Donald J. Trump's tax cut of 2017, which greatly expanded the standard deduction, took tens of millions of workers off the income tax rolls, though virtually all of them pay Social Security, Medicare and sales taxes.

And for all of Mr. Scott's evasions, the criticism is not coming just from the ''militant left'' that he denounced. The nonpartisan Tax Policy Center estimated that ensuring all households pay at least $100 in income taxes would leave families making about $54,000 or less with more than 80 percent of the tax increase. Those making less than about $100,000 would shoulder 97 percent of the cost.

''Let me tell you what would not be a part of our agenda,'' Mr. McConnell told reporters in early March. ''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.''

For Democrats, Mr. Scott is a gift. The 2022 campaign is shaping up as a conventional midterm, focused on the economy under Democratic control. That means inflation, gas prices and candidate ties to an unpopular president.

''If you're in power and you're presiding over inflation, sorry, it's tough to be you,'' Representative Patrick McHenry, Republican of North Carolina, told The Ripon Society, a conservative research group, this week.

Mr. Scott's plan has allowed Democrats to talk about the alternative: what Republicans would do with power. Mr. Scott's plan is chock-full of language about making children say the Pledge of Allegiance, prohibiting the government from asking citizens their race, ethnicity or skin color, and declaring that ''men are men, women are women and unborn babies are babies.''

But its economic section has been the focus. Beyond taxing everyone, under the plan, all federal laws would sunset in five years. ''If a law is worth keeping, Congress can pass it again,'' the plan says. Taken literally, that would leave the fate of Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security to the whims of a Congress that rarely passes anything so expansive.

Democrats are gleefully calling attention to it, even going so far as to promote the Republican senator's speaking engagement on Thursday.

''The chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee has put it on record in a document,'' said David Bergstein, a spokesman for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, ''and we are taking his word for it.''

Mr. Scott's ideas threaten to bring Republicans back to an economic argument they waged -- and lost -- before Mr. Trump won over wide swaths of white ***working-class*** voters with his pledges to leave entitlements alone and cut their taxes.

In 2012, the Republican presidential nominee, Mitt Romney, committed a disastrous gaffe when he was caught on tape describing 47 percent of Americans as wealth takers, not wealth makers.

In 2001, Jim DeMint, a House member from South Carolina at the time, who like Mr. Romney went on to the Senate, asserted that if more than half of Americans paid no taxes, they would vote to expand government largess for themselves and make others pay for it.

''How can a free nation survive when a majority of its citizens, now dependent on government services, no longer have the incentive to restrain the growth of government?'' he asked during a Heritage Foundation lecture, calling for all Americans to pay some income taxes.

The vision of affluent Republicans counseling struggling workers to pay more taxes while they pay less was central to Mr. Trump's critique of the party in the 2016 campaign.

And Mr. Scott is an unlikely bearer of his revanchist message. He's the richest man in Congress, worth around $260 million, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. In 2002, the sprawling hospital chain he ran agreed to pay more than $880 million to settle the Justice Department's longest-running inquiry into health care fraud, including $250 million returned to Medicare to resolve charges contested by the government.

Fellow Republicans are not rushing to embrace Mr. Scott's plan.

''I think it's good that elected officials put out what they're for, and so I support his effort to do it,'' said Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, among the most endangered Republicans up for re-election in November. ''That's what he's for.''

But for Republican candidates, the issue is getting awkward. In Arizona, Jim Lamon, a Republican seeking to challenge the Democratic incumbent, Senator Mark Kelly, first called the plan ''pretty good stuff'' only to have his campaign retreat from that embrace.

Senator Marco Rubio, Republican of Florida, said of the plan, ''It's good that people offer ideas.'' His Democratic challenger, Representative Val B. Demings, nevertheless ran an ad on social media accusing him of embracing it.

At a Republican Senate debate in Ohio on Monday, the current front-runner, Mike Gibbons, called the plan ''a great first draft in trying to set some things we all believe in,'' adding, ''The people that don't believe them probably shouldn't be Republicans.''

J.D. Vance, a candidate aligned with Mr. Trump's ***working-class*** appeal, fired back: ''Why would we increase taxes on the middle class, especially when Apple, Google, Amazon and Facebook pay a lower tax rate than any middle-class American in this room or in this country? It's ridiculous.''

Even as he denied his plan would do that, Mr. Scott on Thursday was bold in the criticism of his fellow Republicans, who are relying on him to help them win elections this fall. Timidity is ''the kind of old thinking that got us exactly where we are today, where we don't control the House, the White House or the Senate,'' he said, adding: ''It's time to have a plan. It's time to execute on a plan.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/us/politics/rick-scott.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/us/politics/rick-scott.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Senator Rick Scott of Florida spoke about his ''Rescue America'' plan at a Heritage Foundation event in Washington on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY T.J. KIRKPATRICK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 1, 2022

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[***Honest City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62G5-9K51-JBG3-64BR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 18, 2021 Sunday

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 9; FICTION

**Length:** 772 words

**Byline:** By Amanda Fortini

**Body**

PARADISE, NEVADABy Dario Diofebi

''Las Vegas is a city of stories,'' Dario Diofebi asserts more than once in his debut novel, ''Paradise, Nevada.'' Let's leave aside for the moment the fact that any city, whether Rome or Seattle, Paris or Paducah, is a city of stories. Las Vegas is a city of the kinds of stories that appeal to ambitious writers keen to advance a grand statement: tales of ***working-class*** people and moneyed tourists, professional poker players, Mormons, criminals and drifters, all of whom rub shoulders at the casinos on the Strip. Las Vegas is so gauche, this line of thinking goes, so unabashed about its own vulgarity, that it is a perfect metonym for that original embarrassment, America. The same might be said of this gaseous, bloated 500-page exemplar of narrative sprawl.

Paradise, Nev., is a real place -- the unincorporated, census-designated town where the Las Vegas Strip is actually located -- and the title's obvious joke is that this unfortunate outpost in the desert (''the ugliest city in America,'' as a character who has come to shop at its outlet malls puts it) is anything but. Here, an eccentric, reclusive billionaire named Al Wiles has built the Positano, a facsimile of Italy's Amalfi Coast that is meant to resemble the real lasagna in every faux detail: ''the cliffs, the sea, down to the ... lemon trees!''

The resort, where much of the drama takes place, exerts its gaudy, philistine pull on the four main characters. Tom, an Italian immigrant and ''hopeless beta'' who overstays his visa to play professional poker. Ray, an online poker whiz turned live player who exists ''in pursuit of a perfect machinelike neutrality toward outcomes,'' and whose tedious sections read as if they were generated by A.I. Mary Ann, a depressed, down-on-her-luck (of course) cocktail waitress who wants to ''metaphorically vomit herself out of her body'' and finds purpose in joining a shadow union working to sabotage the casino. And Lindsay, a 20-something Mormon journalist who has written an article about layoffs at one of Wiles's secondary resorts. The omniscient third-person narrator weaves in and out of their thoughts, along with those of a chorus of minor characters -- so many that the book feels fractured and lacks momentum.

The ersatz elements of the Positano raise the question of the book's own imitative impulses. It somehow unspools like a heist film that is also emulating David Foster Wallace poorly. Many of the sentences are so long that I don't have room to quote one here, but watching them pinball around is disorienting; you have no idea where they're headed next. Diofebi is similarly unrestrained when it comes to structure, tossing in email exchanges, footnotes, charts and vlog scripts, most of which feel superfluous and obscure.

Las Vegas ''is the most honest city in America,'' Walter, a businessman who frequents the Positano, says. ''See, in the rest of the world, the rich hide away from the poor.'' It's commendable that Diofebi addresses class, that great taboo subject, but he seems to have either contempt for his ***working-class*** characters or precious little experience with their real-life analogues. Karen, an aging waitress and Mary Ann's aunt, is said to have built her life around the ''lesser American dream.'' (And what is the greater American dream? Writing?) She wears ''an oversize Las Vegas souvenir T-shirt'' that reads ''This Town Wasn't Built on Winners,'' which is also the subtitle of the book.

''There isn't a single Italian who doesn't hold a strong idea of what America is,'' Diofebi writes, in a section about Tom, who is arguably a stand-in for the novel's Italian author. This is certainly not the first take on America through European eyes, but there are the works of de Tocqueville and Baudrillard, where foreignness confers insight, and then there's ''Perfect Strangers,'' in which the cultural comparisons are ham-handed, and the gags are cheap. Diofebi trots out all the familiar American topics -- fraternities, road trips, Greyhound buses, casino buffets. ''A land where shrimp cascaded by the tableful, just there for the taking,'' Tom marvels.

In the end, all the characters, whose story lines obliquely brush against one another throughout the book, converge on the Positano for a dramatic, cinematic set piece that seems written with a Hollywood adaptation in mind. Rather than illuminating the cheesiness of Las Vegas, Diofebi succumbs to it.Amanda Fortini is the Beverly Rogers fellow at the Black Mountain Institute at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.PARADISE, NEVADABy Dario Diofebi494 pp. Bloomsbury Publishing. $28.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/books/review/dario-diofebi-paradise-nevada.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/books/review/dario-diofebi-paradise-nevada.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Las Vegas: ''the most honest city in America.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE BUGLEWICZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 18, 2021

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[***Romeo Santos Reveals Another Volume of Boundary-Crossing Bachata; Album Review***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:668T-KVD1-DXY4-X3T9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** ARTS; music

**Length:** 910 words

**Byline:** Isabelia Herrera

**Highlight:** “Fórmula Vol. 3” soars when it expands the scope of the genre and the singer’s own approaches to its trademarks, but falls flat when it relies on backward-looking tropes.

**Body**

“Fórmula Vol. 3” soars when it expands the scope of the genre and the singer’s own approaches to its trademarks, but falls flat when it relies on backward-looking tropes.

Ever since he left the Bronx boy band [*Aventura*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/06/arts/music/review-aventura-sighs-goodbye-as-women-squeal.html) a decade ago to go solo, the bachata luminary [*Romeo Santos*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/11/arts/music/in-the-language-of-romance-romeo-santos-is-a-true-superstar.html) has been teaching a graduate seminar in melodrama. He is a disciplined thespian, especially across his “Fórmula” series, a collection of albums driven by audacious, genre-crossing collaborations and intrepid experiments with pop, hip-hop and reggaeton.

Santos, 41, has an unwavering devotion to bachata — a Dominican genre with Black and ***working-class*** origins known for its bedrock of amargue, a peerless brand of bleeding-heart bitterness. Still, he has never really been a traditionalist. (His 2019 album, [*“Utopía,”*](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_nz84G_C6DKrCm5LvHuXYQddKTxD_I0QaY) was a rare exception, an LP that genuflected to and recruited genre-defining forebears like Raulín Rodriguez and Anthony Santos.)

Instead, he has consistently sought out new ways of refreshing bachata’s templates while developing some of his own trademarks — signature catchphrases, caustic disses and salacious onstage antics. He has brought in English lyrics and hints of R&amp;B, and ventured into the world of reggaeton, most memorably alongside Don Omar ([*“Ella y Yo”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lg_Pn45gyMs) from 2005) and Daddy Yankee and Nicky Jam ([*“Bella y Sensual”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSRzIrOqaN4) from 2017). Years before the music industry became obsessed with Anglo pop artists singing in Spanish, he had A-list figures from the world of hip-hop and R&amp;B appearing on his albums, including Usher, Nicki Minaj and Drake. At a moment when other high-profile stars are experimenting with bachata (see Rosalía and the Weeknd on “La Fama,” as well as the intro to Bad Bunny’s “Tití Me Preguntó), it feels even more urgent to recognize that Santos saw its potential for global popularity and creative reimagining all along.

On “Fórmula Vol. 3,” the latest, 21-track installment of the series and his fifth solo album overall, Santos includes unexpected team-ups with Justin Timberlake and the regional Mexican star Christian Nodal. He also doubles down on the theatrics, submerging listeners further into his acerbic torch songs about cruel betrayal, bitter revenge and unrequited love, sometimes with mixed success.

Of the collaborations, “El Pañuelo” with the Spanish star Rosalía is an immediate standout: Her melismatic vocal runs flutter into focus in the intro, and in the chorus, a call-and-response lament between the two singers recalls the 2002 hit [*“Te Quiero Igual Que Ayer”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0j0XorHDeo) by Monchy y Alexandra. The misty-eyed merengue “15,550 Noches,” which unites the genre stalwarts Toño Rosario, Rubby Pérez and Fernandito Villalona, is nostalgic, doleful and explosive all at once. And on the booming Christian Nodal feature “Me Extraño,” a song about returning to yourself after being wronged by a paramour, Santos finds a perfect balance between the thematic commonalities of mariachi and bachata.

His dramatic flourishes are most palpable when he makes full use of cohesive metaphors and potent storytelling as on “Ciudadana,” a diaspora tale about a romance separated by borders, complete with aerial sound effects, like a flight attendant announcing a landing. Santos’s yearning, crisp falsetto is most effective in these contexts: On the corrosive opener “Bebo,” an alcohol-soaked send-off to a duplicitous lover, his voice trembles with despair, and he feigns intoxication in a spoken outro. It’s a vocal performance that magnifies the best parts of bachata’s theatrical core.

But Santos missteps when he falls into religious and gendered tropes. On “Nirvana,” a ballad written as a monologue to God, he attempts to reconcile the existence of social and political injustice with God’s assumed benevolence. It descends into low-level political signaling, with an exculpatory name-drop of the Dominican dembow star [*Tokischa*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/13/arts/music/tokischa.html) and the Puerto Rican rapper Anuel AA, who have been blamed for promoting crime and drug use.

Both “La Última Vez” and “Suegra” reproduce antediluvian gender stereotypes. “Suegra” is the bigger disappointment, though it is expertly produced and arranged by Iván “MateTraxx” Chévere, Martires De León and Santos. The nylon-string guitar-picking complements his high-pitched tenor as Santos sings about the clichéd image of an overbearing mother-in-law. But then his lyrics turn violent, as he describes poisoning her coffee and pushing her body off the side of a cliff in a car (the song even ends with a car crashing sound effect). In a country that currently has the second highest [*rate*](https://oig.cepal.org/en/indicators/femicide-or-feminicide) of femicide in Latin America, the gag doesn’t land as a lighthearted farce; it just feels irresponsible and out-of-touch.

“Sin Fin,” a collaboration with Timberlake, is perhaps the most paradigmatic song on an album rooted in both the past and future. Its syrupy celebration of endless love sometimes verges on sappy idolatry, but it also maximizes Timberlake and Santos’s talent for pop sentimentality. The track is a full-circle moment for Santos: On Aventura’s second album, the band transformed ’N Sync’s [*“Gone”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPf8gPqlqQU) into a bilingual bachata requiem. Here he once again finds common ground between two worlds once thought irreconcilable, demonstrating how bachata can stretch beyond both its real and imagined borders.

Romeo Santos

“Fórmula Vol. 3”

(Sony Latin)

Romeo Santos “Fórmula Vol. 3” (Sony Latin)

PHOTO: Romeo Santos’s fifth solo album is the third in a series that features experimentation. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MANUEL VÉLEZ)

**Load-Date:** September 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Income Taxes for All? Rick Scott Has a Plan, and That’s a Problem.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6546-XTM1-DXY4-X0B6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Jonathan Weisman

**Highlight:** The “Plan to Rescue America” is dividing the party and cheering Democrats, and its author, Senate Republicans’ top campaign official, won’t stop talking about it.

**Body**

The “Plan to Rescue America” is dividing the party and cheering Democrats, and its author, Senate Republicans’ top campaign official, won’t stop talking about it.

WASHINGTON — Senator Rick Scott of Florida, the somewhat embattled head of the Senate Republicans’ campaign arm, said one utterly indisputable thing on Thursday when he stood before a packed auditorium of supporters at the conservative Heritage Foundation: His plan for a G.O.P. majority would make everyone angry at him, Republicans included.

It was an odd admission for the chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee. His leader, Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, has repeatedly told Mr. Scott to pipe down about his [*“11-Point Plan to Rescue America,”*](https://rescueamerica.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/RickScott-11-Point-Policy-Book.pdf) with its call to impose income taxes on more than half of Americans who pay none now, and to sunset all legislation after five years, presumably including Social Security and Medicare.

It has divided his party, put Mr. Scott’s own candidates in awkward positions, and is already featured prominently in Democratic advertising. But after Thursday, it is clear the Republicans have not figured out how to address their Rick Scott problem.

“Washington’s full of a bunch of do-nothing people who believe that no conservative idea can ever happen, nothing will change for the better as long as they’re in charge, and that’s why we’re going to get rid of them,” the senator said, ambiguous about who exactly “they” were. “So Republicans are going to complain about the plan. They’ll do it with anonymous quotes, some not so anonymous. They’ll argue that Democrats will use it against us in the election. I hope they do.”

The senator insisted on the Heritage Foundation stage that his plan would raise taxes on no one, only to concede to reporters after the talk that it would — or that it wouldn’t, he couldn’t decide.

“The people that are paying taxes right now — I’m not going to raise their rates; I’ve never done it,” he said, before adding: “I’m focused on the people that can go to work, and decided to be on a government program and not participate in this. I believe whether it’s just a dollar, we all are in this together.”

But most adults who pay no income tax do work, and the plan makes no distinctions. “All Americans should pay some income tax to have skin in the game, even if a small amount. Currently over half of Americans pay no income tax,” it states.

Last year, 57 percent of U.S. households paid no income tax, but that was by design. Successive Republican tax cuts, including President Donald J. Trump’s tax cut of 2017, which greatly expanded the standard deduction, took tens of millions of workers off the income tax rolls, though virtually all of them pay Social Security, Medicare and sales taxes.

And for all of Mr. Scott’s evasions, the criticism is not coming just from the “militant left” that he denounced. The nonpartisan [*Tax Policy Center estimated*](https://www.taxpolicycenter.org/taxvox/scotts-skin-game-plan-could-raise-taxes-100-billion-2022-mostly-low-and-moderate-income) that ensuring all households pay at least $100 in income taxes would leave families making about $54,000 or less with more than 80 percent of the tax increase. Those making less than about $100,000 would shoulder 97 percent of the cost.

“Let me tell you what would not be a part of our agenda,” Mr. McConnell [*told reporters in early March*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/us/politics/senate-republicans-midterms-scott-mcconnell.html). “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.”

For Democrats, Mr. Scott is a gift. The 2022 campaign is shaping up as a conventional midterm, focused on the economy under Democratic control. That means inflation, gas prices and candidate ties to an unpopular president.

“If you’re in power and you’re presiding over inflation, sorry, it’s tough to be you,” Representative Patrick McHenry, Republican of North Carolina, told The Ripon Society, a conservative research group, this week.

Mr. Scott’s plan has allowed Democrats to talk about the alternative: what Republicans would do with power. Mr. Scott’s plan is chock-full of language about making children say the Pledge of Allegiance, prohibiting the government from asking citizens their race, ethnicity or skin color, and declaring that “men are men, women are women and unborn babies are babies.”

But its economic section has been the focus. Beyond taxing everyone, under the plan, all federal laws would sunset in five years. “If a law is worth keeping, Congress can pass it again,” the plan says. Taken literally, that would leave the fate of Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security to the whims of a Congress that rarely passes anything so expansive.

Democrats are gleefully calling attention to it, even going so far as to promote the Republican senator’s speaking engagement on Thursday.

“The chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee has put it on record in a document,” said David Bergstein, a spokesman for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, “and we are taking his word for it.”

Mr. Scott’s ideas threaten to bring Republicans back to an economic argument they waged — and lost — before Mr. Trump won over wide swaths of white ***working-class*** voters with his pledges to leave entitlements alone and cut their taxes.

In 2012, the Republican presidential nominee, Mitt Romney, committed [*a disastrous gaffe*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/14/business/the-role-of-politics-in-wealth-distribution.html) when he was caught on tape describing 47 percent of Americans as wealth takers, not wealth makers.

In 2001, Jim DeMint, a House member from South Carolina at the time, who like Mr. Romney went on to the Senate, asserted that if more than half of Americans paid no taxes, they would vote to expand government largess for themselves and make others pay for it.

“How can a free nation survive when a majority of its citizens, now dependent on government services, no longer have the incentive to restrain the growth of government?” [*he asked during a Heritage Foundation lecture*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2004/06/20/fiscal-conservatives-star-rises-in-senate-bid/96ad8ba5-781a-4edf-8f63-bd187958d436/), calling for all Americans to pay some income taxes.

The vision of affluent Republicans counseling struggling workers to pay more taxes while they pay less was central to Mr. Trump’s critique of the party in the 2016 campaign.

And Mr. Scott is an unlikely bearer of his revanchist message. He’s [*the richest man in Congress*](https://www.opensecrets.org/news/2020/04/majority-of-lawmakers-millionaires/), worth around $260 million, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. In 2002, the sprawling hospital chain he ran agreed to [*pay more than $880 million to settle the Justice Department*](https://www.nytimes.com/2002/12/18/business/hca-is-said-to-reach-deal-on-settlement-of-fraud-case.html)’s longest-running inquiry into health care fraud, including $250 million returned to Medicare to resolve charges contested by the government.

Fellow Republicans are not rushing to embrace Mr. Scott’s plan.

“I think it’s good that elected officials put out what they’re for, and so I support his effort to do it,” said Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, among the most endangered Republicans up for re-election in November. “That’s what he’s for.”

But for Republican candidates, the issue is getting awkward. In Arizona, Jim Lamon, a Republican seeking to challenge the Democratic incumbent, Senator Mark Kelly, first called the plan [*“pretty good stuff”*](https://apnews.com/article/2022-midterm-elections-business-florida-medicare-congress-dab58b77ce581f9e650525ec034eeec0) only to have his campaign retreat from that embrace.

Senator Marco Rubio, Republican of Florida, [*said of the plan*](https://www.wftv.com/news/local/sen-rick-scott-defends-tax-plan-critics-say-itll-raise-taxes-retirees-low-income-families/3PIYU7A6XVDRNHSRCCAE3ODI7Y/), “It’s good that people offer ideas.” His Democratic challenger, Representative Val B. Demings, nevertheless ran an ad on social media accusing him of embracing it.

At [*a Republican Senate debate in Ohio*](https://www.cleveland.com/news/2022/03/republican-senate-hopefuls-say-they-expect-ugly-primary-race-to-continue-at-debate.html) on Monday, the current front-runner, Mike Gibbons, called the plan “a great first draft in trying to set some things we all believe in,” adding, “The people that don’t believe them probably shouldn’t be Republicans.”

J.D. Vance, a candidate aligned with Mr. Trump’s ***working-class*** appeal, fired back: “Why would we increase taxes on the middle class, especially when Apple, Google, Amazon and Facebook pay a lower tax rate than any middle-class American in this room or in this country? It’s ridiculous.”

Even as he denied his plan would do that, Mr. Scott on Thursday was bold in the criticism of his fellow Republicans, who are relying on him to help them win elections this fall. Timidity is “the kind of old thinking that got us exactly where we are today, where we don’t control the House, the White House or the Senate,” he said, adding: “It’s time to have a plan. It’s time to execute on a plan.”

PHOTO: Senator Rick Scott of Florida spoke about his “Rescue America” plan at a Heritage Foundation event in Washington on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY T.J. KIRKPATRICK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 31, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Reinventing the Humble Tank Top***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6660-74C1-JBG3-61RG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 18, 2022 Thursday

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; National Desk

**Length:** 1894 words

**Byline:** By Max Berlinger

**Body**

The first look at Matthieu Blazy's much-anticipated debut for Bottega Veneta was none other than a plain ribbed cotton tank top. At Prada, a slim-fitting undershirt-style white tank, this one featuring a small triangular logo at the scooped neckline, opened the brand's fall 2022 show (it's available on the Prada website for $995). On Chloé's catwalk, a knit ribbed tank made from ''lower impact merino cashmere'' was paired with leather pants.

As summer temperatures peak, there's no denying that this year, the season belongs to this staple. Once a humble undergarment, meant to be hidden from sight, it has stepped defiantly into the spotlight. Men and women alike are embracing its torso-hugging, shoulder-baring, décolletage-highlighting allure.

The stylist Bryant Christopher Simmons, 32, believes that part of the ribbed tank's appeal lies in its versatility -- both the ways it can be styled and the price points at which it is sold. He owns a small haul, ranging from costly versions offered by contemporary labels like Totême and Hanro to cheap versions from Hanes that he cuts so the hem hits right at his waist. ''It looks so easy,'' Mr. Simmons said.

This spring and summer it seeped into the zeitgeist, its profile rising with the temperatures. When Esquire's summer issue landed, it did so with the actor Elliot Page on the cover, styled not in some dapper tailoring, but a second-skin Polo Ralph Lauren ribbed tank and low-slung jeans. Back in March, the actress and outré fashion plate Julia Fox cut a white ribbed tank top smack dab down the middle and wore it as a matching crop top and miniskirt, posting a video tutorial on how viewers could do it themselves. And when, this spring, Justin Bieber donned a hulking Balenciaga suit on the Grammys red carpet, what, pray tell, did he wear underneath? Nothing other than a white, ribbed tank top.

For the nonbinary musician King Princess, the ribbed tank top is a wardrobe essential. ''People call me the tank top fairy,'' she said, laughing. (She has a habit of handing them out to friends and collaborators.) She described a seminal memory of her mother wearing tank tops -- some of which she has since inherited -- in the 1990s; now, she wears them most days.

''I feel so powerful when I wear a tank top,'' she said, ''because of my own journey with my gender. Like, a tank top with a sports bra underneath makes me feel strong and powerful. It's me at my truest nonbinary form.''

Her preferred tank top is a youth extra-large, so it has a snug fit (she likes the way it restrains her breasts, she said). She typically buys whatever brand is available at the local CVS or Target, and she prefers to wear them with baggy pants. In addition to her mother, she pointed to Fiona Apple and Gwen Stefani as inspirations.

''I was always into rock boys, and then I discovered the women of rock who transcended gender,'' King Princess said. ''For years, men had taken women's clothes and turned them into male rock garments, and then in the grunge era, women took them back.''

For such a simple piece of clothing -- startlingly elementary in its design, merely a fabric tube with three holes -- the ribbed tank has accrued myriad cultural associations. Worn in a straightforward, unironic fashion, it can read as either masculine and feminine -- easily evoking the hackneyed image of the swaggering brute or a vixen eagerly courting the male gaze. Yet it can also be worn in a way that slyly undermines traditional gender roles, as demonstrated by its popularity among L.G.B.T.Q. people.

''It's such a great vernacular piece of clothing,'' said Valerie Steele, director of the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology. ''It has an allure because of this whole macho, Marlon Brando kind of feeling, and then, also, a very strong butch lesbian feeling to it. So it's vernacular clothing with a strong sexual charge, and that's somewhat transgressive.''

It also helps that, because it was first intended as an undergarment, to wear it on its own instantly imparts an aura of eroticism. ''It makes an outfit look sexy and young but not in a way that's bourgeois, expensive or uptight,'' Ms. Steele said. ''I mean, the fact that you're sweating on it,'' she added. ''That's very intimate.''

From Tank Suits to Tank Tops

Tank tops were first popularized in modern Western fashion during the early 20th century as a part of bathing suits for both genders, which, at the time, covered the torso with a sleeveless, low-cut top (the name is thought to derive from ''tank suits,'' as swimming pools were commonly referred to as tanks in England). Later they evolved into a stand-alone garment; according to Jamie Wallis, director of global communications at Hanes, sleeveless shirts were introduced in 1928 alongside the company's woven shirts for practical means: to help preserve the longevity of formal, collared shirts.

The tank top made the jump from intimate apparel to an object of desire through the lens of cinema, most famously cemented into the minds of the general public as a symbol of blue-collar virility by Marlon Brando as Stanley Kowalski in ''A Streetcar Named Desire'' in 1951. Hollywood has since used it as a sartorial shorthand for a certain type of machismo, from Robert De Niro in ''Raging Bull'' and Bruce Willis in ''Die Hard'' to James Gandolfini in ''The Sopranos'' and Vin Diesel in the ''Fast and Furious'' franchise. Still, it wasn't until the sexually liberated 1970s that the tank top transitioned from undergarment to public-facing piece of clothing, so much so that Hanes, during that decade, rechristened it as the athletic shirt, or ''A-shirt.''

It has since been embraced by various subcultures, including skateboarders, 1980s punk musicians and rappers, injecting it with a sense of rebelliousness. Its pragmatic appeal for professional sports players has maintained its spirit of athleticism. It's even had its fair share of controversy, as when, at the turn of the century, it accrued the distasteful nickname ''wife beater'' -- a sobriquet that has, thankfully, fallen out of favor.

Perhaps its plainness is the reason that it has been able to endure for so long and become a mainstay of various factions. Because of this, even the smallest tweaks can have an outsize effect. An in-house historian at Hanes ran through a timeline of such modifications -- from nylon-supported reinforcements (1950s) to varying thicknesses of shoulder straps (1960s) to the introduction of colors (1970s). Maybe its adaptability was best demonstrated in the 2004 movie ''Mean Girls,'' when the character Regina George, a cruel yet popular high schooler, is the victim of a practical joke when two enemies cut holes in her ribbed tank, right over the breasts. The trick backfires, of course, when the rest of the student body follows suit, assuming it's the latest trend.

In the fashion industry, its appeal is clear -- it harkens back to the hierarchical pre-Internet days of the 1990s, its popularity no doubt calling to mind that faraway era -- notably the sensual minimalism of Calvin Klein and the aloof anti-fashion of Helmut Lang.

'Reinvent, reinvent'

''For me, the ribbed tank has always been associated with elegance and sensuality,'' the designer Willy Chavarria said. In addition to overseeing his own namesake men's wear label, Mr. Chavarria is a senior vice president for design at Calvin Klein, and often uses the ribbed tank in his work as a way to explore archetypes of gender and sexuality. ''I like to play with hypermasculine notions from a queer persecutive,'' he said. ''The masculinity and sex appeal of the ribbed tank is timeless.''

Mr. Chavarria, who is Mexican American, also riffs on its strong ties to Chicano culture. ''There's a strong level of sensuality in Latino culture and sexuality in queer culture,'' he said. ''I think the masculinity that Latino culture has imbued into the white tank was adopted by queer culture, which then played on extreme forms of masculinity and femininity.''

Additionally, it is an essential part of the American proletariat uniform which, as recent catwalks demonstrate, fascinates designers of high-end labels looking to subvert stereotypical signifiers of class and social status.

''The incorporation of the tank top in postwar Hollywood films allowed for an aestheticization of manual labor shortly prior to the decline of ***working-class*** men's role in the U.S.,'' said Francesca Granata, an associate professor of fashion history at Parsons School of Design. ''Luxury brands have historically recuperated items of clothing connected to the ***working class***, most recently with Balenciaga doing so while trying to provide a social commentary in the process.''

Because of this symbolic malleability, younger generations are able to freely use the ribbed tank as a blank canvas onto which they can express not just aesthetic concerns, but their hopes and anxieties about gender and class. ''Young people around New York are wearing it a lot right now, often cropped, and in ways that destabilizes gender binaries and ideal body types,'' Professor Granata said. ''In its tightness and body-revealing quality, it lends itself to being embraced by the body-positivity movement and worn by a range of body types.'' To prove a classic piece is always ripe for reinterpretation, a new breed of intrepid upstart designers like Dion Lee, Sandy Liang and Elena Velez, are reworking them in fascinating ways with twisting straps, asymmetrical silhouettes and cutouts.

Customers are responding. Evi Berberi, a representative for Lyst, the global fashion search platform, said that since April, searches for tank tops had gone up 184 percent, continuing a trend that has been on the rise since last quarter. White, she says, is the prevailing color while the top associated search keywords were ''ribbed,'' ''cropped'' and, ''asymmetrical.'' From March to June, the fashion resale marketplace Depop had a 33 percent increase in searches for ''ribbed tank tops'' and a 44 percent increase in listings for that item, said a representative for the company.

''Today there's a terrific rebirth of sexuality and gender identification,'' Mr. Chavarria said. ''While there are garments in the world that are known to be specifically male- or female-presenting, the kids today just have fun mixing it up. I think the ribbed tank still has an identity associated with its history that makes it sexy and stylish for even today's generation.''

And while all this pontificating may very well be true, it also undercuts a simpler, emotional truth powering this trend. The ribbed tank top, for all its associations, is sexy, easy, versatile and effortless. ''It's very cool, it's very chic,'' Mr. Simmons, the stylist, said.

When friends see an actor or a person on the street wearing baggy pants and a tank top, they'll often text the image to King Princess. ''They'll say, 'It's giving you,''' she said. ''Which is very sweet and I find flattering. Everyone should feel confident in what they wear: Clothes are armor.''

''I think it's iconic,'' King Princess said of the tank top's enduring appeal. ''I do think that basic wear -- like a good T-shirt, a good tank top, a good pair of jeans -- these are the things that have been endlessly reinvented. That fascinates me, to take a silhouette over time and reinvent, reinvent.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/17/style/reinventing-the-humble-tank-top.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/17/style/reinventing-the-humble-tank-top.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Molly Matalon for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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The New York Times

August 17, 2022 Wednesday 09:48 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1884 words

**Byline:** Max Berlinger

**Highlight:** The old-fashioned undergarment is enjoying a renaissance.

**Body**

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‘Reinvent, reinvent’

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Additionally, it is an essential part of the American proletariat uniform which, as recent catwalks demonstrate, fascinates designers of high-end labels looking to subvert stereotypical signifiers of class and social status.

“The incorporation of the tank top in postwar Hollywood films allowed for an aestheticization of manual labor shortly prior to the decline of ***working-class*** men’s role in the U.S.,” said Francesca Granata, an associate professor of fashion history at Parsons School of Design. “Luxury brands have historically recuperated items of clothing connected to the ***working class***, most recently with Balenciaga doing so while trying to provide a social commentary in the process.”

Because of this symbolic malleability, younger generations are able to freely use the ribbed tank as a blank canvas onto which they can express not just aesthetic concerns, but their hopes and anxieties about gender and class. “Young people around New York are wearing it a lot right now, often cropped, and in ways that destabilizes gender binaries and ideal body types,” Professor Granata said. “In its tightness and body-revealing quality, it lends itself to being embraced by the body-positivity movement and worn by a range of body types.” To prove a classic piece is always ripe for reinterpretation, a new breed of intrepid upstart designers like Dion Lee, Sandy Liang and Elena Velez, are reworking them in fascinating ways with twisting straps, asymmetrical silhouettes and cutouts.

Customers are responding. Evi Berberi, a representative for [*Lyst*](https://lyst.com/), the global fashion search platform, said that since April, searches for tank tops had gone up 184 percent, continuing a trend that has been on the rise since last quarter. White, she says, is the prevailing color while the top associated search keywords were “ribbed,” “cropped” and, “asymmetrical.” From March to June, the fashion resale marketplace [*Depop*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/02/business/etsy-depop.html) had a 33 percent increase in searches for “ribbed tank tops” and a 44 percent increase in listings for that item, said a representative for the company.

“Today there’s a terrific rebirth of sexuality and gender identification,” Mr. Chavarria said. “While there are garments in the world that are known to be specifically male- or female-presenting, the kids today just have fun mixing it up. I think the ribbed tank still has an identity associated with its history that makes it sexy and stylish for even today’s generation.”

And while all this pontificating may very well be true, it also undercuts a simpler, emotional truth powering this trend. The ribbed tank top, for all its associations, is sexy, easy, versatile and effortless. “It’s very cool, it’s very chic,” Mr. Simmons, the stylist, said.

When friends see an actor or a person on the street wearing baggy pants and a tank top, they’ll often text the image to King Princess. “They’ll say, ‘It’s giving you,’” she said. “Which is very sweet and I find flattering. Everyone should feel confident in what they wear: Clothes are armor.”

“I think it’s iconic,” King Princess said of the tank top’s enduring appeal. “I do think that basic wear — like a good T-shirt, a good tank top, a good pair of jeans — these are the things that have been endlessly reinvented. That fascinates me, to take a silhouette over time and reinvent, reinvent.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Molly Matalon for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 17, 2022

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[***Reader Comments***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65JR-G6X1-DXY4-X3R2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 29, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 3

**Length:** 711 words

**Body**

To Be Gifted, a Child Needs A Reference and Some Luck

Readers responded at nytimes.com to Ginia Bellafante's column last Sunday about New York City's switch from tests to evaluations by teachers to select children for gifted classes. Comments have been edited. The premise behind the previous and new methods for determining if a person is gifted involves identifying giftedness at the age of 4 or 5. This doesn't take into account varying rates of development, with some kids showing greater aptitude earlier than others. The earlier developers often average out in a few years, and many late developers begin showing high potential in their teens and later. The latter category merits the same opportunities for the sake of themselves and society.

Christine Uriarte, Paris

Have some faith in good teachers. Most of the time they can tell the difference. And giftedness doesn't always appear in pre-K. Some children bloom later, and others find it easier to slack off because they are bored. Gifted classes should accept students in all grades rather than only the early ones. We need more teachers who are well educated and can make these decisions. There are many in the school systems already. But many who would be of benefit to students turn away from the profession because teachers are disrespected and they can earn more money elsewhere while keeping their dignity.

Zoned, North Carolina

Isn't one of the points of standardized testing to eliminate the bias of individual teachers? Now students will be chosen by individual teachers to eliminate the bias of standardized testing? Huh?

David Fairhurst, Brooklyn

I've taken care of children for more than 30 years, from newborns to 14-year-olds. I can tell which kids are smarter by the age of 4 months. The babies I thought were average at 4 months are now average adults. Those that I recognized as smart at 4 months have grown up and excelled intellectually. These kids came from various backgrounds, some wealthy, some middle-class, some ***working-class***. Yes, nurturing helps, but I could see innate abilities already there in infancy.

an observer, comments

Given the choice between the two flawed systems of ''sorting,'' I'd rather the teacher choose. A few years ago I attempted to do test prep at home with my daughter (I couldn't afford the professional prep materials/tutors), but the test was two-part and each was created by a different company. I was able to find more free materials for one half than the other. The result: My daughter excelled in the better-prepared side and didn't do as well in the other. She didn't get in the program. More well-to-do parents often paid for professional prep, which, I imagine, led to the bias.

D, Brooklyn

The notion of permanently sorting 4-year-olds into gifted or normal tracks is ridiculous. Education should accelerate or decelerate based on recent performance. You can't effectively test for how someone will fare in a new situation, but recent performance is generally a useful indicator of what you're currently capable of.

Eric, California

Teachers are not trained to identify giftedness. Psychologists are specifically trained to do so and in the most objective of ways, i.e., standardized testing, which yields the most unbiased results.

perltarry, New York

Responding to perltarry: Neither the tests nor the testers are completely unbiased or valid, especially for non-English speakers. But psychologists also use parental and teacher checklists, which is helpful. I agree that leaving it up to teacher observation alone is not helpful and will probably lead to pressures on teachers to identify students, regardless of ''giftedness.''

Dr. Conde, Medford, Mass.

The point of gifted education is to educate children whose intellectual needs cannot be met in the average classroom. If you have entered kindergarten when someone shows you once or twice how to add and subtract multidigit numbers, and you are able to pick up the concept after seeing those examples, you are going to be unoccupied whenever the classroom teacher must show the other students over and over again how to count to 20. Gifted education is so the kids who master the ''standard'' curriculum concepts too fast don't sit there languishing for months.

M, New York

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/23/nyregion/29MetComments.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/23/nyregion/29MetComments.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mayor Eric Adams, left, and David Banks, the chancellor of the New York City schools. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 29, 2022

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[***Janelle Monáe’s Queer, Afrofuturist Literary Debut; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6586-32F1-DXY4-X0XF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 19, 2022 Tuesday 23:06 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 713 words

**Byline:** Stephen Kearse

**Highlight:** “The Memory Librarian” translates the themes of her 2018 album, “Dirty Computer,” onto the page.

**Body**

THE MEMORY LIBRARIAN

And Other Stories of Dirty Computer

By Janelle Monáe

Janelle Monáe’s love of science fiction courses through her music like blood. The promotional artwork and music videos for her early albums and EPs pulled heavily from canonical sci-fi films such as “Metropolis,” “Blade Runner” and “I, Robot,” variously styling Monáe as a robot and android. Inspired by the alienation and oppression that artificial intelligence faces in these fictional worlds, Monáe channels her own experiences of estrangement as a queer, ***working-class*** Black woman into lush and theatrical songs about love under siege by an invasive state.

In her best work, these sci-fi flourishes blend seamlessly into her fusionist music, flavoring her “neon gumbo” but not defining it. “The Memory Librarian,” an anthology that adapts the themes of Monáe’s 2018 album, “[*Dirty Computer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/19/magazine/how-janelle-monae-found-her-voice.html),” into literature, lacks that proportion, its flimsy tales drenched in sci-fi tropes but thin on compelling storytelling. Co-authored with the established genre writers Sheree Renée Thomas, Alaya Dawn Johnson and Eve L. Ewing, and with the newcomers Yohanca Delgado and Danny Lore, “The Memory Librarian” offers five windows into an authoritarian world in which social deviants — almost all of them queer, Black, poor women — are relentlessly hunted and persecuted. The hunters are New Dawn, a nebulous “techno-nationalist” outfit that manages a sprawling surveillance operation.

Armed with drones, emotion trackers and other dystopian technology that allows them to edit memories, the group targets “dirty computers” for “cleaning,” euphemisms for eugenic erasure of unsavory past and current behaviors. Monáe has a clear interest in highlighting the margins of this bleak world, so the stories home in on fugitives from New Dawn, dwelling on the ways they defy their labeling and find love and fulfillment on the outskirts of society. The collection opens with “Breaking Dawn,” a preface that paints the characters to come as savvy resisters digging tunnels under border walls and deviously festering in the shadows. “On the skin of it, the future’s blemishes appeared to be clearing,” Monáe writes, “but they’d just been forced down into the sinews — a righteous inflammation burning, a flagrant flame in the flesh.”

Unfortunately, the body politic implied by these corporeal terms (sinews, blemishes, flesh) never manifests in the storytelling. Monáe’s outcasts — daughters of a New Dawn victim, a queer commune hiding in a desert — rebel against a curiously hollow core. Although two of the stories are novella-length, across the collection it never becomes clear whether New Dawn is the government, a company or a religious group. Nor does the public sentiment for New Dawn’s methods ever get meaningfully articulated. Do “clean” people support the hunt for dirty computers? Are they aware the pogroms are happening? Do they benefit from New Dawn’s mind wipes? Why does New Dawn even go to the trouble of capturing people and erasing their memories when it could just, you know, kill them?

Science fiction has historically — and often unfairly — been mocked for investing more brainpower into explaining elaborate systems than fleshing out the people who live within them, but “The Memory Librarian” fumbles both pursuits. There’s so little explanation of the basic mechanisms of New Dawn’s rule that the downtrodden main characters are deprived of agency and nuance. Their domestic and internal struggles, though rendered with meticulous attention to queer experiences and concerns, have no meaningful connection to their material circumstances.

“Timebox,” the best story of the bunch, holds all the shaky world-building at arm’s length. Its premise — a pantry that exists outside of time — is secondary to the probing of a troubled relationship between two women who discover the room when they move into their first shared apartment. The story is a subtle reminder that the worlds of science fiction don’t have to be grandiose, epic or futuristic to be rich.

Stephen Kearse is assistant editor at Spotlight PA and a contributing writer at The Nation. THE MEMORY LIBRARIAN And Other Stories of Dirty Computer By Janelle Monáe 321 pp. Harper Voyager. $28.99.

PHOTO: Janelle Monáe (PHOTOGRAPH BY JHEYDA MCGARRELL)

**Load-Date:** May 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[***New York City Mobile Sites To Offer Antiviral Medicine***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65TR-J541-JBG3-63J7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 1, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 13

**Length:** 711 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Body**

Mayor Eric Adams says that offering immediate prescriptions to people who test positive at the mobile sites will help address concerns over inequities in distributing antiviral treatments.

New York City is creating the first mobile testing units in the United States that will allow people who test positive for the coronavirus to immediately receive for free the antiviral treatment Paxlovid.

Mayor Eric Adams announced the new program on Thursday in Manhattan with Dr. Ashish Jha, the White House Covid-19 response coordinator.

The new ''Test to Treat'' mobile unit program is part of federal and city efforts to reduce the impact of the virus and to prepare for future waves of cases. Health officials want to improve access to antiviral drugs for vulnerable New Yorkers who may not know about the treatment or do not have a primary care doctor or health insurance.

Mr. Adams, a Democrat who took office in January, tested positive for the virus in April and has said that his infection was mild in part because he took Paxlovid. The treatment, made by Pfizer, has been found to substantially reduce the chances of severe illness in high-risk people if patients start taking it early in the course of infection. Federal regulators authorized the drug for emergency use late last year, and on Thursday Pfizer said it had applied to the Food and Drug Administration for approval of the treatment.

''By getting lifesaving medications into the hands of New Yorkers minutes after they test positive, we are once again leading the nation to quickly deliver accessible care to those who need it,'' Mr. Adams said in a statement.

President Biden announced a national ''Test to Treat'' effort in his State of the Union address in March. The federal program relies on hundreds of local pharmacy-based clinics and community health centers to prescribe antiviral treatments on the spot. No other city besides New York has yet used mobile testing units for the program.

Starting on Thursday, three of the city's mobile testing units will include a clinician who can prescribe antiviral medications for those who are eligible. The units will be set up outside local pharmacies that can immediately fill those prescriptions. The sites will be in the Inwood section of Manhattan, South Ozone Park in Queens, and in the East Bronx -- all neighborhoods away from downtown or midtown Manhattan that have many ***working class*** residents.

The number of mobile sites that can offer the prescription will expand to more than 30 by the end of July, city officials said, adding that later this summer the city will begin offering antiviral medications directly at the 30 mobile units, rather than through a nearby pharmacy. The city already offers free home delivery of antiviral treatments.

Dr. Ted Long, executive director of the city's Test & Trace Corps, said that the first patient at the new mobile testing site outside Inwood Pharmacy this week was a woman who did not have a cellphone and was recently exposed to the virus. She tested positive and left the pharmacy with Paxlovid.

''This effort is focused on equity,'' he said.

Dr. Jha said in an interview that there had been a major increase in the use of Paxlovid across the country over the last three months, and that 240,000 new prescriptions for the treatment were reported last week, the highest weekly total so far. But he said that people who test positive in poorer communities had not accessed antiviral treatments as often as people in wealthier communities had.

''I love this idea,'' he said of New York's mobile program. ''You can go to people where they are. I expect this to go very well, and it will be a great model for the rest of the country to follow.''

A recent study released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that people who reside in the most socially and economically disadvantaged areas in the United States were half as likely as those in wealthier communities to be prescribed the new antiviral treatments, even though many of the distribution sites are in those areas.

Dr. Jha and Dr. Ashwin Vasan, New York City's health commissioner, said that there was plenty of Paxlovid available for New Yorkers who need it.

''Now we're kind of awash in Paxlovid,'' Dr. Vasan said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/30/nyregion/nyc-paxlovid-covid-treatment.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/30/nyregion/nyc-paxlovid-covid-treatment.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mobile testing sites have been a familiar sight in New York City through most of the pandemic. During the Omicron surge in January, a mobile testing site served residents in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Scott Heins/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 1, 2022

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[***A Huge, Uncharted Experiment on the U.S. Economy Is About to Begin; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67J0-2GX1-JBG3-60MK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 12, 2023 Sunday 12:15 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1544 words

**Byline:** Robinson Meyer

**Highlight:** If it fails or misfires, then it will greatly limit the number of tools to fight climate change or a recession.

**Body**

If you want to understand the immense windfall the Biden administration is about to bestow on green industries, take a look at hydrogen. Engineers still aren’t exactly sure what role the gas will play in a climate-friendly economy, but they’re pretty sure that (contra the ridicule in “[*Glass Onion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/21/movies/glass-onion-a-knives-out-mystery-review.html)”) it will be useful for something. We might burn it to generate heat in factories, for instance, or use it to make high-tech chemicals.

And thanks to three laws Congress passed over the past two years — the bipartisan infrastructure law, the CHIPS and Science Act and the climate-focused Inflation Reduction Act — the industry will be very well taken care of. Over the next decade, the government is going to invest $8 billion in hydrogen “hubs” across the country, special zones where companies, universities and local governments can build the machinery and expertise that the new industry needs. Other hydrogen projects will qualify for a $10 billion pot of money in the Inflation Reduction Act or $1.5 billion in the infrastructure bill. Still others could draw from a new $6.3 billion program that will help industrial firms develop financially risky demonstration projects.

So that’s up to $25.8 billion before you get to the bazooka: an uncapped tax credit for hydrogen that could pay out perhaps $100 billion or more over the next decades.

Few Americans realize it yet, but the trifecta of the Biden-era laws amounts to one of the biggest experiments in how the American government oversees the economy in a generation. If this experiment is successful, it will change how politicians think about managing the market for years to come. If it fails or misfires, then it will greatly limit the number of tools to fight climate change or a recession. The story of the 21st-century American economy is being shaped now.

I say “experiment,” but, really, there are two. The first concerns the economy. President Biden’s team believes that it can move the United States toward a more robust, high-capacity and even re-industrialized economy. Can it? And can it use policy moreover to make sure that innovative ideas don’t get lost in the research lab or patent office, but instead make their way to the factory floor and corporate showroom, generating jobs and economic value along the way?

The second experiment: Can the same economy — which has, virtually since [*the abolition of slavery*](https://us-sankey.rcc.uchicago.edu/), derived a good deal of its industrial energy from extracting hydrocarbons from the ground and setting them on fire — find a new primary energy source? Even today, America [*generates 79 percent*](https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/us-energy-facts/) of its energy from fossil fuels. The administration is, in a sense, trying to conduct a high-stakes heart transplant on the economy while the patient remains alive on the table.

Don’t get me wrong: Some kind of climate boom is now all but assured. The investment bank Credit Suisse predicted last year that the Inflation Reduction Act [*would put more than $800 billion*](https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2022/10/inflation-reduction-act-climate-economy/671659/) into the economy by the end of the decade, galvanizing more than $1.7 trillion in climate-friendly public and private spending overall. The law will transform the United States into the “world’s leading energy provider,” the bank said. The American renewable industry alone [*could attract 78 percent more investment per year*](https://www.woodmac.com/horizons/boom-time-what-the-inflation-reduction-act-means-for-us-renewables-manufacturers/) by 2031, according to the energy-research firm Wood Mackenzie.

But I worry that the federal government has started its experiments too haphazardly. The Inflation Reduction Act did not emerge from careful study and bipartisan consensus building, but from intraparty haggling and a harried legislative process. Even the bipartisan CHIPS Act was more of a crisis measure than a strategic intervention. These shortcomings are forgivable; in the Inflation Reduction Act’s case, it’s not like Republicans were ever going to help pass a climate bill. But these constraints have deprived the government of the strong institutions, internal expertise and administrative capacity that have made similar experiments successful in other countries.

For practical purposes, that means, first, that the government won’t be able to spend all this money in the right place. The U.S. financial system [*persistently struggles*](https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2021/08/america-into-the-worlds-factory-again-industrial-finance-corporation/619793/) to fund projects that take a long time to turn a profit and that can expect to have only modest returns. Unfortunately, the biggest and most important physical infrastructure — factories, transmission lines — often fall under that category. In other countries, industrial policy has entailed creating an agile, entrepreneurial agency that can get money to the right companies in the right ways — as a loan, as equity, as a purchase guarantee.

Congress took some steps in that direction last year. The Inflation Reduction Act beefed up the Loan Programs Office, the Department of Energy’s in-house bank, and it established a new green lending office within the Environmental Protection Agency. But Congress has put these institutions on a short leash with a limited mandate. This means that the government can’t support as many risky investments as it should.

Second, the government may lack the ability to coordinate its own actions. Late last year, the Biden administration [*declined to help reopen*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/12/16/biden-wants-green-economy-talks-fail-revive-key-aluminum-plant/) a “green” aluminum factory in Ferndale, Wash., that was exactly the kind of low-carbon industry it wants to champion. The local union, electric vehicle makers and the state’s Democratic leadership all wanted to revive the factory. The project even has national-security relevance, since the United States currently [*imports aluminum*](https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/us-plans-200-tariff-russian-aluminum-soon-this-week-bloomberg-news-2023-02-06/) from Russia. But Mr. Biden chose not to intercede with the local electricity provider, the Bonneville Power Administration, to supply the plant with enough cheap power to operate even though it is a federal agency ostensibly under the president’s control. Never mind the right hand not knowing what the left hand is doing: The right hand couldn’t get the left hand to plug the cord in.

Finally, the government may not understand enough about the companies it’s trying to help. In Taiwan and South Korea, industrial-policy agencies don’t only hand out money; they constantly gather information from the private sector and use it to adjust goals and policies over time. The Inflation Reduction Act contains very few mechanisms for this kind of in-flight course adjustment. Its main incentives are tax credits, which are hard to repeal once they’re in place and hard to fix if they’re not working. They are an unusually mindless way to incentivize companies to change their behavior.

And this points to a related concern: that we have underestimated just how hard decarbonization will be. One of the most cherished and widely held ideas in climate activism is that we could have solved climate change by now if only we’d had the “political will.”

This idea, once true enough, may soon outlive its utility. Mr. Biden and his successors will discover that decarbonization is an inherently difficult and complex societal challenge that cannot be solved with money alone. Some important activities will be legitimately hard to do without emitting carbon pollution; there will be some trade-offs that flummox even the most committed progressives.

Which is to say: Even if the U.S. had an agency that could finance or approve any industrial project in the exact right way at the precise right time, it would still be legitimately unclear which projects it should support. Will a new lithium mine create jobs and build political support for decarbonization, or will its local pollution effects provoke backlash? If a new hydrogen hub opens in your hometown, will you love the growth or hate the higher housing costs?

The Biden experiments bear the mark of a particular set of lawmakers and White House staff members who needed to meet a particular set of goals. They sought to stimulate the pandemic-depleted economy, reduce carbon pollution in a durable way, respond to what they saw as the Chinese manufacturing juggernaut and — perhaps above all — revitalize the American ***working class*** to prevent the next Trumpian crisis. They stumbled on a germ of an idea, a climate-friendly “industrial strategy,” and after 18 months of excruciating legislative wrangling, they have somehow made it the law of the land.

But the lawmakers who wrote that policy are not charged with carrying it out, and many of the officials who championed it most — like Brian Deese, the director of the National Economic Council — are now leaving the White House. Will the next crew understand what they’ve inherited? In order for Mr. Biden’s two experiments to have a chance of success, the officials must not go on autopilot or disarm the parts of the Inflation Reduction Act meant to build domestic political support. And they cannot assume that everything about the coming climate boom will work out in the end. More than just the country’s fate depends on it.

Robinson Meyer is a climate change reporter in Washington, D.C., and a contributing writer at The Atlantic.

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This article appeared in print on page SR10.

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[***Left-Wing Maverick Makes a Late Charge in France's Presidential Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6539-9M61-DXY4-X063-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 27, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1376 words

**Byline:** By Constant Méheut and Aurelien Breeden

**Body**

Jean-Luc Mélenchon, a skilled orator and veteran politician, hopes to become the first left-wing candidate since 2012 to reach the second round of France's presidential election.

LE HAVRE, France -- Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the leading left-wing candidate in France's upcoming presidential election, once likened himself to one of nature's slowest animals.

''Trust a wise and electoral tortoise like me,'' he said at a rally in January. ''Slow and steady wins the race.'' And, he added, mockingly: ''I've already tired a few hares.''

Now, nearly two weeks before the first round of voting on April 10, Mr. Mélenchon -- a veteran politician who launched his third presidential bid 17 months ago -- is hoping that Aesop's fable about the tortoise who came from behind proves prescient.

For months, Mr. Mélenchon and other candidates jostled in the polls below President Emmanuel Macron, the centrist incumbent, and Marine Le Pen, the far-right leader, hoping to disrupt their widely expected rematch.

But Mr. Mélenchon, 70, the leader of the far-left France Unbowed movement, has surged recently in voter surveys. He is now comfortably in third place with about 14 percent, largely ahead of his competitors on the left and within a few points of Ms. Le Pen, whose fierce competition with Éric Zemmour, an anti-immigrant pundit, has eaten into her support.

A final victory for Mr. Mélenchon still seems remote. But a left-wing candidate reaching the runoff for the first time since 2012 would be stunning, especially in a race that was long-dominated by right-wing talking points on security, immigration and national identity.

''I'm starting to think it might be possible,'' said Jérôme Brossard, 68, a retiree who was attending a small Mélenchon rally on a recent evening in Le Havre, a ***working-class*** port city on France's northern coast.

About 200 people gathered at a community center for the event, where walls were lined with posters reading ''Another World Is Possible.'' Some waved France Unbowed flags or wore stickers of the candidate's face on their chest.

Mr. Brossard said friends and family had recently shown interest in Mr. Mélenchon, raising his hopes and, for the first time ever, prompting him to paste campaign posters around town.

Mr. Mélenchon, a former Trotskyist and longtime member of the Socialist party who left in 2008 after accusing it of veering to the center, is a perennial but divisive figure in France's notoriously fractious left-wing politics.

A fiery, skilled orator with a reputation for irascibility -- ''I'm the Republic!'' he once shouted at a police officer raiding his party's headquarters in 2018 -- Mr. Mélenchon has also staked out positions on contentious issues like secularism, race and France's colonial history that have put him at odds with those on the left who support a stricter model of a secular, colorblind republic.

But now, as the global economy strains to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine pushes up the prices of energy and essential goods, Mr. Mélenchon's unabashedly left-wing platform, including a promise to impose price controls on some basic necessities, is resonating.

''That's his favored terrain,'' said Manuel Cervera-Marzal, a sociologist at the University of Liège who has written a book analyzing the France Unbowed movement.

''He is doing an old-school, left-wing campaign that puts issues of inequality and purchasing power at its heart,'' he said, adding that Mr. Mélenchon had softened his image of a ''slightly bad-tempered'' and ''erratic'' politician while preserving his ''populist'' strategy of pitting the people against the elite.

Voters most attracted to Mr. Mélenchon -- who skew young, unemployed and ***working-class*** -- also make up their minds later than most, which helps explain why Mr. Mélenchon's polling numbers have risen as the finish line approaches, according to Mr. Cervera-Marzal.

But that is also the electorate most likely to stay home on election day, he warned.

''It's a crucial issue,'' he said. ''The lower abstention is, the higher Jean-Luc Mélenchon will go.''

Mr. Mélenchon still faces many obstacles. Other left-wing leaders have resisted rallying to his campaign, castigating him for his pro-Russian comments before the invasion of Ukraine and saying his fiery nature made him unfit to govern.

''We need to have a useful president, not just a useful vote,'' François Hollande, France's Socialist president from 2012 to 2017, told France Inter radio this month, as he attacked Mr. Mélenchon's anti-NATO stance and his willingness to opt out of European Union rules.

In 2017, Mr. Mélenchon missed the second round of voting by a mere percentage point, a bitter disappointment that his team is eager not to repeat. Mr. Mélenchon's campaign has held hundreds of small but packed rallies and sent dozens of caravans to tour the country to attract disillusioned voters.

''It's time for the final all-out offensive!'' said Adrien Quatennens, a France Unbowed lawmaker, at the rally in Le Havre. ''It's a vote that is worth a thousand strikes, a thousand protests!''

Turnout was low in Le Havre for last year's regional elections, but the city, with its dock workers and powerful trade unions, is still fertile ground for Mr. Mélenchon's campaign. A third of the city voted for him in 2017.

Sitting in the back row at the rally, Catherine Gaucher, 51, said she ''had a bit of sympathy for the Greens at the beginning.''

''But the platform they advance, no, it's Macronism,'' she said, referring to Mr. Macron, who is widely depicted on the left as the ''president of the rich.''

By contrast, Mr. Mélenchon has vowed to lower the legal retirement age to 60 from 62; introduce a monthly minimum wage of 1,400 euros, or about $1,500; and increase taxes on the rich, including by reintroducing a wealth tax that Mr. Macron repealed.

He is also determined to replace the country's Constitution, which gives the president a strong upper hand, with a new parliamentary system. He has promised to massively invest in green energy and the fight against sexism and violence against women, and to overhaul France's police force, in response to the #MeToo and anti-police-violence protests of recent years.

Even Mr. Mélenchon's most vocal critics acknowledge his thoroughness. Geoffroy Roux de Bézieux, the head of a powerful association of France's biggest companies and one of Mr. Mélenchon's biggest opponents, said last month that Mr. Mélenchon was ''ready to govern,'' with a ''very well crafted'' and ''interesting'' platform.

Clémence Guetté, who is part of the team in charge of that platform, said that the Covid-19 pandemic -- during which Mr. Macron pivoted from pro-market disrupter to unapologetic state spender to prop up France's economy -- had helped legitimize Mr. Mélenchon's own generous spending plans.

''The mind-set is not the same,'' she said.

But Mr. Mélenchon is still hard-pressed to attract left-wing voters who currently support other candidates.

''Many of them are wondering about the efficiency of their vote,'' Mr. Quatennens said in an interview, adding that voters wanted to avoid a rematch between Ms. Le Pen and Mr. Macron.

At a massive demonstration last week in Paris, Mr. Mélenchon appealed directly to left-wing sympathizers. ''Each person is personally responsible for the outcome of the presidential election, because each person has the key to the second round,'' he said in his speech. ''Do not hide behind the differences between leaders and labels.''

But the pool of left-wing voters to pull from is small.

One study by the Fondation Jean Jaurès, a progressive think-tank, found that about 40 percent of those currently supporting the Socialist, Green or Communist candidates may eventually vote for Mr. Mélenchon. But those candidates are polling so low that the additional support may not push him into the runoff.

Still, Sarah Maury-Lascoux, 51, a literature teacher at the rally in Le Havre, was confident. The French left needs to overcome its divisions, she said, and rally behind ''the only candidate who manages to take off.''

Constant Méheutreported from Le Havre and Aurelien Breedenfrom Paris.Constant Méheutreported from Le Havre and Aurelien Breedenfrom Paris.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/26/world/europe/melenchon-france-election-left.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/26/world/europe/melenchon-france-election-left.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Jean-Luc Mélenchon at a rally in Montpellier. He now trails only President Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen in election polls. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PASCAL GUYOT/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** March 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Instead of New Homes, Depot of Idling Trucks Occupies Harlem Site***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67BT-X281-JBG3-6338-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 19, 2023 Thursday

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 17

**Length:** 1446 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons and Mihir Zaveri

**Body**

A developer wanted to build residential towers, and a city councilwoman feared they would accelerate gentrification. Their fight reflects the challenge of building housing in New York.

The lot on West 145th Street in Manhattan was envisioned as a $700 million high-rise complex, with a civil rights museum and hundreds of below-market-rate apartments.

But after a local councilwoman protested, arguing that the project would bring more gentrification, the developer, Bruce Teitelbaum, gave an ultimatum: Unless his proposal was reconsidered, he would build a loud and unsightly truck depot.

On Wednesday, the trucks began to roll in.

''This is not the result we planned or hoped for on 145th Street,'' said Mr. Teitelbaum, once an aide to former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani. ''But without someone who is willing to find common ground and compromise, we have no other viable alternative or choices.''

The councilwoman, Kristin Richardson Jordan, who faces re-election this year, has said she made the right decision. She has argued that the so-called affordable units would still have been too expensive for ***working-class*** residents.

She said she would have agreed to the project had Mr. Teitelbaum agreed to include more homes that were affordable to people with lower incomes -- making a fifth of the apartments available to families of four earning $40,020 per year, for example, and reserving half of the apartments for families of four earning up to about $80,040.

''Let's be clear, that is already an extreme compromise and is still quite awful and would be a total financial windfall for this developer making him and his investors plenty of profit,'' she said. ''And he should have taken it.''

At a time when New York City faces a housing shortage, the tug of war over the Harlem project appears to be a case study in how the powerful whims of developers and the morass of local politics can make it difficult to build new homes.

It also provides a unique look into the high-stakes nature of housing in New York City. By choosing to park trucks on the lot, Mr. Teitelbaum has raised the cost to the community of rejecting his vision, raising the question of whether other developers might follow suit and use publicity-driven tactics to influence local politics.

At the same time, the drama of the Harlem case, and perhaps the threat that developers might try similar tactics elsewhere, has helped prompt a new spirit of cooperation among real estate executives and elected officials to find ways to make deals. Left-leaning City Council members recently backed two new affordable housing projects in Queens after negotiating with developers for more benefits for the community.

The 51-seat City Council has an unspoken tradition, known as member deference, that allows a council member to effectively veto land-use proposals in their district -- a process that gave Ms. Jordan a decisive voice in the Harlem project. Her opposition signaled it would face steep hurdles. It never came to a vote.

The yearslong fight over the Harlem housing project, known as One45, has been acrimonious, culminating in the arrival of the trucks on Wednesday at the new ''Park Your Fleet'' facility. Mr. Teitelbaum stood nearby, theatrically waving toward the more than 10 trucks idling around him.

''This is my dream,'' Mr. Teitelbaum said, his voice laced with sarcasm.

Iesha Sekou, a local activist with office space across the street from the depot, shouted at Mr. Teitelbaum from the sidewalk behind the chain-link fence, insisting that the depot would harm local children who suffered from asthma.

''He's doing this as revenge,'' said Ms. Sekou, founder of Street Corner Resources.

A man seated in the driver's seat in one of the trucks said his boss had told him to come to the depot and sit for a couple hours.

On Wednesday, Ms. Jordan asked state officials to shut down the depot over environmental concerns.

Mr. Teitelbaum said he was not being vindictive and that he could not let the lot sit empty. He said he was considering building a smaller luxury apartment building, a self-storage facility or parking on the block, which would not require City Council approval. He also said that the original proposal needed to contain some market-rate units to make it profitable.

''What is the point in restarting a totally unpredictable process that is doomed from the get-go?'' Mr. Teitelbaum said.

The developer's most recent proposal, in May, which would have been contingent on a city subsidy, called for about 10 percent of the 915 apartments to be affordable to seniors and people at risk of homelessness, including those with a family of four who earn up to $40,020 per year. Some 13 percent of the apartments considered ''affordable'' would have targeted families earning closer to $160,000.

Mayor Eric Adams, a Democrat, has supported Mr. Teitelbaum's proposal, and the mayor's office said on Wednesday that he wanted to see housing on the site, not a truck depot. Charles Kretchmer Lutvak, a spokesman for the mayor, said that the Adams administration would ''continue working with all of our partners on a comprehensive effort to bring much-needed affordable housing to Harlem and every neighborhood in New York City.''

Don Curtis, president of the United Black Caucus, a civil rights group that organized people living in the neighborhood to fight the development, said he thought Mr. Teitelbaum was ''bluffing'' because he wanted to soften any potential opposition to a future development on the site.

Mr. Curtis said he would have supported a project that provided jobs to people in the neighborhood and lower-cost homes.

''It would have been the tallest structure in all of Harlem,'' he said. ''It wouldn't have benefited the community.''

Ms. Jordan, whose Twitter account had disappeared on Wednesday, identifies as a Black socialist, though groups like the Democratic Socialists of America and the left-wing Working Families Party did not endorse her in the 2021 primary, which she won by around 100 votes.

Earlier this month, she held a ''Harlem Not For Sale'' rally to oppose the truck depot. She said the community should not have to choose between a ''high-rise luxury apartment complex that will displace our people in the last Black community in Manhattan and a truck stop that will add to the already dire levels of asthma in our community.''

Before the pandemic, major proposals like a rezoning of Industry City in Brooklyn and a proposed new headquarters for Amazon in Queens were halted over concerns that they would not benefit the neighborhoods surrounding them. But with growing concerns over affordability in the city, elected officials have been more eager to work with developers.

The City Council speaker, Adrienne E. Adams, has signaled that she is open to ending member deference, saying that she values community input, but not ''irrational opposition that rejects desperately needed housing.'' Ms. Adams helped negotiate the recent approval of a $2 billion development known as Innovation Queens that includes five towers and will add more than 3,000 homes in Astoria.

Mandela Jones, a spokesman for Ms. Adams, said on Wednesday that it was ''unfortunate'' that the Harlem housing proposal ''fell short of the community investment, partnership and trust necessary to advance with support.''

''We need to develop more housing at deeper affordability in every corner of the city to address this housing crisis, and the Council continues to consider all projects that seek to accomplish this goal for communities in good faith,'' he said.

The Manhattan borough president, Mark Levine, said this week that the city should make another attempt at rezoning the Harlem site to build affordable housing. He said that the earlier proposal was ''not perfect'' but it had met the goal of offering half affordable units.

''I'm optimistic that this is doable,'' he said. ''It's going to take work and it's going to take compromise.''

Anita Laremont, a former chair of the City Planning Commission and executive director of the city planning department under Mayor Bill de Blasio, said that even if the neighborhood and the city prefer housing, land use rules may give Mr. Teitelbaum the right to go forward with the truck depot. She said that ''letting what somebody's conception of perfect is be the enemy of the good can result in consequences that are worse for the community.''

But, she added, ''I'm not sure if one is looking to build relationships with the community, that the sort of histrionics of this approach is the best way to do it.''

Joshua Needelman contributed reporting.Joshua Needelman contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/nyregion/harlem-truck-depot-housing.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/nyregion/harlem-truck-depot-housing.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The truck depot is part of a housing developer's ultimatum. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A17.

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2023

**End of Document**



[***For the Neediest Students, a Way to Study and Keep Food on the Table***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JG-5K51-DXY4-X2GH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 29, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 17

**Length:** 1344 words

**Byline:** By Stephanie Saul and Dana Goldstein

**Body**

President Biden's proposal calls for community college to be free for all Americans, which may relieve some of the burdens saddling low-income and ***working-class*** college students.

After she got divorced in 2015, Sonia Medeiros, 48, knew she had to earn a college degree. She needed to support herself and her young son, but employers were not responding to her résumé, which showed only a high school education from her native country, Brazil.

The coronavirus pandemic made everything worse. She lost her job in food services and sometimes struggled to afford groceries, rent and car insurance payments. She could not look for new paid work, she said, because her 13-year-old son's school shut down often because of virus cases. Throughout, her federal Pell grant to pay tuition at LaGuardia Community College in Queens, where she is studying nutrition and culinary management, was an essential source of stability.

There are more than five million students, many of them from low-income families, enrolled at the nation's 1,000 community colleges. Like Ms. Medeiros, many of them stand to see a considerably strengthened lifeline to the middle class in the sweeping higher education provisions in President Biden's $1.8 trillion American Families Plan.

The proposal calls for community college to be free for all Americans. For low-income students like Ms. Medeiros, that would free Pell grant money to be spent on the living expenses that prevent many from completing degrees.

''It's very tough,'' Ms. Madeiros said of her financial reality as a single parent and student. But the Biden plan, she said, ''would be very helpful'' in helping her finish her degree and find a full-time job with benefits.

Proponents of the idea say it will relieve some of the burdens saddling low-income and ***working-class*** college students, many of whom struggle to cover tuition costs while at the same time paying for rent, food and other basic needs. Juan Salgado, chancellor of the 70,000-student City Colleges of Chicago system, said that by providing some free secondary education, Mr. Biden's plan would bring education into the 21st century.

''At the very top-line level, what I like about it is the recognition of our students and the impact that our students have and can continue to have on the growth of our economy and the betterment of our communities,'' Mr. Salgado said.

But critics question whether it makes sense to infuse public two-year colleges with so much federal funding, saying that many low-income students perform better at four-year universities. Others point out that community college is already free or low cost in many states.

Beth Akers, a higher education expert at the center-right American Enterprise Institute, said an alternative approach would have been to send the dollars to students to spend at the institutions of their choice. The Biden plan, she said, ''is sort of an experiment in more socialized education after high school, and it will be interesting to see how it works.''

Funded in part by increased taxes on the wealthy, the plan includes more than $300 billion in expenditures for higher education, aimed primarily at community college students as well as those attending historically Black colleges and universities.

Students like Ms. Madeiros would also benefit from many of the other provisions in the American Families Plan, such as child care subsidies, free preschool and tax credits.

The centerpiece of the higher education proposal provides $109 billion to fund free community college for all, with the Biden administration estimating that it will benefit up to 5.5 million students, many who face economic barriers to obtaining a degree.

National enrollment at community colleges has declined by about 10 percent during the pandemic, far outstripping the drop in overall college enrollment. Some community colleges in poorer communities have lost as much as 20 percent of their student body.

Jill Biden, the first lady, is a community college professor and has long been a proponent of increased funding for community colleges and has been promoting the idea in visits around the country.

While generally consistent with Mr. Biden's campaign blueprint, the proposal omits any reference to erasing college debt, a move promoted by a number of congressional Democrats, some who want to forgive $50,000 in federal student loans for many borrowers. The president had partially endorsed the idea during last year's presidential campaign, proposing $10,000 in loan forgiveness.

The White House said this week that it was still reviewing loan forgiveness proposals. While there is likely to be pressure on the administration from progressives to include a loan forgiveness provision in the proposal, the plan's overall cost -- and its reliance on increased taxes on the wealthy -- is likely to be a tough sell among Senate Republicans.

Although the plan makes community colleges free for everyone, they have generally served ***working-class*** students. Many of those students had trouble remaining in school even before the pandemic, juggling their own academic work with financial pressures and child care needs. The average age of community college students is 28, and many of them have their own families.

The proposal would also devote an additional $85 billion to low-income students eligible for federal Pell grants, which are currently capped at $6,495 per student a year. Mr. Biden's plan would raise that by $1,400 a year, the first step to meeting his promise to double the maximum Pell grant during his administration.

Sara Goldrick-Rab, a professor at Temple University who studies the financial difficulties facing students, called the proposal a necessary and long overdue effort.

''The evidence is very clear -- making community colleges free and increasing financial aid will increase college attainment, especially for people now being left behind in this economy,'' Dr. Goldrick-Rab said.

Among its other provisions, the plan would set aside $39 billion to subsidize two years of tuition at historically Black four-year colleges and other minority-serving institutions.

The money, which would be available to students from families earning less than $125,000, is designed as a kind of counterbalance to make sure federal community college funding does not siphon students to community colleges who would otherwise have attended one of the minority colleges.

The president is also proposing $62 billion to finance college retention programs, including money for emergency grants, day care for the children of college students, and mental health services. Three in five students who begin college receive a degree, with even lower results at community colleges.

Mr. Salgado, whose system lost about 12 percent of its students during the pandemic, particularly applauded the proposed funding aimed at retaining students. ''You have to understand that success with students requires more than just tuition support,'' he said.

The plan includes so-called Dreamers, making the group of undocumented immigrants who were children when they entered the United States eligible for assistance.

The proposal would drastically alter the way community college is paid for by creating federal-state agreements -- with the federal government kicking in $3 for every $1 paid by participating states.

The plan, which borrows from a proposal by President Barack Obama, dovetails with updated bills filed on Wednesday by Representative Robert C. Scott of Virginia and Senator Patty Murray of Washington, chairs of the House and Senate education committees. One of the bill co-sponsors, Representative Andy Levin of Michigan, called the president's proposal ''bold'' in its reforms.

Seventeen states already offer some type of free community college, generally for low-income students, by augmenting federal Pell grants. Because community college costs vary from state to state, details of carrying out the plan could be tricky to work out. It is also unclear whether all 50 states would buy into the expansion.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-education-community-college.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-education-community-college.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Students in a math lab at Triton College, a community college in River Grove, Ill. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Nolis Anderson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 29, 2021

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[***Casanova, Last Love***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6353-VPF1-DXY4-X3B5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 16, 2021 Friday

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 365 words

**Byline:** By Beatrice Loayza

**Body**

Benoît Jacquot's erotic costume drama envisions the Italian playboy as a weathered sad sack living in exile.

The French filmmaker Benoît Jacquot (''Diary of a Chambermaid,'' ''Farewell, My Queen'') is a master of costume dramas with an erotic bent. He brings the European period piece down to earth by pitting aristocratic whimsy against the uglier experiences of the ***working class***, and he's never afraid to visualize the, uh, unseemly biological realities beneath all those pantaloons and hoop skirts.

''Casanova, Last Love,'' his latest foray into the world of powdered wigs and courtly intrigue, is no exception, though it pales in comparison to his fiery women-fronted films.

Jacquot reappraises the notorious philanderer by depicting him not as a raucous pleasure-seeker but a weathered sad sack living in exile. In this world, playboys are pathetic and pitiable, which reads like a plea for modern audiences to cut maligned men more slack.

Framed as a series of flashbacks, the film follows Casanova as he wanders phantom-like around the English court -- a much more vulgar place than his usual stomping grounds. He falls for Marianne de Charpillon (Stacy Martin), an alluring but cruel prostitute who claims to have encountered him once before when she was an impressionable 11-year-old girl.

Thus begins a desultory cat-and-mouse game that emphasizes the ambiguity of La Charpillon's intentions, which are complemented by the cinematographer Christophe Beaucarne's dimly-lit spaces and dreamy, velvet textures.

The terrific French actor, Vincent Lindon, usually plays brooding types with a menacing streak but here he imbues his Casanova with subtle poignancy. It's an interesting performance that nevertheless transforms Casanova to the point that he is no longer a believable womanizer.

Perhaps that's the intention: appearances and reputations are deceptive. Though Jacquot throws into question our presumptions about figures like Casanova, as well as vilified women like La Charpillon, he leaves it at that, leaving us wondering what exactly it was all for.

Casanova, Last LoveNot rated. In French and English, with subtitles. Running time: 1 hour 38 minutes. In theaters.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/14/movies/casanova-last-love-review-reappraising-a-philanderer.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/14/movies/casanova-last-love-review-reappraising-a-philanderer.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Vincent Lindon in ''Casanova, Last Love.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY Carole Bethuel/Cohen Media Group FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 16, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Donkey Years***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6539-9M61-DXY4-X09P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 27, 2022 Sunday

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 11; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1475 words

**Byline:** By Timothy Noah

**Body**

WHAT IT TOOK TO WINA History of the Democratic PartyBy Michael KazinLEFT BEHINDThe Democrats' Failed Attempt to Solve InequalityBy Lily Geismer

The Democrats have always been the party of working people, but for most of their existence they were really the party of working white men. Not until the 1960s did Democrats expand their mission decisively beyond what contemporary historians have called ''egalitarian whiteness,'' and not until the 1970s did they fully commit themselves to women's rights.

This course correction, when it finally happened, made the party home to the majority of women voters and the overwhelming majority of Black voters. But it also prompted white flight. Before 1948, no Democrat entered the White House without winning a majority of the white vote. After 1964, no Democrat entered the White House without losing it. Democratic losses were especially heavy among the group whose interests once defined the party: the white male ***working class***.

The practical and moral challenges of repatriating this diaspora animate important books by two historians. ''What It Took to Win,'' by Michael Kazin, takes the story back to the party's origins two centuries ago. ''Left Behind,'' by Lily Geismer, picks up the narrative in the 1990s. Both authors conclude that the glue necessary to put Humpty Dumpty together again is the labor movement.

Kazin's shrewd and very absorbing history begins by noting that the Democrats are the ''oldest mass party in the world.'' They were the first party anywhere to hold regular nominating conventions, the first to establish a national committee, the first to create a congressional caucus and the first to judge party politics as something better than a necessary evil. The founder of this political apparatus is widely presumed to be Thomas Jefferson, but the party, Kazin explains, was really the handiwork of Martin Van Buren, a largely forgotten figure whose one-term presidency turned out to be the least interesting thing about him.

Yes, Jefferson founded, in opposition to Alexander Hamilton's Federalists, the Democratic-Republicans, more often called just the Republicans (thereby creating some confusion with today's Republican Party, founded half a century later). The Democratic-Republicans certainly influenced Van Buren's Democratic Party. But Hamilton's and Jefferson's rival crews weren't political parties at all; they were more akin to caucuses. Jefferson ''detested competitive political parties,'' Kazin notes, and with fewer than 10 percent of eligible landholding males voting in 1800, there wouldn't have been enough customers to sustain one.

The Democratic Party's true origins lay in the Bucktails, a caucus that Van Buren created after becoming a New York state senator in 1813. Van Buren and his Bucktails successfully pressed to eliminate New York's landholding requirement to vote. Other states followed suit, and in 1827 Van Buren, now a United States senator, joined with Thomas Ritchie, the editor and publisher of The Richmond Enquirer, to unite ''the planters of the South and the plain Republicans of the North.'' The organization that did this was initially called the ''Jackson Party'' in honor of its first presidential candidate, Andrew Jackson. But a dozen years later, it was renamed the Democratic Party.

It wasn't obvious that the planters of the South and the ''plain'' (i.e., nonwealthy) Republicans of the North had much in common, but they did. They shared a loathing for Northern industrialists, high tariffs, financiers -- and abolitionists. ***Working-class*** Northern whites (by the mid-19th century, mostly Irish) were no keener than Southern planters to free enslaved Blacks, because doing so would create competition for jobs. Abolitionists were typically Protestant ministers with little sympathy for the papist shanty-dwellers crowding their cities. The antislavery Unitarian minister Theodore Parker of Boston called the Irish ''a wretched race of people for us to import and breed from.''

American history has produced two extended periods of Democratic dominance. These were (to borrow from the historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr.) the Age of Jackson and the Age of Roosevelt. The first began in 1828 and ended on the eve of the Civil War. The second began in 1932 and ended around 1970. During both periods, Democrats won all but three presidential elections and enjoyed two-house majorities in almost every Congress.

The intervening losses of power were brutal. From Abraham Lincoln's 1860 victory to the century's end, no Democrat except Grover Cleveland was elected president. Democrats survived their second dethronement better (probably because they didn't lose a Civil War, just the Vietnam War). But Presidents Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama never commanded a political apparatus half so powerful as that of their 20th-century predecessors. Why not?

They'd lost the Solid South. Democrats spent four decades trying to win it back before mostly writing it off. Lily Geismer's ''Left Behind'' tells this sad story through the prism of the Democratic Leadership Council, a nonprofit organization founded in 1984 that grew out of efforts by Representative Gillis Long of Louisiana,, chairman of the House Democratic Caucus and nephew to the former Louisiana governor and senator Huey Long Jr., to give the Democrats a more Southern flavor. Its followers favored trimming government waste and applying market-based solutions to social problems. They became known as New Democrats. One of them, the Arkansas governor Bill Clinton, used his chairmanship of the organization as a springboard into the White House.

Geismer's book is a wonderfully detailed history of a now-extinct faith; the D.L.C. closed its doors in 2011. She's especially good at tracing the evolution of the ''microfinance'' model developed by the Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus in Bangladesh, which was embraced with great enthusiasm by both Bill and Hillary Clinton. The trouble with microfinance was that, at least in the United States, very few low-income people could benefit from taking high-interest microloans of a few thousand dollars to start their own businesses. A better solution for nearly everyone, Geismer observes, was a job that paid a living wage.

There's a tendency today on the left to judge the New Democrats by an impossible standard, and Geismer succumbs to this periodically. For example, she faults Bill Clinton's praising of the working poor who ''played by the rules'' for serving to ''stigmatize those poor people who allegedly did not.'' That was one of three or four places where I scribbled in the margin, ''Oh, please.'' The New Democrats weren't evil, just cautious, and in Bill Clinton's case that was partly because his most ambitious proposal -- Hillarycare -- was blocked by a Democratic Congress that quickly turned Republican.

The Democrats' main problem, both Kazin and Geismer recognize, is that they lost power and purpose by drifting away from labor. Franklin Roosevelt enacted labor protections early in his administration and created an army of supporters; union membership ballooned from three million in 1933 to 15 million in 1945. Kazin's New Deal chapter is titled, fittingly, ''An American Labor Party?''

It didn't last. The two-time presidential nominee Adlai Stevenson of the 1950s was bafflingly indifferent to labor, and George Meany, who took control of the newly merged A.F.L.-C.I.O. in 1955, was at best a complacent mediocrity. Global trade took its toll. But the heaviest blow fell in 1947 when Republicans and Southern Democrats passed, over Harry Truman's veto, the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act, which sharply restricted union recruiting. The percent of private-sector workers who belonged to unions started shrinking in the 1950s and it never stopped.

Eventually, the Democrats lost interest in labor and started courting Silicon Valley and college-educated urbanites. ''The New Democrats deliberately aimed to constrain the power and influence of the labor movement,'' Geismer writes. The enormity of this error became evident in 2016 when Donald Trump showed the Democrats that there weren't enough college-educated urbanites to elect Hillary Clinton. Four years later the Democrats elected their first genuinely pro-labor president since Truman. Your current commander in chief wants to rebuild organized labor. If Congress lets him, maybe our children will one day call the next three decades the Age of Biden.Timothy Noah is a staff writer at The New Republic and the author of ''The Great Divergence: America's Growing Inequality Crisis And What We Can Do About It.''WHAT IT TOOK TO WINA History of the Democratic PartyBy Michael Kazin416 pp. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. $35.LEFT BEHINDThe Democrats' Failed Attempt toSolve InequalityBy Lily Geismer448 pp. PublicAffairs. $30.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/books/review/what-it-took-to-win-michael-kazin-left-behind-lily-geismer.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/books/review/what-it-took-to-win-michael-kazin-left-behind-lily-geismer.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Democrats demonstrating for lower taxes, 1868. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** March 27, 2022

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[***Democrats Hope Big-Ticket Bills Will Bolster Their Labor Support***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67HR-79X1-JBG3-60RP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1601 words

**Byline:** By Jonathan Weisman

**Body**

BRIDGEPORT, W.Va. -- In the mid-1970s, when Mark Raddish wasn't more than 11 years old, his coal-mining grandfather picked him up from a mining camp and took him a thousand feet underground, to the cold darkness beneath West Virginia. There, he imparted a lesson.

''You don't want to make this your livelihood,'' warned his grandfather, a union miner, Mr. Raddish recalled. ''These guys don't know if they're going to come home at night to see their mom or dad, to see their brothers and sisters or their little boy or girl.''

He did as he was told, getting an education and landing a pipe fitters' union job for Mylan Pharmaceuticals. When that job was sent overseas, he took a leap of faith late last year and signed on as West Virginia Employee No. 2 for Sparkz, a California-based electric vehicle battery start-up. The company was enticed here, in the wooded hills outside Bridgeport, W.Va., in part by generous federal tax subsidies and in part by the United Mine Workers of America, which is recruiting out-of-work coal miners for the company's new plant in a faded industrial park.

It is no accident that this plant, rising in place of a shuttered plate-glass factory, is bringing yet another alternative-energy company to rural West Virginia. Federal money is pouring into the growing industry, with thick strings attached to reward companies that pay union wages, employ union apprentices and buy American steel, iron and components.

President Biden and the Democrats who pushed those provisions are hoping that more union members will bring more political strength for unions after decades of decline. White ***working-class*** voters, even union members, have sided with Republicans on social issues, and still tend to see the G.O.P. as their economic ally, as well.

But Republicans in Congress -- especially in the leadership and tax-writing committees -- have for years resisted Democrats' pro-union efforts, including writing legislation into the tax code and enacting broad policy measures. Republicans have argued that such measures were wasteful, inefficient and would bog down federal projects, in addition to cutting into companies' profits and adding to inflation.

''What I worry about is how fiscally irresponsible the federal government is going to have to be,'' said Rusty Brown, a former official in the Trump administration's Labor Department.

The Democrats finally broke the Republican blockade, in part because the rising threat of China softened Republican resistance to domestic work and supply requirements, in part because Democrats wrote the most stringent requirement themselves, and passed the pro-labor incentives through Congress with rules that overcame a Republican filibuster.

''For the first time in a long time, we're building an economy from the bottom up and the middle out,'' Mr. Biden declared on Wednesday at the Wisconsin Laborers' training center north of Madison, ''with products made in America and with union labor.''

Money is just starting to flow from the last Congress's three huge legislative victories -- a $1 trillion infrastructure bill, a $280 billion measure to rekindle a domestic semiconductor industry and the Inflation Reduction Act, which included $370 billion for clean energy to combat climate change.

Tucked into all of those laws were measures to give unions the power to effectively tell employers: You must pay union-scale wages and use union apprenticeship and training programs, so you might as well hire union workers.

''I think it's a renaissance for the labor movement, especially for the building trades, to take this upswing and open our eyes,'' said Mike Knisley, executive secretary and treasurer of the Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council.

This month, the most powerful incentives went into force: tax credits for clean energy and energy efficiency projects funded by the Inflation Reduction Act. The tax credits increase in value fivefold if federal contractors pay ''prevailing wages,'' or wage rates generally set by unions; use ''qualified'' apprenticeship programs that are usually run by unions; and buy steel, iron and manufactured components that are made in the United States. Contractors that claim the credits but fail to abide by the rules face stiff fines and penalties.

The scale of those incentives was intentional: Democrats who wrote the Inflation Reduction Act made them so generous that Senate tax aides said it would be considered ''fiduciary malfeasance'' not to take advantage of them.

For companies like Sparkz, a 30 percent tax credit to offset the cost of investments in clean energy jumps to 40 percent if the investment lands in areas with retired coal mines or fossil-fuel power plants. Form Energy, which manufactures batteries to store power generated by alternative sources like wind and solar using iron instead of more difficult-to-find minerals, is building a plant in Weirton, W.Va, an old steel town.

If you build a clean-energy power plant on the site of a retired dirty-energy plant, you can take even more off the price of the investment.

''This is clearly saying, 'Thou shalt create jobs,''' said Sanjiv Malhotra, the chief executive of Sparkz.

Beyond the inflation act, Democrats, with help from a few Republicans, were able to add prevailing wage requirements to the semiconductor bill. And both the Energy and Transportation Departments are making clear that access to unions, payment of prevailing wages and commitments to local hiring will be big advantages for competitive bidders seeking infrastructure and highway electrification projects, though Republican governors like Joe Lombardo in Nevada are trying to block some of those requirements.

For union leaders, the federal legislation could prove to be a spectacular gift, if they can meet the demand for union workers and persuade those workers to reward the politicians who provided their jobs.

But that is a big ''if.'' Asked whether Mr. Biden or the man instrumental in many of the tax subsidies, Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, were receiving credit in an overwhelmingly Republican state, Sparkz's first two employees in the state, Mr. Raddish and Mitchell Williams, 24, shrugged.

''That's all hush-hush,'' Mr. Raddish said. ''I don't know.''

For the unions, the trajectory seems clear. Between the construction of semiconductor plants, the building of electric-vehicle charging stations and the expansion of broadband internet, leaders of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers foresee more work than union members for at least the next decade. That means they have to step up organizing.

''We are absolutely bringing more workers into the union,'' said Bill Hamilton, business manager of the I.B.E.W. local that is staffing an enormous Intel semiconductor plant under construction outside Columbus, Ohio.

The leadership of the Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 81 in Syracuse, N.Y., is scrambling to bring in thousands of new members to satisfy the project labor agreement governing Micron's expansive chip plant under construction north of the city. Mr. Biden highlighted such accords last week as he talked up infrastructure projects in Baltimore, New York and New Jersey. He also promoted them on Wednesday in Wisconsin, where he hailed projects in Green Bay and Columbia County.

''People don't realize how much is in the pipeline right now,'' said Mark Muro, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who is tracking the Biden administration's industrial policies. ''There's a fundamental delivery challenge, but it could become a tremendous opportunity for unions.''

Mr. Brown, who is now with the anti-union Freedom Foundation, noted that private-sector unions were at a low ebb, representing only about 10 percent of the private work force.

''When you're writing laws that pretty much require companies to use labor unions, that means you're discriminating against 90 percent of the population,'' he said.

But union leaders say they are intent on strengthening labor's power -- and rewarding its allies. Mr. Hamilton said the I.B.E.W. was including education on the labor movement and an explicit section tying politics to job creation in its revamped training programs.

''We want to get 80 percent of our membership into that education program before the next presidential election,'' he said.

Construction unions are targeting veterans, women and workers of color to bring into the movement.

''It goes hand in hand with what we see is going to be a big increase in our work force,'' said Mark Douglas, the president of the Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council. ''We have to make sure they're educated as to how these things work, and we're very pleased with everything that's happened from Washington with the Biden administration.''

That could be good news for endangered Democrats up for re-election in 2024. They include Mr. Manchin, who won tax incentives to locate plants near abandoned coal mines and closed coal-fired power plants, as well as Senator Sherrod Brown, Democrat of Ohio, who secured union-scale wage requirements in the semiconductor bill.

Not all of the new money will favor organized labor. Joseph W. Kane, another Brookings researcher, said more than three-quarters of the $864 billion for roads, bridges and other projects would go to state and local governments through old spending formulas with no special strings attached.

''There's a lot of D.C. happy talk where you have people seeing transformational, once-in-a-generation spending,'' Mr. Kane said. ''The reality on the ground is very different.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/10/us/politics/democrats-biden-unions.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/10/us/politics/democrats-biden-unions.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mark Raddish, left, and Mitchell Williams in what will be Sparkz's Bridgeport, W.Va., factory, making electric-vehicle batteries. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SPEAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Carl Tjader, a third-year ironworker apprentice, training at the JATC Training Center in Columbus, Ohio, on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13) This article appeared in print on page A1, A13.

**Load-Date:** February 11, 2023

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[***Marjorie Taylor Greene and the Thick, Cracked Goggles of Grievance; FRANK BRUNI***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6828-KHV1-DXY4-X3XD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 20, 2023 Thursday 10:36 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2011 words

**Byline:** Frank Bruni

**Highlight:** She’s an emblem of many Americans’ insistence on a sense of persecution.

**Body**

I don’t keep up with Marjorie Taylor Greene’s tweets, having decided long ago that there were more pleasant and constructive uses of time, like lighting fire to my eyelashes. But I’m rethinking that judgment now. M.T.G. really does have something to say — or, rather, to tell us.

She tweeted a doozy the other day. Actually, she routinely tweets doozies, which I realized when I caught up with her Twitter account, bingeing on it the way I would an overlooked HBO Max series, if the series were an endless sequence of garish sights and ghastly sounds that robbed me of my will to live. This tweet garnered headlines — that’s how I came to it — and deservedly so. [*Audaciously*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/congress/graham-slams-greene-irresponsible-statement-defending-suspect-docs-lea-rcna79938), incoherently, M.T.G. used it to try to turn Jack Teixeira, [*the 21-year-old member of the Massachusetts Air National Guard*](https://www.npr.org/2023/04/14/1169952771/jack-teixeira-background-pentagon-document-leak) accused of leaking national security secrets, into a victim.

The leaks in question [*divulged classified information*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2023/04/13/document-leak-jack-teixeira-og/) about U.S. surveillance of Russia that’s vital to our assistance to Ukraine, where there are true victims, an entire ravaged country of them. And Teixeira’s alleged actions didn’t seem to have any high-minded prompt. He’s more post-adolescent punk than principled dissident by my read.

But then my lens isn’t M.T.G.’s. I don’t wear her thick, cracked goggles of grievance, which reveal Teixeira as a martyr.

“Teixeira is white, male, christian, and antiwar,” [*she tweeted*](https://twitter.com/RepMTG/status/1646615867285708802?s=20), capitalizing on her professed faith without properly capitalizing it. “That makes him an enemy to the Biden regime.” Her tweet, wanting for a good copy edit, [*went on to beseech its readers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/crime/marjorie-taylor-greene-tweet-jack-teixeira-b2320609.html): “Ask yourself who is the real enemy? A young low level national guardsmen? Or the administration that is waging war in Ukraine?”

President Biden isn’t waging war in Ukraine. That’s what Vladimir Putin is doing. And Teixeira’s gender, color and religion have nothing to do with his arrest and looming prosecution, nor are they relevant to a legitimate, necessary debate about the degree, nature, costs and long-term usefulness of our aid to Ukrainians.

But they have everything to do with the manner in which an alarming fraction of Americans regard and respond to political developments today. They look for evidence of offense to, and persecution of, whatever group of people they identify with. They invent that proof when it’s not there; when it is, they upsize it. Either way, their predetermined sense of grievance is the prism through which all is passed and all is parsed. It’s their Rosetta stone. It’s their binky.

M.T.G.’s tweet is an extreme example from a self-infatuated extremist, but it’s an example nonetheless. A reckless brat is arrested, President Biden arches an eyebrow, a bluebird falls from the sky: M.T.G. can see the lefty secularism and reverse racism — the wokeness, in a polarizing word — in any turn of events.

So can many others on the right, which has no monopoly on willful misreads, but is currently conducting a scary and profoundly dangerous master class on them. Witness their conspiracy theories, their militias, their actions on — and then revisionism about — the Jan. 6 rioting. Witness the evolution of Donald Trump’s blather, which leans ever more heavily on the insistence that investigations of him are really attacks on his supporters, who confront the same horrible oppression that poor Airman Teixeira does.

Witness less flamboyant versions of this paranoid mind-set. Ron DeSantis, the Florida governor, has built his brand around identifying the supposed threats to non-woke traditionalists and crafting or calling for measures that foil and punish their liberal oppressors. [*He trades aspiration for retribution*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/22/opinion/ron-desantis-trump.html), optimism for resentment.

He, too, wears goggles of grievance. They’re just a little bit lighter than M.T.G.’s. A little bit looser. And they’re not lined in fur.

For the Love of Sentences

In The Star-Ledger of Newark, N.J., [*Drew Sheneman wrote*](https://www.nj.com/opinion/2023/04/clarence-thomas-likes-to-travel-sheneman.html) that the name of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas’s billionaire buddy, Harlan Crow, brings to mind someone who perhaps “made his fortune through a combination of cattle rustling and owning the haunted theme parks on Scooby Doo. Wait, I just checked, it’s real estate. Same difference.” (Thanks to Mary Alice Schiller of Randolph, N.J., for nominating this.)

In The Washington Post, [*Kim Bellware and Brittany Shammas examined*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/arts-entertainment/2023/04/14/succession-logan-roy-spoilers/) “the frustration some ‘Succession’ fans felt when they dutifully avoided Twitter only to have the plot spoiled some other way; no one likes catching a spoiler in the wild.” (Thomas Beck, Dorado, Puerto Rico)

In The New Yorker, Kathryn Schulz [*paid tribute*](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2023/04/17/how-one-mothers-love-for-her-gay-son-started-a-revolution) to one of the creators, in the early 1970s, of a national advocacy and support group for parents determined to embrace children who disclosed a sexual orientation that was maligned and misunderstood: “You could fit most of the solar system into the chasm between how the average American of the era would have reacted in that hypothetical situation and how Jeanne Manford responded upon learning that Morty was gay.” (Madeline Bauer, Victorville, Calif.)

Also in The New Yorker, [*Anthony Lane described*](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2023/04/17/air-movie-review-paint) how principal characters in the new movie “Air,” about Nike’s development and unveiling of the Air Jordan sneaker, gaze upon the finished footwear: “They’re like shepherds in a Rembrandt Nativity, lit by the natural radiance of the Christ child. And they’re looking at a shoe.” (Stephen Chapman, West Tisbury, Mass.)

Within just hours of The Times’s publication of [*Maureen Dowd’s column*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/15/opinion/fox-news-dominion-murdoch.html) about Rupert Murdoch and Dominion Voting Systems’ defamation suit against his network, Fox News, I’d received dozens of nominations for the following sentence: “At long last, after a shameless career built on spreading poisonous lies about everything from climate to Covid to Trump’s stolen election blather, King Rupert, as Vanity Fair calls him, may be losing dominion over his dominion because of Dominion.” (Leslie Flattery, Katy, Tex., and Jean Sommerfield, Manhattan, among many, many others)

Sticking with The Times, [*David Brooks nailed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/13/opinion/sun-belt-migration.html?searchResultPosition=1) the anti-urban, anti-cosmopolitan bent of many Republican politicians today: “The G.O.P. is a ***working-class*** populist party that has no interest in nurturing highly educated bobo boom towns. The G.O.P. does everything it can to repel those people — and the Tesla they drove in on.” (Judy Fore, Black Mountain, N.C.)

[*Michelle Cottle drew a zoological contrast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/17/opinion/kevin-mccarthy-house.html) between the current and previous speakers of the House: “Ms. Pelosi was a once-in-a-generation leader with a rare gift for herding the cats. Mr. McCarthy and his crew, by contrast, look more like the dog that caught the car.” (Chet Zenone, Salem, Ore., and Mary Shuford, Brooklyn, N.Y., among others)

And in Literary Hub, [*Ed Simon defended*](https://lithub.com/baroque-purple-and-beautiful-in-praise-of-the-long-complicated-sentence/) — and modeled — a rangy kind of writing: “Within a long sentence — clause upon clause, the commas and semicolons, em-dashes and colons, parentheticals and appositions piling up — there can be a veritable maze of imagery, a labyrinth of connotation, a factory of concepts; the baroque and purple sentence is simultaneously an archive of consciousness at its most caffeinated and a dream of new worlds from words alone. No doubt my proffered example of a long sentence, with which I began this paragraph, will not appeal to every reader, which is fine, but to those who hold as inviolate that the only good sentence is a short one, I’m happy to offer an interjection that’s simply two words, the first a scatological curse and the second a pronoun.” (Shari Kulha, Toronto)

To nominate favorite bits of recent writing from The Times or other publications to be mentioned in “For the Love of Sentences,” please email me [*here*](mailto:bruni-newsletter@nytimes.com?subject=For%20the%20Love%20of%20Sentences) and include your name and place of residence.

What I’m Listening To and Reading

* The popular podcast “You’re Wrong About,” which looks afresh at misremembered and misunderstood events and figures from the past, has its highs and lows; a recent zenith, at least for me, was [*an episode that re-examined the singer and songwriter Sinead O’Connor.*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/sin%C3%A9ad-oconnor-with-allyson-mccabe/id1380008439?i=1000608274693) Allyson McCabe, the author of a new book, “Why Sinead O’Connor Matters,” appeared and eloquently made the case that O’Connor paid an exorbitant price for her irreverence, which doesn’t look as outrageous in hindsight. Listening to McCabe and reflecting on it all, I was struck by the fact that O’Connor was canceled long before we called it that and by the sexism in much of the condemnation of her. I was also reminded of how much terrific music she made. I still listen occasionally to my three favorite albums of hers, “The Lion and the Cobra,” “I Do Not Want What I Haven’t Got” and “Faith and Courage.” And I highly recommend them.

1. A good friend of mine who, like me, struggles to explain the pleasure of being devoted to a sports team recently stumbled upon [*this 1987 article*](https://www.nytimes.com/1987/01/25/sports/views-of-sports-the-wounded-giant-regains-his-dignity.html?smid=em-share) in The Times by Richard Gilman about precisely that. It’s a beauty.
2. Few scholars have been as smart on the subjects of contemporary narcissism and young people’s relationship with their gadgets as the social psychologist Jean Twenge, whose books include “iGen” and “Generation Me.” [*Her new book*](https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/Generations/Jean-M-Twenge/9781982181611), “Generations: The Real Differences Between Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers and Silents — and What They Mean for America’s Future,” is chockablock with interesting, surprising insights. It will be released on Tuesday.

On a Personal Note (Odd Neighborhood Names)

The many great examples of strangely or strikingly named streets and subdivisions that you’ve sent in since [*I first wrote about the topic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/opinion/tom-cruise-and-the-insanity-of-the-oscars.html) have given me enough material for additional installments of this occasional feature, which appeared in [*this newsletter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/26/opinion/north-carolina-governor-robinson.html) and [*this one*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/16/opinion/ron-desantis-trump-2024.html). To build on those:

Some streets and neighborhoods in Carefree, Ariz., take their cue from the city’s name in a manner that seems paradoxically labored. There’s Tranquil Trail. Easy Street, of course. Also, “Ho Hum Drive comes to a fork and becomes Ho Road and Hum Road,” Paul Payton of Chatham, N.J., wrote in an email. I thank him for flagging these strenuously becalmed appellations.

They speak to how emphatically a cluster of domiciles — or whoever developed them — can work a theme. The Gingerville Manor subdivision of Edgewater, Md., includes Cinnamon Lane, Tarragon Lane, Cardamon Drive, Fennel Road, Thyme Drive, Peppercorn Place, Coriander Place, Saffron Place and Oregano Drive.

For a similar commitment to a given conceit, check out the so-called [*“Disney Streets” neighborhood of Midway Hills*](https://preservationdallas.org/neighborhoods/the-disney-streets-of-midway-hills#:~:text=The%20Disney%20Streets%20neighborhood%20of,Rosser%20Road%20on%20the%20west.) in Dallas, where you’ll find Cinderella Lane, Pinocchio Drive, Peter Pan Drive, Snow White Drive, Dwarfs Circle, Elfland Circle, Fantasia Lane and Wonderland Trail. (Neva Flynn, Dallas, and Diane Barentine, Dallas, among others)

Street names can be bestowed in a less gauzy and romantic spirit, which was the apparent case with Maalox Court in Louisville, Ky. It’s within a few hundred feet of a road that alludes to a powerful anti-inflammatory: Indocin Court. Perhaps the developer had indigestion, coupled with gout. (Andrew Melnykovych, Louisville)

In Holbrook, Ariz., Bucket of Blood Street was apparently christened in the aftermath — and [*in reference to*](https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/bucket-of-blood-street) — a violent bar fight. (Robert Phillips, Broomfield, Colo.)

Peggy McLellan of Okemos, Mich., pointed me toward an equally eerie artery: “Before cars had GPS, a friend and I took a wrong turn in the vast nothingness of Wyoming. After what seemed like days of still more wrong turns, we came upon Poison Spider Road. We opted not to drive on it.” And a thousand black widows wept.

Given our country’s litigiousness, it’s perhaps appropriate that there is a Supreme Court — by which I mean a road, not a judicial panel — in Moyock, N.C. And in Charles Town, W.Va. And in Springfield, Va. And in Owings Mills, Md., where it’s just a few paces from Circuit Court. I checked out the neighborhood map and was disappointed that developers didn’t have the full courage of their jurisprudential convictions. Why not District Court, Appellate Court, Probate Court and, naturally, Traffic Court?

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by Sam Whitney/The New York Times; photographs by Kenny Holston/The New York Times and Win McNamee/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2023

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[***Late Surge Has Fiery French Leftist Eyeing Presidential Runoff***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6534-93F1-JBG3-61HJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 26, 2022 Saturday 13:30 EST

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**Length:** 1388 words

**Byline:** Constant Méheut and Aurelien Breeden

**Highlight:** Jean-Luc Mélenchon, a skilled orator and veteran politician, hopes to become the first left-wing candidate since 2012 to reach the second round of France’s presidential election.

**Body**

Jean-Luc Mélenchon, a skilled orator and veteran politician, hopes to become the first left-wing candidate since 2012 to reach the second round of France’s presidential election.

LE HAVRE, France — Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the leading left-wing candidate in France’s upcoming presidential election, once likened himself to one of nature’s slowest animals.

“Trust a wise and electoral tortoise like me,” he [*said*](https://twitter.com/JLMelenchon/status/1482733230470180867?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) at a rally in January. “Slow and steady wins the race.” And, he added, mockingly: “I’ve already tired a few hares.”

Now, nearly two weeks before the first round of voting on April 10, Mr. Mélenchon — a [*veteran politician*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/10/world/europe/in-french-elections-sound-and-fury-from-the-lefts-melenchon.html?searchResultPosition=13) who launched his third presidential bid 17 months ago — is hoping that Aesop’s fable about the tortoise who came from behind proves prescient.

For months, Mr. Mélenchon and other candidates jostled in the polls below [*President Emmanuel Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/world/europe/emmanuel-macron-france-election-debate.html), the centrist incumbent, and [*Marine Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/15/world/europe/france-lepen.html?searchResultPosition=7), the far-right leader, hoping to disrupt their widely expected rematch.

But Mr. Mélenchon, 70, the leader of the far-left France Unbowed movement, has [*surged recently*](https://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2022/02/08/election-presidentielle-2022-que-montrent-les-principaux-sondages_6112830_4355770.html) in voter surveys. He is now comfortably [*in third place*](https://www.ifop.com/presidentielle-2022/) with about 14 percent, largely ahead of his competitors on the left and within a few points of Ms. Le Pen, whose fierce competition with [*Éric Zemmour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/11/world/europe/eric-zemmour-rally-france.html?searchResultPosition=11), an anti-immigrant pundit, has eaten into her support.

A final victory for Mr. Mélenchon still seems remote. But a left-wing candidate reaching the runoff for the first time since 2012 would be stunning, especially in a race that was long-dominated by right-wing talking points on [*security*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/17/world/europe/france-crime.html), [*immigration*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/02/world/europe/french-election-immigration.html) and [*national identity*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/world/europe/eric-zemmour-macron-france-election.html).

“I’m starting to think it might be possible,” said Jérôme Brossard, 68, a retiree who was attending a small Mélenchon rally on a recent evening in Le Havre, a ***working-class*** port city on France’s northern coast.

About 200 people gathered at a community center for the event, where walls were lined with posters reading “Another World Is Possible.” Some waved France Unbowed flags or wore stickers of the candidate’s face on their chest.

Mr. Brossard said friends and family had recently shown interest in Mr. Mélenchon, raising his hopes and, for the first time ever, prompting him to paste campaign posters around town.

Mr. Mélenchon, a former Trotskyist and longtime member of the Socialist party who left in 2008 after accusing it of veering to the center, is a perennial but divisive figure in France’s [*notoriously fractious left-wing politics*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/29/world/europe/france-left-presidential-election-primary.html?searchResultPosition=1).

A fiery, skilled orator with a reputation for irascibility — “I’m the Republic!” he [*once shouted*](https://www.france24.com/en/20181018-melenchon-raid-violent-outburst-france-unbowed-investigation) at a police officer raiding his party’s headquarters in 2018 — Mr. Mélenchon has also staked out positions on contentious issues like [*secularism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/world/europe/france-secularism-laicite-macron.html?searchResultPosition=8), [*race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/world/europe/france-racism-universalism.html?searchResultPosition=3) and [*France’s colonial history*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/29/world/europe/france-racism-valeurs-actuelles.html?searchResultPosition=3) that have put him at odds with those on the left who support a stricter model of a secular, colorblind republic.

But now, as the global economy strains to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine pushes up the prices of [*energy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/21/business/europe-power-gas-bill.html) and essential goods, Mr. Mélenchon’s unabashedly left-wing platform, including a promise to impose price controls on some basic necessities, is resonating.

“That’s his favored terrain,” said [*Manuel Cervera-Marzal*](https://www.uliege.be/cms/c_9054334/fr/repertoire?uid=u230072), a sociologist at the University of Liège who has written a [*book*](https://www.editionsladecouverte.fr/le_populisme_de_gauche-9782348054921) analyzing the France Unbowed movement.

“He is doing an old-school, left-wing campaign that puts issues of inequality and purchasing power at its heart,” he said, adding that Mr. Mélenchon had softened his image of a “slightly bad-tempered” and “erratic” politician while preserving his “populist” strategy of pitting the people against the elite.

Voters most attracted to Mr. Mélenchon — who skew young, unemployed and ***working-class*** — also make up their minds later than most, which helps explain why Mr. Mélenchon’s polling numbers [*have risen as the finish line approaches*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/16/world/europe/jean-luc-melenchon-france-presidential-election.html?searchResultPosition=3), according to Mr. Cervera-Marzal.

But that is also the electorate most likely to stay home on election day, he warned.

“It’s a crucial issue,” he said. “The lower abstention is, the higher Jean-Luc Mélenchon will go.”

Mr. Mélenchon still faces many obstacles. Other left-wing leaders have resisted rallying to his campaign, castigating him for his pro-Russian comments before the invasion of Ukraine and saying his fiery nature made him unfit to govern.

“We need to have a useful president, not just a useful vote,” François Hollande, France’s Socialist president from 2012 to 2017, told [*France Inter radio*](https://www.franceinter.fr/emissions/l-invite-de-8h20-le-grand-entretien/l-invite-de-8h20-le-grand-entretien-du-mercredi-09-mars-2022) this month, as he attacked Mr. Mélenchon’s anti-NATO stance and his willingness to opt out of European Union rules.

In 2017, Mr. Mélenchon missed the second round of voting by a mere percentage point, a [*bitter disappointment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/25/world/europe/france-melenchon-macron-le-pen.html?searchResultPosition=8) that his team is eager not to repeat. Mr. Mélenchon’s campaign has held hundreds of small but packed rallies and sent dozens of caravans to tour the country to attract [*disillusioned voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/04/world/europe/france-election-auxerre.html).

“It’s time for the final all-out offensive!” said Adrien Quatennens, a France Unbowed lawmaker, at the rally in Le Havre. “It’s a vote that is worth a thousand strikes, a thousand protests!”

Turnout was low in Le Havre for [*last year’s regional elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/27/world/europe/france-elections-macron-le-pen.html), but the city, with its dock workers and powerful trade unions, is still fertile ground for Mr. Mélenchon’s campaign. A third of the city voted for him in 2017.

Sitting in the back row at the rally, Catherine Gaucher, 51, said she “had a bit of sympathy for the Greens at the beginning.”

“But the platform they advance, no, it’s Macronism,” she said, referring to Mr. Macron, who is widely depicted on the left as the “[*president of the rich.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/01/world/europe/france-emmanuel-macron.html)”

By contrast, Mr. Mélenchon has vowed to lower the legal retirement age to 60 from 62; introduce a monthly minimum wage of 1,400 euros, or about $1,500; and increase taxes on the rich, including by reintroducing a wealth tax that Mr. Macron repealed.

He is also determined to replace the country’s Constitution, which [*gives the president a strong upper hand*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/22/world/europe/france-election-emmanuel-macron.html?searchResultPosition=5), with a new parliamentary system. He has promised to massively invest in green energy and the fight against sexism and violence against women, and to overhaul France’s police force, in response to the [*#MeToo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/08/world/europe/france-metoo-sandra-muller.html?searchResultPosition=2) and [*anti-police-violence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/world/europe/france-police-racism.html?searchResultPosition=23) protests of recent years.

Even Mr. Mélenchon’s most vocal critics acknowledge his thoroughness. Geoffroy Roux de Bézieux, the head of a powerful association of France’s biggest companies and one of Mr. Mélenchon’s biggest opponents, [*said last month*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12tBuZap87g) that Mr. Mélenchon was “ready to govern,” with a “very well crafted” and “interesting” platform.

Clémence Guetté, who is part of the team in charge of that platform, said that the Covid-19 pandemic — during which Mr. Macron pivoted from pro-market disrupter to unapologetic state spender to prop up France’s economy — had helped legitimize Mr. Mélenchon’s own generous spending plans.

“The mind-set is not the same,” she said.

But Mr. Mélenchon is still hard-pressed to attract left-wing voters who currently support other candidates.

“Many of them are wondering about the efficiency of their vote,” Mr. Quatennens said in an interview, adding that voters wanted to avoid a rematch between Ms. Le Pen and Mr. Macron.

At a massive demonstration last week in Paris, Mr. Mélenchon appealed directly to left-wing sympathizers. “Each person is personally responsible for the outcome of the presidential election, because each person has the key to the second round,” he said in his [*speech*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zlwij7ZXLts). “Do not hide behind the differences between leaders and labels.”

But the pool of left-wing voters to pull from is small.

One [*study by the Fondation Jean Jaurès*](https://www.jean-jaures.org/publication/presidentielle-2022-les-electeurs-de-gauche-a-lheure-des-choix/), a progressive think-tank, found that about 40 percent of those currently supporting the Socialist, Green or Communist candidates may eventually vote for Mr. Mélenchon. But those candidates are polling so low that the additional support may not push him into the runoff.

Still, Sarah Maury-Lascoux, 51, a literature teacher at the rally in Le Havre, was confident. The French left needs to overcome its divisions, she said, and rally behind “the only candidate who manages to take off.”

Constant Méheut reported from Le Havre and Aurelien Breeden from Paris.

Constant Méheut reported from Le Havre and Aurelien Breeden from Paris.

PHOTO: Jean-Luc Mélenchon at a rally in Montpellier. He now trails only President Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen in election polls. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PASCAL GUYOT/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** March 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[***‘Casanova, Last Love’ Review: Reappraising a Philanderer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:634S-CM81-DXY4-X1ST-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 14, 2021 Wednesday 01:00 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 381 words

**Byline:** Beatrice Loayza

**Highlight:** Benoît Jacquot’s erotic costume drama envisions the Italian playboy as a weathered sad sack living in exile.

**Body**

Benoît Jacquot’s erotic costume drama envisions the Italian playboy as a weathered sad sack living in exile.

The [*French filmmaker Benoît Jacquot*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/08/movies/benoit-jacquot-the-director-who-loves-women.html) (“Diary of a Chambermaid,” “Farewell, My Queen”) is a master of costume dramas with an erotic bent. He brings the European period piece down to earth by pitting aristocratic whimsy against the uglier experiences of the ***working class***, and he’s never afraid to visualize the, uh, unseemly biological realities beneath all those pantaloons and hoop skirts.

“Casanova, Last Love,” his latest foray into the world of powdered wigs and courtly intrigue, is no exception, though it pales in comparison to his fiery women-fronted films.

Jacquot reappraises the notorious philanderer by depicting him not as a raucous pleasure-seeker but a weathered sad sack living in exile. In this world, playboys are pathetic and pitiable, which reads like a plea for modern audiences to cut maligned men more slack.

Framed as a series of flashbacks, the film follows Casanova as he wanders phantom-like around the English court — a much more vulgar place than his usual stomping grounds. He falls for Marianne de Charpillon (Stacy Martin), an alluring but cruel prostitute who claims to have encountered him once before when she was an impressionable 11-year-old girl.

Thus begins a desultory cat-and-mouse game that emphasizes the ambiguity of La Charpillon’s intentions, which are complemented by the cinematographer Christophe Beaucarne’s dimly-lit spaces and dreamy, velvet textures.

The terrific French actor, Vincent Lindon, usually plays brooding types with a menacing streak but here he imbues his Casanova with subtle poignancy. It’s an interesting performance that nevertheless transforms Casanova to the point that he is no longer a believable womanizer.

Perhaps that’s the intention: appearances and reputations are deceptive. Though Jacquot throws into question our presumptions about figures like Casanova, as well as vilified women like La Charpillon, he leaves it at that, leaving us wondering what exactly it was all for.

Casanova, Last Love

Not rated. In French and English, with subtitles. Running time: 1 hour 38 minutes. In theaters.

PHOTO: Vincent Lindon in “Casanova, Last Love.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY Carole Bethuel/Cohen Media Group FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 16, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Hawks Are Standing in the Way of a New Republican Party; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64PN-BRM1-DXY4-X31Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 5, 2022 Saturday 10:00 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1463 words

**Byline:** Sohrab Ahmari, Patrick Deneen and Gladden Pappin

**Highlight:** Conservatives must make a clear break with neo-neoconservative foreign policy.

**Body**

A painful contradiction lies at the heart of the American right. Even as conservatives are breaking with some Cold War orthodoxies on domestic policy, Republican politicians remain wedded to that era’s violently expansionist foreign policy. They oppose liberal imperialism in the United States —the aggressive push to impose progressive values, often joined to corporate power — while still contriving to spread the same order to the ends of the earth.

It’s a contradictory vision, and for many members of the so-called new right who are pushing for a political realignment of the Republican Party,  it presents a major stumbling block. We do not want to see this new vision of conservative American politics co-opted by hawkish ideologues more interested in posturing abroad than in reform here at home. Conservatives must make a clear break with neo-neoconservative foreign policy and instead emphasize widely shared material development at home and cultural nonaggression abroad as the keys to U.S. security.

The crisis in Ukraine illustrates the problem. Even Republicans sympathetic to the new right haven’t been able to resist the hawkish temptation. Among the loudest voices calling for escalation were Republican Senators Tom Cotton of Arkansas and Marco Rubio of Florida, politicians who have otherwise tried to articulate a more populist domestic vision for their party. Senator Rubio [*resorted*](https://twitter.com/SenRubioPress/status/1484277599849357328) to inapt Churchill-Hitler parallels (though he later [*said*](https://www.foxnews.com/media/sen-marco-rubio-im-not-in-favor-of-sending-us-troops-to-europe-amid-russian-threat) he opposes deploying troops to Eastern Europe); Senator Cotton [*lambasted President Biden*](https://twitter.com/SenTomCotton/status/1486383169473593344) for “appeasing Vladimir Putin.”

The Israeli scholar Yoram Hazony has suggested he wants to forge a new, more solidaristic and inwardly focused consensus to replace the old, broken fusion of pro-business libertarians, religious traditionalists and foreign-policy hawks. Yet even at the 2021 national conservatism conference, the hawks were amply represented and pitched the same old belligerence, especially against China.

Today’s nationalist hawks often speak of an obligation to defend democratic allies dotting the peripheries of revanchist powers like Russia and China. But if they had their way, the real-world effects would be little different from those of their hawkish predecessors: protracted and destabilizing conflicts that would distract us from domestic reform — not to mention imperil the lives of overwhelmingly ***working-class*** young Americans in uniform.

Even on the new right, then, the goal of securing America by “making the world safe for democracy” refuses to die. It’s important to revisit the intellectual history to understand how it was that the right came to advance what is a liberal cause in the first place.

Since the earliest days of our nation, a division has existed between those who argued that America should be an “exemplary republic” and those who called instead for a “crusader nation.” The exemplarist camp figured that America could best serve liberty and self-government by perfecting domestic republicanism — without going abroad in search of “monsters to destroy,” as John Quincy Adams [*put it*](https://loveman.sdsu.edu/docs/1821secofstateJQAdmas.pdf). The crusaders sought to expand liberal democracy abroad, partly because they thought this would make America more secure and partly because they believed it was our destiny to baptize all nations in liberal ideals.

The party of restraint was seen as conservative: cautious about the danger posed by war to republican virtues, respectful of enduring civilizational differences, humble in the face of unpredictable global events, hesitant to commit American blood and treasure to all but the most necessary military causes. By contrast, it was characteristically “liberal” to insist on an American duty to enlarge the liberal empire, whether through soft or hard power, a tradition exemplified by Woodrow Wilson and John F. Kennedy.

More recently, self-described conservatives came to embrace the crusader project, a misguided shift culminating in President George W. Bush’s [*second Inaugural Address*](https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4460172), with its fantasy of eliminating “tyranny” everywhere. What had been previously central to the liberal worldview came to be reframed as modern American “conservatism.”

Many of today’s Republicans thus came of age at a time when hawkishness on behalf of liberal values was understood as conservative. Yet the values lying at the foundation of that worldview and shaping our institutions are antithetical to everything conservatives claim to cherish: a ruthless market ideology that puts short-term shareholder gains and the whims of big finance above the demands of the national community; a virulent cultural libertinism that dissolves bonds of family and tradition.

What conservatives revile as “woke capital” is just this acidic combination of a market-centric economics and liberal cultural arrogance. Yet as conservatives tub-thump for NATO expansion in Europe and hawkishness elsewhere, they seem clueless as to what these things entail: the integration of evermore geographic space into the same socioeconomic order they find so oppressive at home.

From the post-Cold War “Washington consensus” (the idea that privatization, deregulation and free trade would lead to broad prosperity) to the post-9/11 regime-change wars, “crusader” foreign policy immiserated ordinary people: Thoughtless NATO expansion bred resentment in a wounded-but-still-strong Russia, setting the stage for recurring crises; economic “shock therapy” applied by disciples of Milton Friedman empowered predatory oligarchs in post-Soviet lands; the shattering of Arab states in the name of “freedom” created ungoverned spaces across vast swaths of the Middle East and North Africa, kindling terrorism and sending millions of migrants into Europe.

Like soldiers who haven’t realized the old war is over, Republicans must grasp the current state of play: Liberal imperialism ought no longer to be mistaken for a conservative cause. It is time to repurpose older conservative foreign-policy values.

The first pillar of such a foreign policy should be a sound restraint, especially where the United States doesn’t have formal treaty obligations, and a general retrenchment of the Western alliance’s ambitions. Senator Josh Hawley, a lawmaker sympathetic to the new right, showed a better path on Wednesday by calling on President Biden to rule out admitting Ukraine into NATO. Mr. Hawley [*suggested*](https://www.axios.com/josh-hawley-biden-ukraine-nato-membership-8ea2f9e0-f892-4e6b-8050-0b5e9fba3d95.html) his move would help Washington shift resources to East Asia. But even there, Americans should beware of mindless China hawkism. Yes, the United States has real differences with Beijing. We must punish industrial espionage. We must defend treaty allies. And we must seek a more balanced trade relationship. But we should also find areas of cooperation, exchange and shared interests, seeking to avoid any future wars and instead communicating with mutual respect for a civilizational equal.

Domestic industrial prowess and energy independence should be the second pillar. Without factories manufacturing all sorts of goods, we won’t be able to shift production to defense — or to P.P.E. and vaccines — when a real crisis hits. Moreover, as Michael Lind has [*emphasized*](https://nationalinterest.org/feature/return-geoeconomics-87826), the industrial-military blocs of the future — spheres of influence led by America, Europe, China and India — will be only as strong as their regional supply chains and their internal stability allow.

Many G.O.P. leaders couldn’t be happier if the impulses toward Republican realignment were limited to mere jingoism. That, after all, has sated the Republican base while keeping economic policy firmly neoliberal. The party establishment would far rather talk about Ukraine than about declining ***working-class*** life expectancy and the fentanyl crisis.

The persistence of donor-backed Republican hawkishness remains an obstacle to national development — of industrial capacity and widely shared solidarity — that would strengthen America’s defenses and ennoble its culture. The monsters that menace us don’t lurk abroad.

Sohrab Ahmari is a contributing editor of The American Conservative and a visiting fellow at Franciscan University. Patrick Deneen, a former speechwriter and special assistant to the director of the U.S. Information Agency, is a professor of political science at the University of Notre Dame. Gladden Pappin is an associate professor of politics at the University of Dallas and a visiting fellow at the Mathias Corvinus Collegium in Budapest.

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**Load-Date:** February 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Parisian Designer Builds His Dream House in a Former Brothel***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67TM-BR21-DXY4-X36J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 20, 2023 Monday 21:10 EST

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**Section:** T-MAGAZINE

**Length:** 1752 words

**Byline:** Nancy Hass and François Halard

**Highlight:** Ramdane Touhami has turned a haute bohemian landmark into an audacious showcase for his inimitable, fearless creativity.

**Body**

THE POLYMATHIC PARIS-based designer and entrepreneur [*Ramdane Touhami*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/04/fashion/ramdane-touhami-buly-1803.html) considers thinking overrated. “For me, it’s mostly a waste of time; instead I just do,” he says midway through a breakneck monologue — in which he describes his recent logo work for Moynat and Christofle, a hotel he’s just acquired in Switzerland, the challenges of reviving the nearly 400-year-old candle maker [*Cire Trudon*](https://archive.nytimes.com/tmagazine.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/10/21/wick-and-mortar/) and his collection of works by the German industrial designer [*Dieter Rams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/30/t-magazine/dieter-rams-10-iconic-designs.html) — as we drink takeout espresso in the late winter drizzle outside a coffee bar near his 10th Arrondissement studio. Most of the city has ceased masking, but not Touhami, and he stays outside when he can, no matter the weather, terrified of missing even a day of work because of illness. “I have so many things going on that there’s no room for that in my life,” he says.

In theory, at least, the 48-year-old has earned some downtime. In 2021, he and his wife of 23 years, Victoire de Taillac-Touhami, 48, sold their fragrance company, [*Officine Universelle Buly*](https://archive.nytimes.com/tmagazine.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/04/11/a-new-line-french-bath-and-beauty-goods-with-an-old-world-touch/) — which has dozens of vintage-inflected boutiques throughout the world — to LVMH. Despite the windfall, however, the self-taught Touhami — who was raised in the South of France in a family of ***working-class*** Moroccan immigrant farmers and, in his early 20s, was briefly homeless in Paris — is indefatigable. As soon as the LVMH sale went through, freeing him from day-to-day responsibilities for Buly (de Taillac-Touhami, whose sister is the jewelry designer [*Marie-Hélène de Taillac*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/12/t-magazine/luxury-of-simplicity.html), still works for the brand as the head of strategy and marketing), he vacated the company’s offices in the Marais and moved to his current studio: a cavernous 7,000-square-foot Belle Époque-era event space. In just eight months, he and his regular team of artisans remade it, adding towering marquetry cabinets, spectacular moldings and faux marble surfaces to transform the place into a Baz Luhrmann-esque environment for his 25 or so employees, with a studio for his new podcasting company, a room dedicated entirely to the graphic fonts that are his specialty and a private chef who makes daily lunches for the staff.

But even such a mammoth project seems not to have satisfied the couple’s constant need for creative upheaval. In early 2022, a few months after his offices were completed, Touhami and the equally kinetic de Taillac-Touhami — with whom he has three children between the ages of 15 and 20 — decided to buy a house on Rue Victor Massé, in the newly fashionable Ninth Arrondissement, near Place Pigalle and the Moulin Rouge. With characteristic impulsiveness, they completed the purchase only a week after they first heard of the house’s existence from de Taillac-Touhami’s sister, who passed along the listing from a real estate agent friend. It is their 18th residence in two and a half decades, including stints in Brooklyn and Tokyo (they still own the penthouse that Touhami elaborately transformed about 10 years ago on the genteel Rue du Bac across the Seine). “This is what happens when you do instead of think,” Touhami says.

IT’S LITTLE WONDER that Touhami found such an opportunity irresistible: Even in a city steeped in haute-bohemian lore, the four-story white masonry mansion, in a courtyard entered through an unremarkable Hausmannian locked archway, stands out. Built around 1870, the house had become a brothel by the turn of the 20th century. The artist [*Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/15/arts/design/toulouse-lautrecs-groundbreaking-prints-at-moma.html), who often painted and patronized prostitutes and had a studio nearby on Avenue Frochot, is said to have been in residence for a time on the top floor. According to Touhami, after the brothel closed in 1931, the house, with a sweeping entry landing up a wide set of stairs and a capacious front garden, was purchased by a carpet maker who worked with the renowned Art Deco-era designer [*Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann*](https://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/18/arts/design-review-for-the-classy-and-the-climbers-the-high-priest-of-art-deco.html). Touhami says Ruhlmann designed the monumental, still-intact curving plaster staircase, topped with a polished walnut handrail.

In 1976, the house became home to [*Jean-Claude Carrière*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/11/movies/jean-claude-carriere-dead.html), arguably France’s most celebrated and prolific screenwriter, known for co-writing the Spanish filmmaker [*Luis Buñuel’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/1983/07/30/obituaries/luis-bunuel-dies-at-83-film-maker-for-50-years.html) trippy French-era films, including “[*Belle de Jour*](https://www.nytimes.com/1995/06/25/movies/film-view-a-vision-of-eroticism-among-the-straitlaced.html)” (1967) with Catherine Deneuve and “[*The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/23/movies/luis-bunuel-discreet-charm-bourgeois.html)” (1972). Carrière owned the house for more than 40 years, until his death in 2021 at age 89 — barely a year before the Touhamis first encountered it.

Touhami had the interiors planned out within days of signing the contract. In Carrière’s time, the 5,400-square-foot house was an intellectual’s retreat filled with walnut bookshelves and slouchy, off-white slipcovered furniture; now, after being stripped to the studs, it’s a wild pastiche of periods, colors, effects and wall treatments. Accustomed to creating retail environments quickly, Touhami had it finished in a mere seven months, with his artisans sometimes working into the night.

On the Cover

Today, each room feels as though it might be in a different time or place, with its own logic. The main 860-square-foot salon, to the left of the staircase, has a louche fun house aura, with a high-concept illusion that Buñuel himself might have envied: Two-inch-thick burled-ebony veneered walls are engineered to appear as if they were peeling off at the top corners, revealing the pale, heavily ornamented 18th-century plaster surface below. “The people working on it said it couldn’t be done,” Touhami says. “You have no idea how hard it was to get that curl of the wood just right, to make it seem real.” In a specially contoured niche in the veneer above the fireplace — among the few things in the house left untouched are the tarot card porcelain tiles, a gift from Buñuel, that surround the mantel — hangs what Touhami believes is a portrait by the 16th-century Venetian painter Titian. Attached to the room’s periphery is a custom-created tangle of thick felt tubes in shades of gray, navy, buff and currant, evoking a duct system run gloriously amok: a site-specific sculpture that doubles as seating. The dining room across the entry hall resembles a ship captain’s private salon on an Art Deco-era luxury liner, with a long, rounded mirror-polished table of Touhami’s own design ringed by a series of narrow, flush built-in cabinets; set into each door are circular portholes with etched patterns by Christian Fournié, a specialist in historical reproductions of French muslin glass. On the ceiling above the table, instead of a chandelier, three giant metal spiders with lighted abdomens seem to be crawling across the ornate plasterwork. Along the crown molding, the names of those he says made their mark on the house over the years are spelled out in plaster, in a blocky all-capitals font created by Touhami’s boutique typography studio: Buñuel, Carrière, Ruhlmann, Toulouse-Lautrec and, of course, Touhami himself. (The house has its own custom-branded cutlery and ceramics, and a logo.) In the kitchen next door, every surface, including the ceiling, is covered in clay tiles handmade by a company in Umbria, Italy; the effect is almost medieval.

Upstairs in the primary bedroom, where the ceiling slants precipitously, Touhami was able to cajole his team of artisans, who numbered in the dozens, to create a series of identical Louis-style plaster wall frescoes that descend in size while maintaining precisely the same scale. (“They were not at all happy,” he says of the craftspeople.) Such ornamentation contrasts with the modern Italian furnishings he favors, in styles ranging from Futurist to Memphis. In the basement, he’s installed a five-foot-deep, 15-foot-long pool with a retro tile surround. Across the space, a guest room with a glass door to the side garden has been fitted with a 1930s suite of near-black mahogany furniture from the [*Clignancourt flea market*](https://www.nytimes.com/1990/09/23/travel/shoppers-world-for-paris-its-the-flea-market.html), intricately carved with a hallucinogenic menagerie of animals. “The guests will sleep here and it will be insane,” Touhami says.

While he designed a primary bathroom for de Taillac-Touhami, with several types of deep-hued, highly figured marble and a sculptural, squared-off tub, he has left two small powder rooms on different floors as he found them, each covered top to bottom in a seemingly random pastiche of small multicolored glazed tiles. Buñuel gave the tiles, which were from one of his film sets, to Carrière. “Only a fool would remove them,” says Touhami. “Even when you’re making something entirely new, you have to recognize if you come upon magic. You have to know just to leave it alone.”

PHOTOS: In the living room of Ramdane Touhami and Victoire de Taillac-Touhami’s Paris home, a painting he says is attributed to Titian hangs above a fireplace mounted with tarot cards that were gifted to the previous owner by the filmmaker Luis Buñuel, and sofas and ottomans designed by Touhami. The dining room is a tribute to the 1930s, with polished mahogany built-in cabinet doors, a lacquered table and chairs and a terrazzo floor all designed by Touhami. On the table are silver-plated pieces from Christofle’s Fjerdingstad collection. Opposite: in the entry hall, a large ceiling light in neon, brass and copper designed by the architect Ottorino Aloisio in 1948 for his Cinema Massimo in Turin, Italy; a 1970s mirror by Vittorio Introini; an Ettore Sottsass Solitaria console from 1992; a chair by Anacleto Spazzapan; and artworks by Adel Abdessemed and Gilbert &amp; George. From top: in the primary bedroom, paneling by S.O.E. Stuc &amp; Staff, a 1960s floor lamp by Ignazio Gardella, a Hans Wegner Flag Halyard chair and an ottoman designed by Man Ray in 1971; Italian wood, glass and brass tables from the 1950s and articulating sconces from the 1940s flank a pair of 1960s beds by Carlo de Carli for Sormani. The cashmere bedspreads were designed by Touhami and the floor is white oak parquet de Versailles. Opposite: in the primary bathroom, Blue Bahia granite and Carrara, Rosso Levanto, Verde Guatemala and Rosa Tea marbles, fittings from l’Atelier Traditionnel du Vimeu, an Eileen Gray mirror and sconces by Pierre Chareau. Clockwise from above: in the terra-cotta-clad kitchen, copper cookware from Mauviel, a tea set by Tom Dixon and a custom Abimis cook space with Gaggenau appliances; the pool and sauna, with clay tiles by Cotto Etrusco and mosaics by Ezarri; the guest room is furnished with a set of French furniture with animal motifs produced in the 1930s. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANCOIS HALARD) This article appeared in print on page M2102, M2103, M2104, M2105, M2106, M2107, M2108, M2109.

**Load-Date:** March 22, 2023

**End of Document**



[***‘We’ve Become Too Complicated’: Where Eric Adams Thinks Democrats Went Wrong***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63RH-YFY1-JBG3-6496-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 1, 2021 Friday 14:00 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 402 words

**Byline:** ‘The Ezra Klein Show’

**Highlight:** New York’s likely next mayor shares his vision for public safety, housing and “kitchen table issues.”

**Body**

In July, Eric Adams narrowly won the Democratic nomination for mayor of New York, making him the odds-on favorite to win in November. And he won the nomination by running directly against the verities of today’s progressives: asserting that the police are the answer, not the problem; that “defund the police” misjudged what communities of color actually want; that Democrats had lost touch with the multiracial ***working-class*** voters they claim to represent.

Adams won on that message. He won in deep-blue New York City. It’s made him a national figure, and he’s been emphatic on what that means. “I am the face of the new Democratic Party,” he said. And “if the Democratic Party fails to recognize what we did here in New York, they’re going to have a problem in the midterm elections, and they’re going to have a problem in the presidential election.”

[You can listen to this episode of “The Ezra Klein Show” on [*Apple*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-ezra-klein-show/id1548604447), [*Spotify*](https://open.spotify.com/show/3oB5noYIwEB2dMAREj2F7S), [*Google*](https://www.google.com/podcasts?feed=aHR0cHM6Ly9mZWVkcy5zaW1wbGVjYXN0LmNvbS84MkZJMzVQeA%3D%3D) or [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article).]

When politicians become national stories, they often release or rerelease a book. Adams is no exception. But instead of a campaign manifesto or an autobiography, his [*“Healthy at Last”*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/652065/healthy-at-last-by-eric-adams/) is a book about the health benefits of plant-based eating. “Outspoken vegan” isn’t a political identity I tend to associate with ambitious politicians at odds with the progressive wing of the Democratic Party, but that’s Adams for you. He doesn’t shy away from a fight.

In this conversation, Adams and I talk about the fights he is picking or will probably have to pick in the coming years: with progressives who he thinks have lost their way, with police unions he wants to reform, with wealthy communities where he wants to build more housing, with critics who think plant-based eating is a hobby for foodie elites and with voters who may not be willing to wait for Adams’s “upstream” approach to social problems to pay off.

You can listen to our whole conversation by following “The Ezra Klein Show” on [*Apple*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-ezra-klein-show/id1548604447), [*Spotify*](https://open.spotify.com/show/3oB5noYIwEB2dMAREj2F7S), [*Google*](https://www.google.com/podcasts?feed=aHR0cHM6Ly9mZWVkcy5zaW1wbGVjYXN0LmNvbS84MkZJMzVQeA%3D%3D) or [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article). View a list of book recommendations from our guests [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/ezra-klein-show-book-recs.html).

(A full transcript of the episode is available [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/01/podcasts/transcript-ezra-klein-interviews-eric-adams.html).)

“The Ezra Klein Show” is produced by Annie Galvin, Jeff Geld and Rogé Karma; fact-checking by Michelle Harris; original music by Isaac Jones; mixing by Jeff Geld; audience strategy by Shannon Busta. Special thanks to Kristin Lin.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tommy Thomas FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Why Harlem Is Getting a Truck Depot Instead of New Housing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67BP-0821-JBG3-62T7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 18, 2023 Wednesday 09:37 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1452 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons and Mihir Zaveri

**Highlight:** A developer wanted to build residential towers, and a city councilwoman feared they would accelerate gentrification. Their fight reflects the challenge of building housing in New York.

**Body**

A developer wanted to build residential towers, and a city councilwoman feared they would accelerate gentrification. Their fight reflects the challenge of building housing in New York.

The lot on West 145th Street in Manhattan was envisioned as a $700 million high-rise complex, with a civil rights museum and hundreds of below-market-rate apartments.

But after a local councilwoman protested, arguing that the project would bring more gentrification, the developer, Bruce Teitelbaum, gave an ultimatum: Unless his proposal was reconsidered, he would build a loud and unsightly truck depot.

On Wednesday, the trucks began to roll in.

“This is not the result we planned or hoped for on 145th Street,” said Mr. Teitelbaum, once an aide to former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani. “But without someone who is willing to find common ground and compromise, we have no other viable alternative or choices.”

The councilwoman, Kristin Richardson Jordan, who faces re-election this year, has said she made the right decision. She has argued that the so-called affordable units would still have been too expensive for ***working-class*** residents.

She said she would have agreed to the project had Mr. Teitelbaum agreed to include more homes that were affordable to people with lower incomes — making a fifth of the apartments available to families of four earning $40,020 per year, for example, and reserving half of the apartments for families of four earning up to about $80,040.

“Let’s be clear, that is already an extreme compromise and is still quite awful and would be a total financial windfall for this developer making him and his investors plenty of profit,” she said. “And he should have taken it.”

At a time when New York City faces a housing shortage, the tug of war over the Harlem project appears to be a case study in how the powerful whims of developers and the morass of local politics can make it difficult to build new homes.

It also provides a unique look into the high-stakes nature of housing in New York City. By choosing to park trucks on the lot, Mr. Teitelbaum has raised the cost to the community of rejecting his vision, raising the question of whether other developers might follow suit and use publicity-driven tactics to influence local politics.

At the same time, the drama of the Harlem case, and perhaps the threat that developers might try similar tactics elsewhere, has helped prompt a new spirit of cooperation among real estate executives and elected officials to find ways to make deals. Left-leaning City Council members [*recently backed two new affordable housing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/16/nyregion/politicians-housing-crisis-real-estate.html) projects in Queens after negotiating with developers for more benefits for the community.

The 51-seat City Council has an unspoken tradition, known as member deference, that allows a council member to effectively veto land-use proposals in their district — a process that gave Ms. Jordan a decisive voice in the Harlem project. Her opposition signaled it would face steep hurdles. It never came to a vote.

The yearslong fight over the Harlem housing project, known as One45, has been acrimonious, culminating in the arrival of the trucks on Wednesday at the new “Park Your Fleet” facility. Mr. Teitelbaum stood nearby, theatrically waving toward the more than 10 trucks idling around him.

“This is my dream,” Mr. Teitelbaum said, his voice laced with sarcasm.

Iesha Sekou, a local activist with office space across the street from the depot, shouted at Mr. Teitelbaum from the sidewalk behind the chain-link fence, insisting that the depot would harm local children who suffered from asthma.

“He’s doing this as revenge,” said Ms. Sekou, founder of Street Corner Resources.

A man seated in the driver’s seat in one of the trucks said his boss had told him to come to the depot and sit for a couple hours.

On Wednesday, Ms. Jordan asked state officials to shut down the depot over environmental concerns.

Mr. Teitelbaum said he was not being vindictive and that he could not let the lot sit empty. He said he was considering building a smaller luxury apartment building, a self-storage facility or parking on the block, which would not require City Council approval. He also said that the original proposal needed to contain some market-rate units to make it profitable.

“What is the point in restarting a totally unpredictable process that is doomed from the get-go?” Mr. Teitelbaum said.

The developer’s most recent proposal, in May, which would have been contingent on a city subsidy, called for about 10 percent of the 915 apartments to be affordable to seniors and people at risk of homelessness, including those with a family of four who earn up to $40,020 per year. Some 13 percent of the apartments considered “affordable” would have targeted families earning closer to $160,000.

Mayor Eric Adams, a Democrat, has supported Mr. Teitelbaum’s proposal, and the mayor’s office said on Wednesday that he wanted to see housing on the site, not a truck depot. Charles Kretchmer Lutvak, a spokesman for the mayor, said that the Adams administration would “continue working with all of our partners on a comprehensive effort to bring much-needed affordable housing to Harlem and every neighborhood in New York City.”

Don Curtis, president of the United Black Caucus, a civil rights group that organized people living in the neighborhood to fight the development, said he thought Mr. Teitelbaum was “bluffing” because he wanted to soften any potential opposition to a future development on the site.

Mr. Curtis said he would have supported a project that provided jobs to people in the neighborhood and lower-cost homes.

“It would have been the tallest structure in all of Harlem,” he said. “It wouldn’t have benefited the community.”

Ms. Jordan, whose [*Twitter account*](https://twitter.com/Kristin4Harlem) had disappeared on Wednesday, identifies as a Black socialist, though groups like the Democratic Socialists of America and the left-wing Working Families Party did not endorse her in the 2021 primary, which she won by around 100 votes.

Earlier this month, she held a [*“Harlem Not For Sale” rally*](https://www.instagram.com/p/Cm7BMUBO38H/?hl=en) to oppose the truck depot. She said the community should not have to choose between a “high-rise luxury apartment complex that will displace our people in the last Black community in Manhattan and a truck stop that will add to the already dire levels of asthma in our community.”

Before the pandemic, major proposals like a rezoning of Industry City in Brooklyn and a proposed new headquarters for Amazon in Queens were halted over concerns that they would not benefit the neighborhoods surrounding them. But with growing concerns over affordability in the city, elected officials have been more eager to work with developers.

The City Council speaker, Adrienne E. Adams, has [*signaled that she is open to ending member deference*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/28/opinion/new-york-housing-crisis.html), saying that she values community input, but not “irrational opposition that rejects desperately needed housing.” Ms. Adams helped negotiate the [*recent approval of a $2 billion development known as Innovation Queens*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/22/nyregion/innovation-queens-nyc-housing.html) that includes five towers and will add more than 3,000 homes in Astoria.

Mandela Jones, a spokesman for Ms. Adams, said on Wednesday that it was “unfortunate” that the Harlem housing proposal “fell short of the community investment, partnership and trust necessary to advance with support.”

“We need to develop more housing at deeper affordability in every corner of the city to address this housing crisis, and the Council continues to consider all projects that seek to accomplish this goal for communities in good faith,” he said.

The Manhattan borough president, Mark Levine, said this week [*that the city should make another attempt at rezoning the Harlem site*](https://twitter.com/MarkLevineNYC/status/1614763225509150720?s=20&amp;t=FZ3aqA-NF0mXyQA_wirt_Q) to build affordable housing. He said that the earlier proposal was “not perfect” but it had met the goal of offering half affordable units.

“I’m optimistic that this is doable,” he said. “It’s going to take work and it’s going to take compromise.”

Anita Laremont, a former chair of the City Planning Commission and executive director of the city planning department under Mayor Bill de Blasio, said that even if the neighborhood and the city prefer housing, land use rules may give Mr. Teitelbaum the right to go forward with the truck depot. She said that “letting what somebody’s conception of perfect is be the enemy of the good can result in consequences that are worse for the community.”

But, she added, “I’m not sure if one is looking to build relationships with the community, that the sort of histrionics of this approach is the best way to do it.”

Joshua Needelman contributed reporting.

Joshua Needelman contributed reporting.

PHOTO: The truck depot is part of a housing developer’s ultimatum. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A17.

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2023

**End of Document**



[***'Brooklyn's in the House!' (And Senate): Midterms Put a Spotlight on the Borough***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66WT-JCH1-DXY4-X486-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 19, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1134 words

**Byline:** By Dodai Stewart

**Body**

With Hakeem Jeffries and Chuck Schumer poised to lead the Democrats in Washington, New York's biggest borough enters the political spotlight.

In the Jonathan Lethem novel ''Motherless Brooklyn,'' readers learn the phrase ''Tell your story walking.'' It's a quintessentially Brooklyn sentiment: I will listen to you, sure, but keep it moving.

If there's a particular vibe to Brooklyn -- a smug and swaggering hometown pride -- the U.S. Capitol is about to get a serious taste of it. Representative Hakeem Jeffries of Brooklyn is favored to become the leader of the House Democrats as Nancy Pelosi steps down. Senator Chuck Schumer, also of Brooklyn, will continue to lead the Senate.

Their constituents are already imagining the impact.

''Brooklyn's in the house! Brooklyn's definitely in the house,'' said Alan Rosen, the third-generation owner of Junior's Restaurant, which has been on the same corner of Brooklyn -- Fulton and DeKalb Avenues -- since 1950.

But what does it even mean to be from Brooklyn?

Brooklyn is not just a metropolis of 2 million people across 69 square miles (that's a comfortable 38,000 people per square mile, by the by). Residents will tell you it is an attitude, a way of life, with its own language and customs. (Look no further than the blue sign installed by former Borough President Marty Markowitz near the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge that reads ''Leaving Brooklyn. Fuhgeddaboudit!'')

There exists a Brooklyn cliché, that it is nothing but tony tree-lined blocks of brownstones in a Park Slope-centric liberal bubble, as seen in a ''Saturday Night Live'' video. But Brooklyn contains people from all walks of life, living in massive low-income housing complexes, humble rowhouses, glittering high rises, run-down tenements and colonial gems.

Brooklyn spawned Larry David and Spike Lee, Joan Rivers and Jay-Z, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the Notorious B.I.G. It's Jewish, it's Black, it's Puerto Rican, Italian, Polish, Russian, German, Caribbean, Chinese, Korean, Indian, Central American, Yemeni, Turkish and much, much more.

Being from Brooklyn saturates a person with certain skills, said the writer Jacqueline Woodson, 59, author of the best-selling novel ''Another Brooklyn.''

''The world is almost like water to us. It just flows right off of us,'' she said.

''As Brooklynites, we can get stung by something, but it's not going to swell and bleed,'' said Ms. Woodson, who moved to Brooklyn at age 7 and still lives there. ''It's not like it's going to change us and damage us. It's not even a thick skin, but it's this kind of fluidity that allows us to move through different spaces and different ways of thinking and be able to engage in it.''

Dan Perlman, 31, a comedian and the co-creator, writer and star of the Showtime series ''Flatbush Misdemeanors,'' said that the borough's density and diversity no doubt helped prepare Mr. Jeffries and Mr. Schumer for Capitol Hill. ''The magic of it is that we all kind of coexist, step on each other's toes and get near each other,'' he said. ''I'm sure that applies in Congress, where they're all going to be bumping into each other.''

People from Brooklyn are used to ''scrapping their way,'' Mr. Perlman said. He elaborated: ''There's a creativity that's required. There's just not a lot of rest. You run into walls a lot -- you need to come up with a lot of audibles, to use as sports term. Like, OK, this was the plan today, but that's not going to happen. The train is down. OK, I got to switch to the bus. There are curveballs thrown every day.''

Ms. Woodson noted that even the way Brooklynites speak is an asset for working in politics: ''We're able to be in rooms with lots of people talking at once and follow all the conversations,'' she said. ''I'm finding that as I travel the country, people don't do that. People have a hard time with that. I really feel like in Brooklyn, we can do it, and not only do it across different people speaking, but different people's ways of speaking.''

Brooklynites, said photographer Russell Frederick, 53, ''have their own unique swagguu'' -- a term close to swagger, but said with Brooklyn swagger. (In fact, he suggested it be spelled with an extra u.)

Mr. Frederick, whose lens has documented residents of Brooklyn for decades, said that Mr. Schumer (who has an apartment in Park Slope) and Mr. Jeffries (who lives in Prospect Heights) have received a certain local schooling. ''It's not just that they are educated,'' he said. ''When you're from Brooklyn, you're street smart. And you can be book smart. With that, you know how to navigate any circle and you're not intimidated by nobody or anything. You made it through the '70s? You made it through the '80s? Listen. You Teflon. You can go into Beirut, you can go into a war in Congo, in the Middle East.''

That Brooklyn is producing powerful political figures is absolutely not surprising to Brooklynites. In addition to Mr. Jeffries and Mr. Schumer, they include Mayor Eric Adams (who was born in Brooklyn but grew up mainly in Queens) and Attorney General Letitia James.

''It's no coincidence that the mayor of New York City, the New York State attorney general and now potentially the House Democratic leader all herald from Central Brooklyn -- a community with a strong sense of Black self-identity and self-determination that has reverberated here for generations,'' Tayo Giwa and Cynthia Gordy Giwa, filmmakers and co-creators of Black-Owned Brooklyn, wrote in an email. ''That confidence has allowed many people from Central Brooklyn to ascend to extraordinary heights.''

With pride, they added, ''There is something special about this place.''

Mr. Rosen, the owner of Junior's, agreed, and said while he was not political, Mr. Jeffries is ''a great customer.'' (Mr. Jeffries is known to send colleagues a Junior's cheesecake each holiday season.)

Asked if being from Brooklyn could help a person in politics, Mr. Rosen answered, ''It can help you in life.'' He pointed to the ''Brooklyn attitude,'' describing it as ''that sort of ***working-class*** mentality, that you just want to grind it out, do things better, make things better and work hard.''

Ms. Woodson relished in the fact that in Brooklyn, people gleefully ride the Cyclone at Coney Island: ''It takes a certain kind of blind faith. That roller coaster is older than anybody I know in Brooklyn. It's made out of wood, and people still get on it.''

With such grit and determination, Brooklyn boosters insist, there's only one outcome. ''People who come from Brooklyn are winners,'' said Mr. Frederick. ''We don't lose. We don't lose. We don't play to lose. We don't lose. We don't lose.''

Still, he maintained, there's a balance. ''It's the sweetness with the toughness. I mean, Biggie said it. Spread love. It is the Brooklyn way.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/18/nyregion/brooklyn-schumer-jeffries.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/18/nyregion/brooklyn-schumer-jeffries.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Representative Hakeem Jeffries of Brooklyn is favored to be the leader of the House Democrats. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTHONY GEATHERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A12.

**Load-Date:** November 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Brooklyn’s in the House. And the Senate.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66WT-PX31-JBG3-61YH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 19, 2022 Saturday 13:19 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1151 words

**Byline:** Dodai Stewart

**Highlight:** With Hakeem Jeffries and Chuck Schumer poised to lead the Democrats in Washington, the New York borough that they live in enters the political spotlight.

**Body**

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“The world is almost like water to us. It just flows right off of us,” she said.

“As Brooklynites, we can get stung by something, but it’s not going to swell and bleed,” said Ms. Woodson, who moved to Brooklyn at age 7 and still lives there. “It’s not like it’s going to change us and damage us. It’s not even a thick skin, but it’s this kind of fluidity that allows us to move through different spaces and different ways of thinking and be able to engage in it.”

Dan Perlman, 31, a comedian and the [*co-creator, writer and star*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/08/nyregion/dan-perlman-flatbush-misdemeanors.html) of the Showtime series “Flatbush Misdemeanors,” said that the borough’s density and diversity no doubt helped prepare Mr. Jeffries and Mr. Schumer for Capitol Hill. “The magic of it is that we all kind of coexist, step on each other’s toes and get near each other,” he said. “I’m sure that applies in Congress, where they’re all going to be bumping into each other.”

People from Brooklyn are used to “scrapping their way,” Mr. Perlman said. He elaborated: “There’s a creativity that’s required. There’s just not a lot of rest. You run into walls a lot — you need to come up with a lot of audibles, to use as sports term. Like, OK, this was the plan today, but that’s not going to happen. The train is down. OK, I got to switch to the bus. There are curveballs thrown every day.”

Ms. Woodson noted that even the way Brooklynites speak is an asset for working in politics: “We’re able to be in rooms with lots of people talking at once and follow all the conversations,” she said. “I’m finding that as I travel the country, people don’t do that. People have a hard time with that. I really feel like in Brooklyn, we can do it, and not only do it across different people speaking, but different people’s ways of speaking.”

Brooklynites, said photographer Russell Frederick, 53, “have their own unique swagguu” — a term close to swagger, but said with Brooklyn swagger. (In fact, he suggested it be spelled with an extra u.)

Mr. Frederick, whose lens has [*documented residents of Brooklyn for decades*](https://www.russellfrederick.com/), said that Mr. Schumer (who has an apartment in Park Slope) and Mr. Jeffries (who lives in Prospect Heights) have received a certain local schooling. “It’s not just that they are educated,” he said. “When you’re from Brooklyn, you’re street smart. And you can be book smart. With that, you know how to navigate any circle and you’re not intimidated by nobody or anything. You made it through the ’70s? You made it through the ’80s? Listen. You Teflon. You can go into Beirut, you can go into a war in Congo, in the Middle East.”

That Brooklyn is producing powerful political figures is absolutely not surprising to Brooklynites. In addition to Mr. Jeffries and Mr. Schumer, they include Mayor Eric Adams (who was born in Brooklyn but grew up mainly in Queens) and Attorney General Letitia James.

“It’s no coincidence that the mayor of New York City, the New York State attorney general and now potentially the House Democratic leader all herald from Central Brooklyn — a community with a strong sense of Black self-identity and self-determination that has reverberated here for generations,” Tayo Giwa and Cynthia Gordy Giwa, filmmakers and co-creators of [*Black-Owned Brooklyn*](https://www.instagram.com/blackownedbklyn/), wrote in an email. “That confidence has allowed many people from Central Brooklyn to ascend to extraordinary heights.”

With pride, they added, “There is something special about this place.”

Mr. Rosen, the owner of Junior’s, agreed, and said while he was not political, Mr. Jeffries is “a great customer.” (Mr. Jeffries is known to send colleagues a Junior’s cheesecake each holiday season.)

Asked if being from Brooklyn could help a person in politics, Mr. Rosen answered, “It can help you in life.” He pointed to the “Brooklyn attitude,” describing it as “that sort of ***working-class*** mentality, that you just want to grind it out, do things better, make things better and work hard.”

Ms. Woodson relished in the fact that in Brooklyn, people gleefully ride the Cyclone at Coney Island: “It takes a certain kind of blind faith. That roller coaster is older than anybody I know in Brooklyn. It’s made out of wood, and people still get on it.”

With such grit and determination, Brooklyn boosters insist, there’s only one outcome. “People who come from Brooklyn are winners,” said Mr. Frederick. “We don’t lose. We don’t lose. We don’t play to lose. We don’t lose. We don’t lose.”

Still, he maintained, there’s a balance. “It’s the sweetness with the toughness. I mean, Biggie said it. Spread love. It is the Brooklyn way.”

PHOTO: Representative Hakeem Jeffries of Brooklyn is favored to be the leader of the House Democrats. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTHONY GEATHERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A12.

**Load-Date:** November 21, 2022

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[***In God We Divide***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YH6-3BD1-DXY4-X2M8-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2357 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** The political dimensions of worship have never been greater.

**Body**

The political dimensions of worship have never been greater.

A steady religious realignment has reshaped the white American electorate, turning religious conviction — or its absence — into a clear signal of where voters stand in the culture wars.

As mainstream Protestant denominations have declined over the past half century, there has been a hollowing out of the center among white Christians of all faiths. New generations of Americans have joined the ranks of evangelical churches, while others, in larger numbers, have forsaken religion altogether.

These two trends have transformed the strategic underpinnings of political campaigning.

The more religiously engaged a white voter is, the more likely he or she will be a Republican; the less religious the voter, the more likely to be a Democrat. But, as we shall see it’s not that simple: The deeper you go, the more complex it gets.

[*Ryan Burge*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=), a political scientist at Eastern Illinois University, has tracked religious trends for the past 30 years using data from the   [*General Social Survey*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=).

He reports that in 1988, 55.7 percent of Americans were members of traditional, mainstream denominations, 36.6 percent were members of evangelical and born-again denominations and 7.7 percent said they were not religious.

By 2018, membership in traditional denominations had fallen 20 points to 35.5 percent, born-again evangelical church membership had grown by 4.8 points to 41.4 percent, and the share of the nonreligious had tripled to 23.1 percent.

In an email, Burge warned that “in just a few years there will be no moderate Protestants left.”

This has been a windfall for the Republican Party.

As Burge [*writes*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=): “Almost every predominantly white Protestant denomination — from Southern Baptists and United Methodists to Missouri Synod Lutherans and the Assemblies of God — is solidly Republican” This is apparent in the sea of red in the accompanying chart.

Among the 20 largest white Protestant denominations, “just two became less Republican in a statistically significant way in the last 10 years,” according to Burge, while “16 of these denominations have larger shares of Republicans today than they did when Barack Obama was elected in 2008.” Republicans have even made gains in relatively liberal denominations like the United Church of Christ, the Episcopal Church and the American Baptist Churches.

While Republicans are picking up steam among the faithful, Democrats are making gains among those with little or no propensity for worship.

Take white ***working class*** Democrats. [*Brian Schaffner*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=), a political scientist at Tufts, measures the intensity of religious commitment using responses to the question in the 2018   [*Cooperative Congressional Election Study*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=), “How important is religion to you, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?”

Among whites without degrees — the polling definition of ***working class*** — 39 percent in 2018 said religion was very important, 25 percent said somewhat important, 15 percent not too important, and 20 percent not at all important.

In the 2018 midterm elections, Schaffner found that 76 percent, of those for whom religion is not at all important voted for Democratic House candidates in 2018. At the other end of the spectrum, nearly 4 out of five — 78 percent — of non-college whites who said religion was very important voted for a Republican House candidate. The accompanying chart shows the trends from 2008 to 2018.

There is, Schaffner explained in an email, “a 50 point plus gap (!) between how nonreligious white ***working class*** people voted in 2018 compared to how the most religious white ***working class*** people voted.”

Schaffner’s data shows an even larger religious gap among white college graduates. This group is less religious than whites without degrees — 36 percent answered “very important,” 22 percent “somewhat important,” 15 percent “not too important” and 27 percent “not at all important.”

The 2018 House Democratic vote among white college graduates for whom religion is not at all important was 91 percent; for those who said religion is very important, 30 percent voted Democratic, a 61 point gap.

The less religious, Schaffner wrote told me “are more likely to be male (57 percent), and are much younger (average age of 44, compared to average age of 52 among those for whom religion is important).” In addition, the nonreligious are much less likely to be married, tend to live in urban areas and are more likely to be found in the Northeast and West than other regions.

In his book “[*Red Fighting Blue*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=),”   [*David Hopkins*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=), a political scientist at Boston College, pointed out that:

voters’ religious affiliations and degrees of religiosity now exert considerable influence over their partisan identification and choice of candidates; the Pew Research Center found in 2015 that white evangelical Protestants had come to prefer the Republican Party by a margin of 68 percent to 22 percent, while religiously unaffiliated voters now leaned toward the Democrats by 61 percent to 25 percent — a 40-point gap that equals the magnitude of the more longstanding difference in the partisan preferences of whites and African Americans.

While cultural liberals and cultural conservatives are not truly at “war,” Hopkins continued, “they are increasingly lining up on opposite sides in the ongoing electoral competition between the two major parties.”

The steady growth in recent years in the number of people who respond to the question “what is your religious preference” by saying they have “no religion” has clearly benefited the Democratic Party, which now depends on the nonreligious for nearly three out of every 10 votes it gets.

By 2018, according to Burge’s analysis, these voters had become the largest religious category, 28 percent, of the Democratic electorate, outnumbering once dominant Catholics at 21.8 percent, evangelicals at 14.1 percent, black Protestants at 12.9 percent and mainline white Protestants at 14.4 percent.

Three political scientists — [*David Campbell*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=) and   [*Geoffrey C. Layman*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=), both of Notre Dame, and   [*John Green*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=) of the University of Akron — have developed a multidimensional analysis of religiosity in their forthcoming book, “Secular Surge: A New Fault Line in American Politics.”

Campbell, Layman and Green divide Americans into four categories: Religionists, 37 percent of the population, who are a mainstay of the Republican Party; Secularists, 28 percent, a linchpin of the Democratic Party; and two other groups that fall between these extremes.

One of these intermediate groups is made up of those the authors call Religious Secularists, who make up 16 percent of the population, and endorse both religious and secular values. The other intermediate group — which might be called a bystander constituency — is made up of people the authors term Non-Religionists, best described by what they are not: They see little value in religious views and are disinterested in secular explanations.

From a political vantage point, what is most interesting about these four groups is the different pattern of voting each exhibited in 2012 and 2016.

As would be expected, the most conservative group, Religionists, remained firmly Republican, voting 58.8 percent for Romney and 62.1 percent for Trump. The most liberal group, secularists, remained firmly Democratic, 78.0 percent for Obama in 2012, 77.8 percent for Clinton in 2016.

There were, however, big shifts among the two intermediate groups, which have proven to be the most volatile, and thus of most interest to campaign strategists. The Non-Religionists went from supporting Obama over Romney 60.2 to 39.8, to supporting Trump over Clinton, 56.6 to 43.4. The Religious Secularists remained Democratic, but the margin among them fell from decisively backing Obama, 85.1-14.9, to more modest support for Clinton, 67.4 — 32.6.

[*Laura R. Olson*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=), a political scientist at Clemson University, provided The Times with an analysis of white non-college voter demographics based on the nonpartisan Democracy Fund’s   [*2019 VOTER Survey*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=).

She found that among non-college whites, neither Republicans nor Democrats are strong churchgoers, although there is a substantial difference: While 51 percent of Republicans say they seldom or never attend services, 70 percent of Democrats are not regular churchgoers.

There is a larger partisan difference on religiosity per se. 44 percent of white ***working class*** Democrats describe themselves as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular” — more than double the number of similarly educated Republicans, at 19 percent.

Olson has additional data on the white ***working class***.

Democrats are substantially less likely to be married, at 49 percent, than Republicans, at 64 percent. 53 percent of ***working class*** white Democrats say they are liberal or very liberal, a huge difference from the 1.2 percent of their Republican counterparts. 55 percent of the Democrats have no confidence in big business compared to 20 percent of Republicans without college degrees.

[*Robert Jones*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=), founder and CEO of the Public Religion Research Institute, sketched out other differences in an email. For example, 65 percent of non-college white Republicans say they are conservative compared to 17 percent of non-college white Democrats.

These Republicans, Jones wrote, are 49 points more likely to favor restrictive immigration policies than their Democratic counterparts, 93 to 44 percent.

Another political analyst, who asked to remain anonymous because of the rules of his employment, argues that the “most powerful simple way to understand the electorate” is as composed of “white Christians (half), white seculars (a quarter) and voters of color (a quarter).”

Citing data from Pew, he noted that white Christians favored Trump 67 to 27, while white seculars favored Clinton 63-28 and voters of color favored Clinton 75-20. In more recent polling, he said, sorting by religion provides more insight than by education:

White non-college secular men support the generic Democrat by 17 points, while white college Evangelical women support Trump by 47 points, a 64 point gap going in the opposite direction from what education and gender would predict.

In addition, he continued, “identifying yourself as Christian in America today means that you are identifying yourself with a particular set of values that systematically set you apart from those who do not.”

The substitution, he wrote,

of “non-college” for “Christian” in elite discourse is consequential and damaging to progressive prospects. Pretty much everyone loosely agrees that Republicans want America the way they think it was and are revolting against cosmopolitan modernization, including even science. But naming white non-college voters as the Republican base suggests that the source of Republican grievance is lack of education, which organizes the conversation that follows about everything else. Imagine instead, the conversation that would follow from identifying the source of Republican grievance as religious.

Religion, he continued, “is real with values and motivated institutions, while non-college is barely more than an analytical category. Christians call themselves Christians, non-college folks don’t call themselves uneducated. Christian is an identity, non-college is a label.”

Religiosity has joined issues which cluster around race, immigration, abortion, women’s rights, gay marriage, the traditional nuclear family and globalization — all reinforced by the parallel [*split between urban and rural America*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=), which is playing out again in our response to the dangers posed by coronavirus.

In “Red Versus Blue,” David Hopkins accurately sums up the situation:

Perpetually vigorous competition between two closely matched parties that each maintain reliable electoral dominance over a significant, and roughly equal, proportion of the nation’s geographic territory has become a signature characteristic of American politics in the twenty- first century.

The result is a national politics in which conflict replaces resolution. Hopkins goes on:

The appearance of distinct and stable geographic alignments on the contemporary electoral map thus serves as an apt visual symbol of an era defined by the emergence of intense partisan conflict among leaders and citizens alike. With the vast majority of voters now providing consistent support to the candidates of a single party in national elections, and with Democratic and Republican politicians collectively shifting toward opposite ends of the ideological spectrum, the United States has entered a political age characterized by the dual trends of mass-level partisanship and elite- level polarization.

Under these circumstances, with the nation so closely divided, a small minority gains the power to determine election outcomes:

It is only fitting that cartographic representations of recent election results have repeatedly revealed large, comparably sized territorial bastions of opposite partisan affiliations, with a smaller bloc of swing states holding the narrow balance of power between them — just as a dwindling number of voters who remain open to persuasion by either party now find themselves caught between two sizable populations of increasingly fervent, and mutually antagonistic, loyalists to the Democratic or Republican cause.

The past 50 years have brought extraordinary new freedoms, but they have also tested our faith. The current pandemic and the economic chaos churning in its wake bring yet another test, a test that will demonstrate just how resilient our population is, how functional our electoral system is and how resourceful our institutions are under conditions of maximum stress.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=). And here&#39;s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php/hendrickson.php?id=rpburge&amp;subcat=).

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PHOTO: A Trump rally in Ohio last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 27, 2020

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[***Shift in Mood Puts Also-Ran Ahead of Pack***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67NS-NPH1-DXY4-X1C1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Mitch Smith

**Body**

Paul Vallas, who emerged as the front-runner with a tough-on-crime message, will face Brandon Johnson, a progressive county commissioner, in an April runoff.

CHICAGO -- When Paul Vallas ran for mayor of Chicago four years ago, it did not go well. He finished in a distant ninth place, winning only 5 percent of the vote and barely registering as an electoral afterthought.

But on Tuesday, Mr. Vallas, who hammered a tough-on-crime message on the campaign trail, finished well ahead of eight other candidates in an election that denied Mayor Lori Lightfoot a second term and made her the city's first incumbent to lose re-election since the 1980s.

Mr. Vallas's strong showing reflects a much different electoral mood in Chicago, where homicides spiked under Ms. Lightfoot's watch during the pandemic, property crime rates have continued to rise and promises to crack down have taken on new appeal.

Across the country, even in liberal cities, calls for more expansive policing and harsher prosecution have gained political favor. Debates over those issues will shape Mr. Vallas's runoff on April 4 with Brandon Johnson, who has outlined a progressive agenda for dealing with Chicago's problems.

That matchup gives voters a choice between two starkly different Democrats: The younger, unabashedly liberal Mr. Johnson, a county commissioner and former union organizer who is Black; and the older, more conservative Mr. Vallas, a white man who is a former public school executive and a vocal supporter of law enforcement. Mr. Vallas has used a political playbook similar to the one that helped Mayor Eric Adams of New York City emerge from a crowded Democratic field to win election in 2021.

''Public safety is the fundamental right of every American: It is a civil right and it is the principal responsibility of government,'' Mr. Vallas, 69, said Tuesday night in a speech. ''And we will have a safe Chicago. We will make Chicago the safest city in America.''

But on Chicago's influential political left, the prospect of a Vallas mayoralty has been met with fear, derision and implications that he is really more of a Republican than the lifelong Democrat he says he is.

''We cannot have this man as the mayor of the city of Chicago,'' Mr. Johnson, 46, whose campaign was lifted by an endorsement from the local teachers' union, told his supporters on Tuesday night. ''Our children and families across Chicago can't afford it.''

Mr. Vallas grew up on Chicago's South Side and is a familiar figure in local government. He led Chicago Public Schools from 1995 to 2001 before leaving to run the school systems in Philadelphia, New Orleans and Bridgeport, Conn. In those positions, he cultivated a reputation as a crisis manager and charter school supporter willing to take on hard jobs and implement sweeping changes, an approach that garnered a mix of praise and criticism.

But it was Mr. Vallas's hard-line message on crime and policing that elevated him in this year's nine-candidate mayoral field. After unsuccessful runs for governor in 2002, lieutenant governor in 2014 and mayor in 2019, Mr. Vallas positioned himself this year well to the political right of Ms. Lightfoot, and even further to the right of Mr. Johnson.

''I was never scared before,'' said Martha Wicker, 61, who voted for Mr. Vallas and described worrying about crime during her daily commute. ''Now I don't want to be on the train alone when it's dark.''

The next mayor will inherit a long-challenged Police Department operating under a consent decree and without a permanent leader. In Ms. Lightfoot's first major announcement since losing re-election, she said on Wednesday that David O. Brown, who led the Chicago Police during most of her time in City Hall, would resign later this month.

As of Wednesday evening, with some mail-in ballots still not counted, Mr. Vallas was leading in 19 of the city's 50 wards, compared with nine wards where Mr. Johnson was in first place.

Mr. Vallas racked up large margins in downtown Chicago, the site of widespread looting in 2020, and in parts of the Northwest and Southwest Sides with significant white, ***working-class*** populations. Mr. Johnson performed well on the city's northern lakefront, carrying a plurality of the votes in some majority-white wards, while also winning some majority-Hispanic areas northwest of downtown.

Mr. Vallas was the only white politician in the field, which included seven Black candidates and one Hispanic contender. Chicago, which has a history of racial and ethnic groups sometimes voting as blocs, has roughly equal numbers of Black, white and Hispanic residents.

In the runoff, both candidates will seek to win over Chicagoans who backed Representative Jesús G. García, a progressive Democrat with a loyal base of Hispanic voters, and Ms. Lightfoot, who carried several mostly Black wards on the South and West Sides.

Supporters of Mr. Johnson, who previously worked as a public-school teacher, said they appreciated his approach on education and policing. Mr. Johnson at one point suggested that he agreed with the movement to reduce funding for police departments, though he later backtracked.

''I like his opinions about funding the police differently, not defunding but doing it differently,'' said Carla Moulton, 61, a legal secretary who voted for Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson, a pastor's son and West Side resident who won election to the County Board in 2018, called on the campaign trail for increasing access to mental health services, adding funding for schools and creating more affordable housing. To pay for it, he has called for raising some taxes, including on businesses.

''The finances of the city belong to the people of the city,'' Mr. Johnson said on Tuesday night. ''So we're going to invest in the people of the city.''

Progressives united against Mr. Vallas because of his views on the police, his track record supporting charter schools and, most recently, a Chicago Tribune report that his Twitter account liked an array of offensive posts on Twitter about Ms. Lightfoot. (Mr. Vallas suggested his account was breached.) Mr. Vallas also said in a television interview in 2009 that he considered himself more of a Republican than a Democrat, a strike against him in the eyes of many voters in overwhelmingly liberal Chicago.

As he made his case to voters, Mr. Vallas welcomed an endorsement from the local Fraternal Order of Police, called for the replacement of Chicago Police Department leaders and put forth a plan to improve arrest rates and prosecute more misdemeanor crimes. His campaign website described Chicago as a near dystopia in which ''city leadership has surrendered us all to a criminal element that acts with seeming impunity in treating unsuspecting, innocent people as prey.''

For many voters, unnerved by homicide rates that soared to generational highs during the coronavirus pandemic, that message resonated.

Mike Curran, 50, a real estate broker, said he voted for Mr. Vallas because of public safety concerns.

''I'm very disappointed in the last four years,'' Mr. Curran said. ''I grew up in Detroit and know what can happen to a city. I voted for Vallas because I'm extremely fed up with crime in the neighborhood.''

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, Mr. Vallas became a sought-after leader for school systems in crisis. He became chief executive of Chicago Public Schools in the years after the district was referred to as the country's worst. He led the Philadelphia school system and expanded charter schools after the state took over the district. And after Hurricane Katrina, he oversaw the rebuilding of the New Orleans school system.

Creg Williams, who worked as a school district administrator under Mr. Vallas in multiple cities, described his former boss as an energetic, determined leader who was open to criticism but steadfast in advancing his vision.

''He looks at problems and he thinks about, 'How do I innovate and how do I create? How do I make this change, and make that change a lasting change?''' said Dr. Williams, who later worked as a school superintendent in other districts and who has supported Mr. Vallas's campaign.

During his stint with the Chicago school district, Mr. Vallas had a cordial relationship with the Chicago Teachers Union, an organization that battled repeatedly with the last two Chicago mayors and that helped elevate Mr. Johnson's profile in this year's campaign.

Deborah Lynch, whose tenure as president of the teachers' union overlapped briefly with Mr. Vallas's stint leading the Chicago schools, said she appreciated Mr. Vallas's approach even though she did not agree with him on every issue.

''He was a leader with lots of energy, lots of ideas, lots of plans,'' said Ms. Lynch, who now lives in suburban Chicago and who supports Mr. Vallas's mayoral campaign. ''Some of those plans went as intended. Some, you know, were lessons learned.'' She added: ''He has a vision, but he also backs up his vision with specific plans.''

His work, however, has also brought criticism. Mr. Vallas was appointed in 2017 to the board of trustees at Chicago State University, which was struggling financially.

After arriving there, he quickly moved into a top administrative role, where he was charged with helping set the course for the university's future. But as it became clear he was planning to run for mayor in 2019, he was forced out. The Rev. Marshall Hatch Sr., who at the time was the chairman of the university's board, said he believed Mr. Vallas ''didn't help at all'' and had ''no impact,'' though others on campus defended his work.

''It didn't make a lot of sense, other than the school was in trouble and it looked like the school's in such a crisis that, hey, let's throw a fixer like Paul over there,'' Mr. Hatch said. ''It didn't last long.''

Julie Bosman, Robert Chiarito and Dan Simmons contributed reporting.Julie Bosman, Robert Chiarito and Dan Simmons contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/01/us/paul-vallas-chicago-mayor-election.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/01/us/paul-vallas-chicago-mayor-election.html)

**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page A1, A14.

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2023

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[***The Deadly Lack of Imagination in the Democratic Party; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6747-5K71-JBG3-6122-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1369 words

**Byline:** Thomas Frank

**Highlight:** To defeat the right, we must first completely rethink the left.

**Body**

So the Democrats avoided the usual midterm cataclysm. They lost the House, yes, but they gained a seat in the Senate, and they did so despite a bad economic climate and an unpopular president. Meanwhile, Donald Trump has embarrassed himself with stupid remarks, and maybe this time he will stay embarrassed. Liberal rejoicing fills the air.

Now for some cold water. Democrats did so well, in part, because a conservative Supreme Court handed them a political gift by overturning Roe v. Wade and Republicans ran a group of dreadful celebrity Senate candidates.

The reality of the triumph, however, is that liberals are back to stalemate. Stalemate, that is, with an opponent that has been radicalizing for 50 years. An opponent that continually produces outrageous fire-breathing extremists, then supplants them with a new crop when the zealotry of the first bunch has worn off. It feels like the cycle is endless. But there is an answer to this problem, if we can just think beyond the limits of our current political imagination.

Ever since I started paying attention, virtually all the country’s political dynamism has been located on the right. They brought us Prop 13, the Reagan revolution, the Gingrich revolution, the Tea Party and Trumpism, each successive explosion securing some new tax cut or making some grand deregulatory thrust before exhausting itself and leaving the stage. That there will be another explosion soon, picking up where the last one left off, is almost a certainty.

Readers of this paper don’t need me to detail where this is going or what it has cost us: the inequality, the deindustrialization, the downfall of our middle-class society, the refusal to play by the rules. Suffice it to say that in the face of all this, chronic stalemate is simply not good enough.

There is only one realistic way out of this impasse: [*The Republican Party*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/03/17/magazine/democracy.html) must be defeated overwhelmingly and for years to come. It can be done. Liberalism has done it before, and not all that long ago: Franklin Roosevelt’s Democrats won five straight terms in the White House and controlled the House of Representatives, with a few brief interruptions, from 1931 to 1995.

But the current iteration of U.S. liberalism is constitutionally incapable of such a feat, let alone building and sustaining the sweeping popular movement we must have if we are ever going to do something about deindustrialization, systemic racism and global warming. To defeat the right, we must first completely rethink the left.

Recall, briefly, where the modern Democratic Party comes from. It was born, essentially, in a centrist backlash against a traditional left party that (it was said) [*foolishly talked*](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/10/how-democrats-killed-their-populist-soul/504710/) the [*populist language*](https://prospect.org/features/democrats-must-populists/) of class conflict. What had to happen, party reformers declared, was a move to the “[*vital center*](https://www.nytimes.com/1997/01/19/magazine/the-vital-center-will-not-hold.html),” outreach to Republicans, a voyage to a place beyond politics where everyone agreed about free trade, innovation and balanced budgets.

When Democrats did those things, strategists and party leaders argued, affluent professionals — members of the well-educated “[*learning class*](https://prospect.org/features/dlc/)” — would flock to the big tent. There would be consensus. Electoral victories. Affluence (for some) in the coming knowledge economy.

That was the plan. And it succeeded. The “New Democrats” won the war inside the Democratic Party, defeating the traditionalists. They were given many chances to rule. They triangulated and sought grand bargains. Today we live in the future to which they built their celebrated bridge, with a deregulated Wall Street, a devitalized heartland and college diplomas held up as the answer to all problems. Turning their backs on the populism they loathed, our future-minded, new-style Democrats declined to take the opportunity offered by the 2008-09 financial crisis to remake the financial system. Instead, some of them came to [*identify with*](https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2016/06/barack-obama-venture-capitalist) that system.

In some ways, liberalism from the top down has worked out as intended. The highly educated are now [*solidly Democratic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/08/us/politics/how-college-graduates-vote.html), and the wealthy are moving [*rapidly*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/12/06/georgia-runoff-live-updates/#link-YFGTW4TYPZD3RENILXSJYPUB4I) our way. Today the party’s candidates often raise more money than Republicans. Despite President Biden’s intermittent blue-collar sympathies — and despite the party’s ramped-up language about conquering racism and defending democracy itself — the strategy of the 1990s still seems to be the strategy of today: courting the learning class, winning the [*affluent suburbanites*](https://www.commondreams.org/news/2022/12/07/dems-back-blue-dog-spanberger-swing-district-post-over-progressive-cartwright), talking about how [*innovation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/05/us/politics/chips-act-congress-innovation-hubs.html)will save us, reaching out to Republicans like Liz Cheney. And despite inspiring victories like John Fetterman’s in Pennsylvania, according to exit polls, the party continues to [*hemorrhage*](https://newrepublic.com/article/168722/democrats-lost-working-class-support-midterms) ***working-class*** votes.

The combination of high net worth and high moral virtue that the Democrats offer is a richly satisfying blend for some voters, a perfect summary of how they see themselves. For party leaders, it has meant something even better: lucrative [*second careers*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/as-obama-nears-close-of-his-tenure-commitment-to-silicon-valley-is-clear/2015/02/27/3bee8088-bc8e-11e4-bdfa-b8e8f594e6ee_story.html) at Silicon Valley behemoths, compounds on Martha’s Vineyard and presidential libraries that surpass those of the Republicans in soaring monumentalism. If perpetual stalemate is the price the country must pay for such things, maybe it’s a bargain.

For all their love of creativity and innovation, however, there is a deadly lack of imagination in the way modern Democrats play the game. Leaders assumed for years that demographic change was automatically going to yield future majorities, and by implication that nothing visionary or transformative was required of them. Traditional Democratic constituent groups, they seemed to think, could be easily satisfied with noble rhetoric. Then, surprise, the Republicans found some clever way to win them over.

Sizable majorities of Americans desperately want traditional liberal measures like universal health care and economic fairness. But actually, existing liberalism, with its air of upper-crust contempt and its top-down moralism, rubs this deeply democratic nation exactly the wrong way.

These things are obvious when viewed from a certain distance, but liberals, intoxicated by their own righteousness, can never figure it out. They keep expecting the right to die off, as if poisoned by its diet of wickedness, and yet the Republicans persist, dreaming up new culture wars against the “liberal elite,” radicalizing themselves continually along the way, refusing to succumb.

And what do liberals do? We dig in. We cheer for our side, we cheer some more, we demand that everyone else also cheer. We react hysterically to bad news, we refuse any analysis that doesn’t begin by ascribing Satanism to the G.O.P., and we go on Twitter to scold those who don’t measure up to our standards in some way. This is not strategy. It is fandom.

If politics were baseball, this might be appropriate. But in a democracy, we are not just spectators. Beating the Republicans overwhelmingly will require much more.

If I have learned one thing from the experience of the past few decades, it is that America cannot expect genuine reform to come from Democratic Party leadership or enlightened technocrats in Washington; it must come from the bottom up. It must be demanded by ordinary people, in solidarity, coming together by the millions in a social movement capable of sweeping all before it. Unfortunately, liberals don’t build such movements these days: What we do is purge them, police the unruly public via social media and write off wayward voters as sinful or [*beyond redemption*](https://www.cnn.com/2016/09/09/politics/hillary-clinton-donald-trump-basket-of-deplorables/index.html).

An extremist Republican Party may indeed be one of the country’s biggest political problems, as the president [*has suggested*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/09/01/remarks-by-president-bidenon-the-continued-battle-for-the-soul-of-the-nation/). But liberalism from the top down, which has prevented Democrats from capturing the imagination of what ought to be a Democratic era, is certainly another. And that, at least, we can do something about.

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[***A Shifting Mood on Crime Propelled Chicago’s Leading Candidate for Mayor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67NK-2WR1-DXY4-X4TF-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Paul Vallas, who emerged as the front-runner with a tough-on-crime message, will face Brandon Johnson, a progressive county commissioner, in an April runoff.

**Body**

Paul Vallas, who emerged as the front-runner with a tough-on-crime message, will face Brandon Johnson, a progressive county commissioner, in an April runoff.

CHICAGO — When Paul Vallas ran for mayor of Chicago four years ago, it did not go well. He finished in a distant ninth place, winning only 5 percent of the vote and barely registering as an electoral afterthought.

But on Tuesday, Mr. Vallas, who hammered a tough-on-crime message on the campaign trail, finished well ahead of eight other candidates in an election that denied Mayor Lori Lightfoot a second term and made her the city’s first incumbent to lose re-election since the 1980s.

Mr. Vallas’s strong showing reflects a much different electoral mood in Chicago, where homicides spiked under Ms. Lightfoot’s watch during the pandemic, property crime rates have continued to rise and promises to crack down have taken on new appeal.

Across the country, even in liberal cities, calls for more expansive policing and harsher prosecution have gained political favor. Debates over those issues will shape Mr. Vallas’s runoff on April 4 with Brandon Johnson, who has outlined a progressive agenda for dealing with Chicago’s problems.

That matchup gives voters a choice between two starkly different Democrats: The younger, unabashedly liberal Mr. Johnson, a county commissioner and former union organizer who is Black; and the older, more conservative Mr. Vallas, a white man who is a former public school executive and a vocal supporter of law enforcement. Mr. Vallas has used a political playbook similar to the one that helped Mayor Eric Adams of New York City emerge from a crowded Democratic field to win election in 2021.

“Public safety is the fundamental right of every American: It is a civil right and it is the principal responsibility of government,” Mr. Vallas, 69, said Tuesday night in a speech. “And we will have a safe Chicago. We will make Chicago the safest city in America.”

But on Chicago’s influential political left, the prospect of a Vallas mayoralty has been met with fear, derision and implications that he is really more of a Republican than the lifelong Democrat he says he is.

“We cannot have this man as the mayor of the city of Chicago,” Mr. Johnson, 46, whose campaign was lifted by an endorsement from the local teachers’ union, told his supporters on Tuesday night. “Our children and families across Chicago can’t afford it.”

Mr. Vallas grew up on Chicago’s South Side and is a familiar figure in local government. He [*led Chicago Public Schools*](https://www.nytimes.com/1999/12/29/nyregion/in-chicago-schools-chief-as-executive.html) from [*1995 to 2001*](https://www.nytimes.com/1997/06/06/us/chicago-schools-set-standard-in-insisting-students-perform.html) before [*leaving*](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/06/07/us/chief-executive-of-chicago-schools-resigns.html) to run the school systems in Philadelphia, [*New Orleans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/24/education/24orleans.html) and [*Bridgeport, Conn.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/22/education/change-agent-in-education-collects-critics-in-connecticut-town.html) In those positions, he cultivated a reputation as a crisis manager and charter school supporter willing to take on hard jobs and implement sweeping changes, an approach that garnered a mix of praise and criticism.

But it was Mr. Vallas’s hard-line message on crime and policing that elevated him in this year’s nine-candidate mayoral field. After unsuccessful runs for governor in 2002, lieutenant governor in 2014 and mayor in 2019, Mr. Vallas positioned himself this year well to the political right of Ms. Lightfoot, and even further to the right of Mr. Johnson.

“I was never scared before,” said Martha Wicker, 61, who voted for Mr. Vallas and described worrying about crime during her daily commute. “Now I don’t want to be on the train alone when it’s dark.”

The next mayor will inherit a long-challenged Police Department operating under a consent decree and without a permanent leader. In Ms. Lightfoot’s first major announcement since losing re-election, she said on Wednesday that David O. Brown, who led the Chicago Police during most of her time in City Hall, would [*resign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/01/us/david-brown-lori-lightfoot-chicago-police.html) later this month.

As of Wednesday evening, with some mail-in ballots still not counted, Mr. Vallas was leading in 19 of the city’s 50 wards, compared with nine wards where Mr. Johnson was in first place.

Mr. Vallas racked up large margins in downtown Chicago, the site of widespread looting in 2020, and in parts of the Northwest and Southwest Sides with significant white, ***working-class*** populations. Mr. Johnson performed well on the city’s northern lakefront, carrying a plurality of the votes in some majority-white wards, while also winning some majority-Hispanic areas northwest of downtown.

Mr. Vallas was the only white politician in the field, which included seven Black candidates and one Hispanic contender. Chicago, which has a history of racial and ethnic groups sometimes voting as blocs, has roughly equal numbers of Black, white and Hispanic residents.

In the runoff, both candidates will seek to win over Chicagoans who backed Representative Jesús G. García, a progressive Democrat with a loyal base of Hispanic voters, and Ms. Lightfoot, who carried several mostly Black wards on the South and West Sides.

Supporters of Mr. Johnson, who previously worked as a public-school teacher, said they appreciated his approach on education and policing. Mr. Johnson at one point suggested that he agreed with the movement to reduce funding for police departments, though he later [*backtracked*](https://www.chicagotribune.com/politics/elections/ct-brandon-johnson-defund-police-justice-for-black-lives-20230223-lrapyjp5xzcilfmvkys3bajcki-story.html).

“I like his opinions about funding the police differently, not defunding but doing it differently,” said Carla Moulton, 61, a legal secretary who voted for Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson, a pastor’s son and West Side resident who won election to the County Board in 2018, called on the campaign trail for increasing access to mental health services, adding funding for schools and creating more affordable housing. To pay for it, he has called for raising some taxes, including on businesses.

“The finances of the city belong to the people of the city,” Mr. Johnson said on Tuesday night. “So we’re going to invest in the people of the city.”

Progressives united against Mr. Vallas because of his views on the police, his track record supporting charter schools and, most recently, a [*Chicago Tribune report*](https://www.chicagotribune.com/politics/elections/ct-chicago-paul-vallas-twitter-likes-mayor-race-20230223-po6c7h7etfbv7oji5237y75jtm-story.html) that his Twitter account liked an array of offensive posts on Twitter about Ms. Lightfoot. (Mr. Vallas [*suggested*](https://www.chicagotribune.com/politics/elections/ct-vallas-responds-to-tweets-20230225-gjfsmla2mvdrrblyftqr3lxhle-story.html) his account was breached.) Mr. Vallas also [*said*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_U_95FO70Jo) in a television interview in 2009 that he considered himself more of a Republican than a Democrat, a strike against him in the eyes of many voters in overwhelmingly liberal Chicago.

As he made his case to voters, Mr. Vallas welcomed an endorsement from the local Fraternal Order of Police, called for the replacement of Chicago Police Department leaders and put forth a plan to improve arrest rates and prosecute more misdemeanor crimes. His campaign website described Chicago as a near dystopia in which “city leadership has surrendered us all to a criminal element that acts with seeming impunity in treating unsuspecting, innocent people as prey.”

For many voters, unnerved by homicide rates that soared to generational highs during the coronavirus pandemic, that message resonated.

Mike Curran, 50, a real estate broker, said he voted for Mr. Vallas because of public safety concerns.

“I’m very disappointed in the last four years,” Mr. Curran said. “I grew up in Detroit and know what can happen to a city. I voted for Vallas because I’m extremely fed up with crime in the neighborhood.”

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, Mr. Vallas became a sought-after leader for school systems in crisis. He became chief executive of Chicago Public Schools in the years after the district was referred to as the [*country’s worst*](https://www.nytimes.com/1987/11/08/us/schools-in-chicago-are-called-the-worst-by-education-chief.html). He led the [*Philadelphia school system*](https://www.inquirer.com/politics/paul-vallas-mayor-chicago-philadelphia-education-20230223.html) and expanded charter schools after the state took over the district. And after Hurricane Katrina, he oversaw the rebuilding of the New Orleans school system.

Creg Williams, who worked as a school district administrator under Mr. Vallas in multiple cities, described his former boss as an energetic, determined leader who was open to criticism but steadfast in advancing his vision.

“He looks at problems and he thinks about, ‘How do I innovate and how do I create? How do I make this change, and make that change a lasting change?’” said Dr. Williams, who later worked as a school superintendent in other districts and who has supported Mr. Vallas’s campaign.

During his stint with the Chicago school district, Mr. Vallas had a cordial relationship with the Chicago Teachers Union, an organization that battled repeatedly with the last two Chicago mayors and that helped elevate Mr. Johnson’s profile in this year’s campaign.

Deborah Lynch, whose tenure as president of the teachers’ union overlapped briefly with Mr. Vallas’s stint leading the Chicago schools, said she appreciated Mr. Vallas’s approach even though she did not agree with him on every issue.

“He was a leader with lots of energy, lots of ideas, lots of plans,” said Ms. Lynch, who now lives in suburban Chicago and who supports Mr. Vallas’s mayoral campaign. “Some of those plans went as intended. Some, you know, were lessons learned.” She added: “He has a vision, but he also backs up his vision with specific plans.”

His work, however, has also brought criticism. Mr. Vallas was [*appointed*](https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.13985.html) in 2017 to the board of trustees at Chicago State University, which was struggling financially.

After arriving there, he quickly moved into a top administrative role, where he was charged with helping set the course for the university’s future. But as it became clear he was planning to run for mayor in 2019, [*he was forced out*](https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-met-paul-vallas-leaves-chicago-state-20180128-story.html). The Rev. Marshall Hatch Sr., who at the time was the chairman of the university’s board, said he believed Mr. Vallas “didn’t help at all” and had “no impact,” though others on campus [*defended his work*](https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-met-paul-vallas-leaves-chicago-state-20180128-story.html).

“It didn’t make a lot of sense, other than the school was in trouble and it looked like the school’s in such a crisis that, hey, let’s throw a fixer like Paul over there,” Mr. Hatch said. “It didn’t last long.”

Julie Bosman, Robert Chiarito and Dan Simmons contributed reporting.

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[***Joyce Carol Oates has no illusions about what lasts. 'Everything that you think is solid is actually fleeting and ephemeral.'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68S9-7H11-DXY4-X2C0-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By David Marchese and Mamadi Doumbouya

**Body**

''I have,'' Joyce Carol Oates says, ''so many ideas.'' That's putting it mildly. It's hard to think of another writer with as fecund and protean an imagination as the 85-year-old, who is surely on any shortlist of America's greatest living writers. Oates, whose latest is the unsettling short-story collection ''Zero-Sum,'' has published 62 novels, 47 short-story collections, 16 collections of nonfiction, 9 collections of poetry, plays and books for children and young adults, as well as a torrent of tweets (the latter of which occasionally get her in trouble). The sheer quantity of her output, impressive as it may be, is almost beside the point. The real achievement is that the quality of that work is so consistently high. You can be confident that if you throw a dart at the Oates catalog, you'll hit a piece of writing that is emotionally intense, full of knife-sharp sentences and painterly description, rich with thematic daring and grave moral and philosophical reckoning (and, now and then, a morbid sense of humor). You can also be confident that there's more on the way.

''I have a stack of notes for my next novel, and another novel, and I have a lot of short stories,'' Oates says excitedly. ''The one I'm doing now, the reader's going to be surprised.''

In your book ''On Boxing,'' you have a line about how for fighters, life is about the fight and the rest is just waiting. Do you feel that way with writing? That's a good question. It points to a philosophical issue of what is essential in our lives and what is existential or incidental. Thinking of my early married life, my husband1 was a professor, and we talked about books all the time. Though we talked and talked for years, I don't really remember that dialogue. I don't remember the students I was teaching2, whom I loved. It's 2023, and I have to concede that I don't remember those students. All I have left of all that happiness is my writing of that time. A book or two, some stories. I think that's a profound fact. It's a kind of devastating fact. Everything that you think is solid is actually fleeting and ephemeral. The only thing that is quasi-permanent would be a book or work of art or photographs or something. Anything you create that transcends time is in some ways more real than the actual reality of your life. If you set your hand on fire right now, it's ephemeral. It would hurt, but Plato would say it's not as real as something that transcends time. I am a person who was married, and was very happily married. Yet, that's all gone now. Where is it?

Does it give you any solace to know that you at least have those books that you wrote during that period of happiness? I suppose it has some solace to it, otherwise things would all be lost. Did you see the movie ''The Great Beauty''?3 It's about a man who's 65 years old. He wrote a good novel that people liked, but then he was taken up by the beauty of Rome. In a way, he says, he wasted his life. People are seduced by the beauty of the close-at-hand, and they don't have the discipline or the predilection or the talent, maybe, to say: ''I'm not going to go out tonight. I'm not going to waste my time on Twitter. I'm going to have five hours and work on my novel.'' If you did that every day, you'd have a novel. Many people say, ''I'm going to pet my cat'' or ''I'm with my children.'' There's lots of reasons that people have for not doing things. Then the cats are gone, the children move away, the marriage breaks up or somebody dies, and you're sort of there, like, ''I don't have anything.'' A lot of things that had meaning are gone, and you have to start anew. But if you read Ovid's ''Metamorphoses,'' Ovid writes about how, if you're reading this, I'm immortal. You see that theme in Shakespeare's sonnets4: You're reading this, so I'm still alive. In fact, they're not alive, they're gone, but while they were alive, they did have that extra dimension of their lives. That is not nothing.

So having a body of work to leave behind ameliorates the feeling of things being gone from your life? I don't know how to answer that. I was very close to my parents, and like many people who loved their parents, I didn't think I would survive without them -- but you do. We start losing people: we lose our grandparents and parents; we start losing friends; you lose a spouse. That's the human experience, and you suddenly realize that the human experience is going to be your experience. When that starts to happen to you, it is quite stunning. But I think as people get older, we get more tolerant. I remember after my first husband died, I couldn't sleep, and I would look at movies late at night and ''Leaving Las Vegas''5 was on a lot. While my husband was alive, I would never have seen a movie about an alcoholic. I didn't have any patience with anything like that. But after he died, I thought, Of course everybody's self-medicating. I had a totally different interpretation of the movie. I understand now what self-medication means. It's not necessarily weakness. It's how people are able to keep going.

Just on that notion of tolerance: How do you see the shift that has occurred in what's tolerated from writers? A writer like you, or a friend of yours like Philip Roth, could be pretty provocative in a way that feels rare nowadays. Everything is evolutionary, and we have a different consciousness now. Our society is much more obviously diverse than it was when Philip started writing. He was a young Jewish man, but he wasn't mainstream Jewish in the sense of being religious. He was secular. So he was writing out of that perspective, and he was attacked by older Jewish critics because he seemed like he was sneering at American Jews at a time -- after World War II -- when that seemed unkind. But he gets a different sensibility as he gets older. It sort of widens. Philip always remained, to some extent, a brash, adolescent voice, and he was best when he was being funny and mocking, but he didn't seem to have the humanity or capacity of, say, Bernard Malamud. I'm not sure why I got on that subject, but Philip also took a stance against feminism because he felt that was challenging the authority of the white male. His writing was extremely sexist. If you read it from his position, you could still sort of enjoy it. And John Updike's occasional sexism didn't bother me at all, because they're very good writers. People who are younger now, of a different generation than Philip and me and John Updike, see the world differently. They see things in a much more egalitarian way. Like, why not have a lesbian writing from her point of view? Why must it always be the white male? Why would the white writer be wanting to write about a Black subject? It's not that you can't do it, but why would you want to when that's their world and they know that world? A white writer, we have so many things we can do. We don't have to go over to somebody else's garden and be picking around.

How does support for the idea that diverse voices should be given primacy in telling their stories jibe with that tweet6 of yours -- which made a lot of people angry -- where you seemed to lament hearing an anecdote about how book publishers aren't interested in first novels by white male writers? I guess I assume that it's like saying water is wet: publishers don't publish enough diverse voices. I thought we knew that. I was responding to another tweet. A bunch of the time I get in trouble on Twitter, I'm retweeting somebody else and commenting, and then my tweet gets taken out of context. But I was saying, ''Yes, an agent told me this.'' People told me, ''Joyce, it is true, but we don't say it; you shouldn't say it.'' I was offering reasons why I thought it might be true, and one of them is that publishers publish to make money, and it might be that for publishers when they publish a book by a white male who's not famous like Stephen King, it doesn't sell as much. But Twitter is so truncated. It can't get much of an argument out, and everything seems to be, like, ''racism'' -- you just wave a flag. People seem reluctant to understand there are other factors in the world. I think class is much more important. Black people and persons of color who are wealthy, they have much more in common with white people who are wealthy. People don't seem to want to talk about class in America. I'm from a ***working-class*** background, so I see things in terms of class struggle.

I read an old piece you wrote for The New York Times Book Review about the appeal of anonymity for writers and how their work can be affected or hemmed in by the public's perception of who they are outside the work. Did something flip where now you don't care about that? It doesn't matter to you if people might think about you differently because every once in a while you put a howler out there on Twitter? I don't think about it too much. It may be because I am living alone, and people in my generation, we used to have five conversations a day. That's all gone. For some people Twitter takes up that time of the day when you're in your zen consciousness where everything is finite. It's not permanent, it's like a flame that flickers and goes out. Also, in quoting something that I said years ago, you're making a common mistake that people are fixed. That is a philosophical question too: What is essential in your being and what is contingent and accidental? Somebody says to you, ''You should be on Twitter because if you post where you're going to give your readings, people can see where you're going.'' They set it up for you, and you start tweeting. You just sort of go down a dark path. Much of life is accidental.

When new feelings or ideas bubble up in the culture, do you immediately think, Here's something for me to write about? Or do you have to spend time figuring out if they're viable subject matter for you? I'm thinking of pandemic fears or anxiety about humans being displaced by A.I., both of which you write about in ''Zero-Sum.'' It's more taken from my own experience. We had a lockdown around March 15 in 2020. I had been teaching at Princeton and Rutgers, and suddenly the whole state was locked down. I was living alone, and I would be awake much of the night. In the news, the death tolls kept rising. There began to be stories about bodies in morgues in New York City, or in vans outside the morgues. I was trying to get back to that sense of isolation and unease, but only because I experienced it. I probably wouldn't have been writing about it otherwise. In ''This Is Not a Drill,''7 the idea is that perhaps this is going to be a recurring experience in the Western societies: that suddenly the technology will fail and you'll be hearing sirens, you'll be told to stay in your house -- it didn't seem too far-fetched.

So you use your own feelings as a way into the story? Yes.

Is it the same process for a story like the new book's ''Mr. Stickum,'' where you're inhabiting a dark, murderous perspective. Presumably that's something with which you don't have experience? Well, it's a collective perspective of girls who are in high school, and they have a certain privilege, and so they think they're helping girls or women who are made to be sex slaves. But that was a fun story. I have a whole category of fun stories. They are usually very macabre and somewhat over the top. I'm working on a novel now, and it is really a fun novel. I look forward to writing it. I hope it doesn't get canceled. We're in an era that I would not have predicted, where a novel could be canceled because of its premise. My goodness. Some of our great, outrageous writers like Nabokov would never get published today.

What's the premise of the novel? My novel? I don't think I will tell you. I call it a fun novel because the plot's very complicated. I have written a lot of very serious novels, like ''Breathe,''8 in which there was no humor. But plotting a novel that's complicated is a lot of fun.

When you were talking before about how people spend time on things when they could be writing a novel, was there an implicit judgment in there? Do you think the people who don't leave something like that behind spent their time on the wrong things? David, there are some questions that arise when one is being interviewed that would never otherwise have arisen. I often have that feeling after an interview: that it represents a little bubble in my life; almost like a bubble in one's blood, moving toward the heart like a clot. I focus so much on my work; then, when I'm asked to make some abstract comment, I kind of reach for a clue from the interviewer. I don't want to suggest that there's anything artificial about it, but I don't know what I'm supposed to say, in a way, because I wouldn't otherwise be saying it. Sartre said -- I don't even particularly like Sartre -- but he did say something very revealing: ''Genius is not a gift, but the way a person invents in desperate circumstances.''9 Much of what I'm doing is, I'm backed into a corner and the way out is desperation. So, no, I don't necessarily feel that was a judgment. How would I know what it would be like to have 15 wonderful grandchildren? I didn't raise horses. I didn't have dogs. There are many things I haven't done that make people happy and fulfilled. I'm not passing any judgment. I'm backed into a corner that is my identity; I don't have experience of other things. I don't think about these things unless somebody asks me. I'm thinking about the next chapter in my novel. I worked all morning on one and a half pages. I feel so interested in the next chapter. It's like jumping into some water. You don't know if it's going to be cold or warm, but it's exciting. That's the way I live. I'm not thinking about these philosophical, overall questions.

Often people I interview will say, ''That's not something I think about'' or ''I haven't really thought about that.'' Exactly.

But how boring would it be if all I did was ask about things people had already thought about? But I understand what you're saying. There is an element of being put on the spot. Well, it's ironic because I just posted a Substack about the idea of an interview10. It is actually quite a fascinating genre. It's very American: ''The interview.'' Different interviews come out of the interviewer. It's like you're striding out into the Barnum & Bailey Circus, you have your whip, the lions come and jump through the flaming hoops, but they're doing it for you. If somebody else was there maybe the lions would just come padding out quietly and lie down and have a nap. It's a wonderful experience, I suppose, to be an interviewer. You have the capacity to create the interview in your own image11. Anyway, this is not to say that there was anything wrong about my statement to you. It's that there's almost nothing I can say that isn't simply an expression of a person trying desperately to say something. [Laughs]

After Cormac McCarthy died, The Times ran an essay saying that his career couldn't happen today. Did you see that? Yes, I think I responded to it on Twitter12. It was probably true.

Could your career happen today? Gosh, I don't know. I really am an experimental writer, and I sort of downplayed that because experimental writing doesn't sell. But when I look at a novel by Cormac McCarthy like ''Child of God,'' that is a novel that I love. I thought, Wow, it's so funny and weird and wonderful, and I don't think there's almost any readership for that. I'm not so interested in mainstream writing. Some of my novels seem to be mainstream writing, but if you're looking closely, you'll see that it's sort of meta, like a simulation of something rather than the actual thing. I have to write that way, I think, in order to even have a publisher.

It's a bait and switch? I think Cormac McCarthy is exactly like that. But it's sort of like you're just doing some unique thing over in the corner of the field. Over here Monet is painting the haystacks and here Van Gogh is painting something different. Then you walk around and there's Hieronymus Bosch and he's got this bizarre landscape, and then you walk farther and there's R. Crumb and then there's Picasso. These people are looking at the world but their visions are so different. I think that we're all like that, those of us who have been writing for a while. There's Emily Dickinson over here, there's Faulkner, there's Cormac McCarthy, and I feel I'm in that territory. We're each doing some odd little thing.

This interview has been edited and condensed for clarity from two conversations.

David Marchese is a staff writer for the magazine and writes the Talk column. He recently interviewed Emma Chamberlain about leaving YouTube, Walter Mosley about a dumber America and Cal Newport about a new way to work.

1. Oates was married to Raymond J. Smith from 1961 to 2008, and Charles G. Gross from 2009 to 2019. They are each deceased.

2. In the early and mid-1960s, Oates taught at the University of Detroit. She then taught at the University of Windsor, in Ontario, Canada, from 1968 to 1978. She has been teaching at Princeton ever since.

3. A 2013 drama, directed and co-written by Paolo Sorrentino and starring Toni Servillo.

4. From Sonnet 55: '''Gainst death and all oblivious enmityShall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room Even in the eyes of all posterityThat wear this world out to the ending doom. So, till the Judgment that yourself arise, You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.''

5. From 1995, co-written and directed by Mike Figgis and starring Nicolas Cage, in an Academy Award-winning performance, as a screenwriter intent on drinking himself to death

6. In 2022, replying to the Times essay ''There's More Than One Way to Ban a Book,'' Oates tweeted: ''(a friend who is a literary agent told me that he cannot even get editors to read first novels by young white male writers, no matter how good; they are just not interested. this is heartbreaking for writers who may, in fact, be brilliant, & critical of their own 'privilege.')''

7. From ''Zero-Sum,'' and about a man who, after a long time in a frightening, pandemic-induced lockdown, ventures out into the newly unfamiliar world.

8. A chapter from ''Breathe,'' called ''A Theory Pre-Post-Mortem,'' was reworked for inclusion as a stand-alone story in ''Zero-Sum.''

9. Oates used that Sartre line as the epigraph for the 2000 novel ''Blonde,'' a fictionalization of the life of Marilyn Monroe. It was adapted into the 2022 film of the same title.

10. Yes, Oates also writes a Substack.

11. This is the most perceptive thing an interview subject has ever said to me about interviews.

12. She did: ''true that most writers of McCarthy's generation, & younger, were supported by editors & publishers through early careers of modest sales, careers-in-the-making that probably could not be replicated today.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/16/joyce-carol-oates-figured-out-the-secret-to-immortality.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/16/joyce-carol-oates-figured-out-the-secret-to-immortality.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MAMADI DOUMBOUYA) (MM11)

Opposite page: Joyce Carol Oates in 1970. Above: Oates receiving a National Humanities Medal from President Barack Obama in 2011. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

JIM WATSON/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (MM12

MM13) This article appeared in print on page MM11, MM12, MM13.

**Load-Date:** July 23, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Adams forged a path to victory by leaning on his personal story and a moderate platform.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:640H-T6W1-JBG3-60C0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 2, 2021 Tuesday 23:24 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 412 words

**Byline:** Michael Gold, Jeffery C. Mays and Andy Newman

**Highlight:** Eric Adams, the next mayor of New York, has been many things to many people.

**Body**

Eric Adams, the next mayor of New York, has been many things to many people.

Eric Adams [*leaned heavily on his biography*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/23/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html) on the long road to becoming New York’s 110th mayor — and just the second Black person to hold the office.

When he talked about public schools on the campaign trail, Mr. Adams reminded voters that his dyslexia went undiscovered for most of his youth.

When he spoke about homelessness, Mr. Adams recounted carrying a trash bag of clothes to school because he was worried that his family would be evicted before he returned home.

On crime and safety, Mr. Adams promised that he could both promote public safety and [*protect Black and Latino residents*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/15/nyregion/eric-adams-maya-wiley-black-voters.html) from civil rights abuses. He said that his experience of being beaten by the police as a teenager inspired him to join the department and speak out against discrimination from within its ranks, eventually leading a group called 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care.

After retiring from the Police Department, Mr. Adams, 61, served four terms as a state senator before being elected, then re-elected, Brooklyn borough president.

But while he has emphasized his ***working-class*** bona fides and vowed to fight for New Yorkers struggling to make ends meet in an expensive city that had left them behind, Mr. Adams has had no qualms about courting New Yorkers at the top of the heap.

After winning a bruising Democratic mayoral primary in June — where he ran as a moderate in a field crowded with progressives — Mr. Adams held a [*raft of fund-raisers with New York’s rich and powerful*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/27/nyregion/eric-adams-donors-mayor.html). He [*consulted with the billionaire former mayor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/nyregion/eric-adams-bloomberg.html) Michael R. Bloomberg and dined with the billionaire media mogul Rupert Murdoch while promising that city government would be [*more friendly to business*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/10/nyregion/eric-adams-issues-mayor.html) than it has been under Mayor Bill de Blasio.

Mr. Adams’s charm and ease in depicting himself as [*many things to many people*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/23/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html) and his ability to convincingly shape-shift at will may be his greatest skill, but it leaves some people uneasy.

Even those who have known him for decades aren’t sure which version will show up to City Hall in January. Sometimes, even Mr. Adams does not seem sure.

“I’m so many formers,” he said over the summer during a visit to the White House, where he declared himself the new face of the Democratic Party, “I’m trying to figure out the current.”

PHOTO: On the campaign trail, Eric Adams never failed to remind voters where he had come from. (PHOTOGRAPH BY James Estrin/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2021

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[***Police named a ‘person of interest’ connected to the shooting.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656R-0901-DXY4-X4WD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 12, 2022 Tuesday 08:49 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 617 words

**Byline:** Andy Newman, Troy Closson, Ashley Southall and Michael Gold

**Highlight:** The man had rented a U-Haul that the police found near where the gunman boarded the subway, the police said as they continued their search for the suspect.

**Body**

The police in New York on Tuesday evening identified a man they called a “person of interest” in the mass shooting on a crowded subway train in Brooklyn during the morning rush earlier that day that injured nearly two dozen people, five of them critically.

The man, Frank R. James, 62, had rented a U-Haul van in Philadelphia, the police said. A key to the van, they said, was found in a collection of belongings on the train that they believed belonged to the gunman, including a Glock 9-millimeter handgun, three ammunition magazines, a hatchet, fireworks and a liquid believed to be gasoline.

The police found the van abandoned on a street late Tuesday afternoon, about five blocks from the Kings Highway station, where they say the gunman had gotten on the subway, and five miles from the 36th Street station, where the shooting unfolded.

Mr. James remains at large, James Essig, the Police Department’s chief of detectives, said in a news conference at police headquarters.

“We are endeavoring to locate him to determine his connection to the subway shooting, if any,” Chief Essig said.

Mr. James has addresses in Philadelphia and Wisconsin, the police said.

He appeared to have posted dozens of videos on YouTube, where he riffed off news events in long, vitriolic rants. He blamed Black women for violence among Black people and pointed to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine as evidence that whites are genocidal.

Shortly before 8:30 a.m., the police said, a heavyset, dark-skinned man in a construction vest and construction helmet donned a gas mask as a crowded N train approached the 36th Street station in the Sunset Park neighborhood, tossed two smoke grenades on the floor of the car, and began firing the gun. Thirty-three shots later, he fled.

Ten people were hit by gunfire, the police said. Five of the victims were critically injured, but none of their wounds were life-threatening, the Fire Department said. The 10 gunshot victims made the shooting the worst in the history of the New York City subway. Another 13 people suffered injuries related to smoke inhalation, falls or panic attacks, Chief Essig said.

The shooting came as the city was already struggling to cope with both a rise in shootings citywide and an increase in crime and disorder in the subway that has scared commuters from returning to a transit system that saw ridership plummet during the pandemic. It set off panic and chaos aboard the train, in the station and the surrounding streets and sent schools in the vicinity into lockdowns that lasted much of the day.

Mayor Eric Adams said that the search for the gunman was hampered by the fact that at least one security camera at the 36th Street subway station that might have captured the scene was not operating.

The N train snakes through ***working-class*** neighborhoods filled with immigrants from all over Asia and Latin America. As the shooting unfolded and the doors of the train opened, sending smoke billowing through 36th Street station, fearful riders fled, many of them hurrying onto an R train sitting across the platform. Subway seats and cars were streaked with blood as people called for help.

Around the 36th Street station, dozens of police vehicles with flashing lights clogged the streets and helicopters flew overhead.

Reporting was contributed by Jonah E. Bromwich, Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Joseph Goldstein, Andrew Hinderaker, Sadef Ali Kully, Ana Ley, Chelsia Rose Marcius and William K. Rashbaum.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dakota Santiago for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 13, 2022

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[***For Progressives, Verdict Is Split in New York Races***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:630M-PKF1-JBG3-64WN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 25, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1394 words

**Byline:** By Lisa Lerer

**Body**

Progressives cheered the results in down-ballot races and in Buffalo, even as the outcome of the mayoral primary appeared less rosy.

They may not win Gracie Mansion, but there's always Buffalo. And Rochester, too.

For progressives in New York State, primary elections on Tuesday night brought a number of victories, even as the biggest apple of them all -- New York City's mayoralty -- may elude their grasp.

Though Eric Adams amassed a sizable lead over Maya D. Wiley, his top rival, in first-choice votes, liberal candidates celebrated victories in down-ballot races in New York City and in the state's second and third largest cities, wins that they argue demonstrate their ascendancy at the grass-roots level even as they are struggling to flex their power in Washington.

In perhaps the biggest upset of the night, India B. Walton, a democratic socialist, defeated a four-term incumbent in the Democratic mayoral primary in Buffalo and cast her victory as a threat to the longtime party establishment.

Ms. Walton had promised to safeguard undocumented immigrants, place a moratorium on new charter schools and cut millions from the Police Department budget by ending the role of officers in most mental health emergency calls.

''This victory is ours. It is the first of many,'' said Ms. Walton. ''If you are in an elected office right now, you are being put on notice. We are coming.''

As New Yorkers prepare to wait weeks for final results in the mayoral primary while absentee ballots are counted and ranked-choice tabulations begin, the early returns across the city and state paint a complicated picture. They highlight voters' embrace of a diverse slate of candidates but reflect generational divides and continued tension as Democrats navigate their identity in the post-Trump era.

While the idiosyncratic politics of deeply Democratic New York City are hardly a bellwether for the nation, the results in the mayoral contest in particular point to a progressive movement still charting its way through the kinds of divisive policy issues that split the Democratic Party during last year's presidential primary.

Three of the top four candidates in the election ran on more moderate messages than Ms. Wiley, particularly around crime and policing, and were rewarded with support from a diverse coalition that spanned all five boroughs.

But the early news was brighter for progressives elsewhere. Candidates backed by the Working Families Party won City Council seats in Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx. Jumaane Williams, the city's public advocate, won more than 70 percent of the vote in his primary. Brad Lander, a council member from Park Slope, is leading in the primary for city comptroller.

In the Democratic primary for Manhattan district attorney, Alvin Bragg was ahead of Tali Farhadian Weinstein, who sank more than $8 million into her own campaign, infuriating liberals because of her spending and ties to Wall Street. Tiffany Cabán, who narrowly lost a race for Queens district attorney in 2019, is leading in a primary for a City Council seat. And Antonio Reynoso, a council member who represents Williamsburg and Bushwick and once cast himself as a ''boombox for progressive values,'' leads the contest for Brooklyn borough president.

In Washington, progressives have found their ambitions curtailed by a razor-thin margin in the Senate and a refusal by moderate Democrats to support eliminating the filibuster.

Voting rights legislation failed this week, prompting concerns from many on the left that President Biden and his administration did not mount a fierce enough push for one of their top priorities. As groups of senators draft dueling infrastructure plans, some liberals worry that the administration will jettison proposals to fight climate change and support caregiving in favor of a compromise that can draw Republican support.

And, in recent weeks, liberal candidates have lost a number of competitive primary contests. In Virginia, former Gov. Terry McAuliffe defeated four rivals who ran to his left to capture the nomination. Six weeks earlier, Troy Carter, a Louisiana state senator, defeated a left-leaning rival in a special election for a congressional seat.

In New York, the need to count absentee ballots and a new ranked-choice voting system means the Democratic mayoral primary is unlikely to be called until mid-July. But Mr. Adams, a Black retired police captain and Brooklyn's borough president, captured a strong lead in first-choice votes, winning every borough except Manhattan and showing particular strength in the Bronx and ***working-class*** Black neighborhoods in Brooklyn.

Mr. Adams built his campaign in opposition to the ''defund the police movement,'' denouncing his liberal rivals for adopting left-wing slogans that he said threatened the lives of ''Black and brown babies'' and were being pushed by ''a lot of young white affluent people.''

''I'm not sure that I would necessarily chose New York City as my bellwether for the country, but there's no doubt that Adams staked his race on a more moderate position,'' said David Axelrod, a former top adviser to President Barack Obama. ''There are certainly significant pockets of progressivism in metropolitan areas all over the country; it doesn't necessarily mean that is the dominant political strain.''

As results were tabulated, progressives sought to cast their second-place position as a victory of sorts, one they argued demonstrated their strength in a crowded field.

Ms. Wiley, who trails Mr. Adams by about 75,000 votes, urged her supporters to ''wait patiently,'' arguing that she could pull out an upset victory as the counting continues.

In the final weeks of the campaign, she won the backing of Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Elizabeth Warren, among other progressive leaders, and liberals largely united behind her candidacy.

''Progressives have coalesced around Maya Wiley as a candidate. And it is the coalescing that is the reason there is a progressive candidate in No. 2,'' Ms. Wiley said, when asked by reporters to evaluate the performance of left-leaning candidates in the election.

Yet some argued that progressives, faced with several candidates competing for the left-wing mantle, had failed to unite early enough around a single candidate. As the campaigns of Scott M. Stringer and Dianne Morales collapsed, the Working Families Party and other left-leaning groups rescinded endorsements and followed Ms. Ocasio-Cortez to rally behind Ms. Wiley as early voting started.

''Maya managed to move a lot of voters in a relatively short period of time,'' said Sochie Nnaemeka, the New York state director of the Working Families Party. ''As we look to the final results in this mayor's race, I think we feel, overall, there is real progressive ascendancy, and there's a possibility to continue to elect more candidates with a clear anti-establishment, pro-working people viewpoint.''

Some aides and allies of his rivals argue that Mr. Adams evaded the kind of scrutiny that weakened candidates like Mr. Stringer, the city comptroller who stumbled after facing two allegations of sexual misconduct, and Andrew Yang. Others pointed to a deluge of super PAC spending, which largely benefited moderate candidates, including Mr. Adams.

But the strong lead Mr. Adams has in the race also renews questions about the progressive movement's ability to connect with Black and brown voters, particularly older voters who are more conservative on social issues and policing.

Mr. Adams's ***working-class*** background enabled him to connect in a way that was more challenging for Ms. Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio and prominent analyst on MSNBC, some progressive strategists say. Mr. Adams, who barely campaigned in Manhattan, cast himself as a messenger of ***working-class*** anger and frustration with the management of the city.

Rebecca Katz, a strategist who worked for Mr. Stringer, noted that parts of Ms. Ocasio-Cortez's district had supported Mr. Adams, who takes a far more conservative position on the role of the police than the congresswoman.

''Voters are not ideological if you look at how they're looking at their candidates,'' she said. ''You can't look at these results and say it was a referendum on ideology. This is more a story of which candidates are connecting with voters.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/24/nyregion/maya-wiley-progressive-nyc-primary.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/24/nyregion/maya-wiley-progressive-nyc-primary.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Maya Wiley, top, was trailing the more moderate Eric Ad- ams in the mayoral race. Early news was brighter for progres- sives elsewhere, including clockwise from above, Ju- maane Williams (public advo- cate)

Alvin Bragg (Manhattan district attorney)

and Brad Lander (comptroller). (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPHANIE KEITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ELIANEL CLINTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

DEMETRIUS FREEMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 25, 2021

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[***Battle Over Religious Statue Is About More Than Religion***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6741-R5J1-DXY4-X04T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 18, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1215 words

**Byline:** By Julie Bosman and Todd Heisler

**Body**

In Chicago, a Battle Over a Religious Statue Is About Much More Than Religion

We're exploring how America defines itself one place at a time. Two communities in Chicago have seen their future tied to the fate of a beloved religious statue.

CHICAGO -- On a cold Tuesday morning in Chicago, police officers lined an alley on the West Side. Across a chain-link fence, a group of people in parkas paced nervously in a backyard.

Then the officers stepped aside. A three-ton statue wrapped in blue cloths was loaded from the vacant St. Adalbert Church onto the bed of a truck, beginning its slow journey down the alley.

Even shrouded in blankets, the statue had a lifelike quality: It was a replica, still visible in silhouette, of Michelangelo's Pietà, the marbled figure of Mary cradling the body of Jesus.

''Don't take her away!'' shouted Judy Vazquez, one of the people in the backyard, as the statue passed by.

''Alleluia!'' said another protester, Bronislawa Stekala, clutching a rosary of brown wooden beads and raising her fist in anger.

For more than five years, a group of Polish and Latino Catholics from Chicago and its suburbs has been waging a fierce but quixotic fight against the Archdiocese of Chicago.

They first objected to the closure in 2019 of St. Adalbert, a towering brick structure in the Pilsen neighborhood, part of a wave of parish consolidations tied to shrinking attendance and the exorbitant cost of repairing antiquated buildings. Then the group turned its efforts to the statue inside, which was slated to be moved to another Catholic parish, St. Paul, a mile away.

Their mission was about more than the statue. For the Polish members of the group, the church and the statue were monuments to their ancestors and a reminder of their ties to Pilsen, which was once an entry point in Chicago for Polish immigrants. For the Latinos, the fight was to preserve community anchors including churches, as the neighborhood becomes increasingly gentrified and ***working-class*** Mexican families are being forced out by rising rents.

''If they sell the property of St. Adalbert's, it's going to change the fabric of Pilsen,'' Ms. Vazquez said. ''This is unacceptable that they want to sell every piece of church property to developers. The developers will have carte blanche. They're going to continue to develop Pilsen. They'll take the culture away from the neighborhood.''

The Archdiocese of Chicago says the changes reflect reality: The number of weekend churchgoers at St. Adalbert had shrunk to about 200, far less than is needed to sustain a church of its size. And the building required millions in repairs because of its crumbling brick facade, a decades-old problem that was explained in detail to parishioners before St. Adalbert merged with a neighboring parish.

Moving the statue to that parish, also in Pilsen, will give the beloved Pietà a home, the archdiocese said, a place where it can be protected and preserved for the community.

''We understand that change is difficult and many have worshiped at St. Adalbert or have family history with the church,'' Manuel Gonzales, a spokesman for the archdiocese, said in an email. ''We truly hope the small number of former St. Adalbert parishioners, who are among the protesters, will join with their neighbors to help the unification succeed.''

I watched the protesters one morning in November as they gathered for one of their regular prayer sessions in the alley. They drank coffee, shared memories of the church and prayed the rosary with their eyes lowered. Most of the group carried memories of what St. Adalbert was like more than a half-century ago, when it was a thriving parish with a school and a vast convent that was home to dozens of nuns.

Byron Sigcho-Lopez, the alderman who represents Pilsen on the Chicago City Council, stood among the prayer group, recalling all the history of the church and the multicultural effort to save it. In front of St. Adalbert, a faded sign still notes a Mass schedule, with separate services in Polish and Spanish.

''Both communities are trying to save St. Adalbert,'' he said. ''It's a sacred and important site for both communities.''

Mr. Sigcho-Lopez had pushed for a zoning change that would give the community more input into the fate of the church building, should it be sold.

''The objective is to find somebody that could repurpose the building,'' said Raul Serrato, a member of the finance council at St. Paul. ''That's been the difficulty because obviously nobody, including us, wants the building torn down. It's a beautiful structure.''

On the day of the statue's removal, Ms. Vazquez and the other members of her group would not let it leave without a fight.

For weeks, they had waited anxiously, knowing that it could be moved at any time. Then Ms. Vazquez heard on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving that crews had arrived at the church. Members of the group raced over and stood in a backyard, watching for hours as workers took the statue out of the church and loaded it onto a truck.

Stanley Rydzewski, 68, reminisced about baptisms and weddings at St. Adalbert, saying that the building was more than a parish, a repository of vital Polish history.

''Polish people built this church,'' he said. He had long since left his home in the old neighborhood for the suburbs, he said, but was bitter about the slow dismantling of a parish he loved.

After workers removed the statue, the truck turned onto the street in front of the church, headed toward St. Paul. Ms. Vazquez and several other protesters positioned themselves in front of the truck, locking arms and refusing to move.

Julio Delgado, who lives across the street, emerged from his house and shook his head at the commotion.

''The church is a lost cause, the statue is a lost cause, and it's been a lost cause for years,'' said Mr. Delgado, who regularly attended St. Adalbert when it was open.

After an extended standoff, police officers arrested the protesters, and the statue continued its journey to St. Paul church.

One week later, Father Michael Enright, the pastor of St. Paul, opened the door of the rectory and led me into the darkened, silent church.

There was the statue, cut from Carrara marble, in its new perch in front of Gothic arches and stained-glass windows.

He declined to comment on the conflict over the statue; the protest group has been angry with him for years over the closing of St. Adalbert. But he is now the statue's caretaker of sorts, and an unusually qualified one: He happens to be a hobbyist stonecutter who has carved pieces in the church, including a lectern that stands on the altar.

When the Pietà arrived at St. Paul in November, it was covered in dust and dirt from the move. Father Enright carefully vacuumed some of the debris and wiped the statue down with paper towels.

Standing before the marble form of Mary and Jesus, he said he could see why it had inspired such passion and devotion.

''There is something to be said for beauty,'' he said.

Ms. Vazquez cannot bring herself to attend Mass at St. Paul. But she has visited the statue twice in its new home, she said this week, popping in and saying a prayer.

''I was just talking to her, giving her my pain, saying 'Ave Maria,''' she said. ''I just had to be by her.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/17/us/chicago-archdiocese-st-adalbert-statue.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/17/us/chicago-archdiocese-st-adalbert-statue.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A replica of Michelangelo's Pietà, top left, on a truck near St. Adalbert Church in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, top right, which holds significance for the city's Polish and Latino communities. St. Adalbert closed in 2019, but parishioners have held vigils and other events outside, like a celebration of the Virgin of Guadalupe, above.

The three-ton marble statue of Mary and Jesus in its new home, St. Paul church, a mile from St. Adalbert. ''There is something to be said for beauty,'' said the Rev. Michael Enright, the pastor of St. Paul. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD HEISLER/THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A15.

**Load-Date:** December 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[***What Did New York’s Primaries Mean for Progressives? It’s Complicated.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:630D-T3G1-JBG3-62R7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 24, 2021 Thursday 20:45 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1457 words

**Byline:** Lisa Lerer

**Highlight:** Progressives cheered the results in down-ballot races and in Buffalo, even as the outcome of the mayoral primary appeared less rosy.

**Body**

Progressives cheered the results in down-ballot races and in Buffalo, even as the outcome of the mayoral primary appeared less rosy.

They may not win Gracie Mansion, but there’s always Buffalo. And Rochester, too.

For progressives in New York State, primary elections on Tuesday night brought a number of victories, even as the biggest apple of them all — New York City’s mayoralty — may elude their grasp.

Though [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) amassed a sizable lead over Maya D. Wiley, his top rival, in first-choice votes, liberal candidates celebrated victories in down-ballot races in New York City and in the state’s second and third largest cities, wins that they argue demonstrate their ascendancy at the grass-roots level even as they are struggling to flex their power in Washington.

In perhaps the biggest upset of the night, [*India B. Walton*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html), a democratic socialist, defeated a four-term incumbent in the Democratic mayoral primary in Buffalo and cast her victory as a threat to the longtime party establishment.

Ms. Walton had promised to safeguard undocumented immigrants, place a moratorium on new charter schools and cut millions from the Police Department budget by ending the role of officers in most mental health emergency calls.

“This victory is ours. It is the first of many,” said Ms. Walton. “If you are in an elected office right now, you are being put on notice. We are coming.”

As New Yorkers prepare to wait weeks for final results in the mayoral primary while [*absentee ballots are counted and ranked-choice tabulations begin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html), the early returns across the city and state paint a complicated picture. They highlight voters’ embrace of a diverse slate of candidates but reflect generational divides and continued tension as Democrats navigate their identity in the post-Trump era.

While the idiosyncratic politics of deeply Democratic New York City are hardly a bellwether for the nation, the results in the mayoral contest in particular point to a progressive movement still charting its way through the kinds of divisive policy issues that split the Democratic Party during last year’s presidential primary.

Three of the top four candidates in the election ran on more moderate messages than Ms. Wiley, particularly around crime and policing, and were rewarded with support from a diverse coalition that spanned all five boroughs.

But the early news was brighter for progressives elsewhere. Candidates backed by the Working Families Party [*won City Council seats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) in Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx. Jumaane Williams, the city’s public advocate, won [*more than 70 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) of the vote in his primary. [*Brad Lander*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html), a council member from Park Slope, is leading in the primary for city comptroller.

In the Democratic primary for Manhattan district attorney, [*Alvin Bragg*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) was ahead of Tali Farhadian Weinstein, who sank more than $8 million into her own campaign, infuriating liberals because of her spending and ties to Wall Street. Tiffany Cabán, who narrowly lost a race for Queens district attorney in 2019, is leading in a primary for a City Council seat. And Antonio Reynoso, a council member who represents Williamsburg and Bushwick and once cast himself as a “[*boombox for progressive values*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html),” leads the contest for Brooklyn borough president.

In Washington, progressives have found their ambitions curtailed by a razor-thin margin in the Senate and a refusal by moderate Democrats to support eliminating the filibuster.

Voting rights legislation failed this week, prompting concerns from many on the left that President Biden and his administration did not mount a fierce enough push for one of their top priorities. As groups of senators draft dueling infrastructure plans, [*some liberals worry*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) that the administration will jettison proposals to fight climate change and support caregiving in favor of a compromise that can draw Republican support.

And, in recent weeks, liberal candidates have lost a number of competitive primary contests. In Virginia, former Gov. Terry McAuliffe defeated four rivals who ran to his left to capture the nomination. Six weeks earlier, Troy Carter, a Louisiana state senator, defeated a left-leaning rival in a special election for a congressional seat.

In New York, the need to count absentee ballots and a new ranked-choice voting system means the Democratic mayoral primary is unlikely to be called until mid-July. But Mr. Adams, a Black retired police captain and Brooklyn’s borough president, captured a strong lead in first-choice votes, winning every borough except Manhattan and [*showing particular strength*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) in the Bronx and ***working-class*** Black neighborhoods in Brooklyn.

Mr. Adams built his campaign in opposition to the “defund the police movement,” denouncing his liberal rivals for adopting left-wing slogans that he said threatened the lives of “Black and brown babies” [*and were being pushed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html)by “a lot of young white affluent people.”

“I’m not sure that I would necessarily chose New York City as my bellwether for the country, but there’s no doubt that Adams staked his race on a more moderate position,” said David Axelrod, a former top adviser to President Barack Obama. “There are certainly significant pockets of progressivism in metropolitan areas all over the country; it doesn’t necessarily mean that is the dominant political strain.”

As results were tabulated, progressives sought to cast their second-place position as a victory of sorts, one they argued demonstrated their strength in a crowded field.

Ms. Wiley, who trails Mr. Adams by about 75,000 votes, urged her supporters to “wait patiently,” [*arguing that she could pull out an upset victory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) as the counting continues.

In the final weeks of the campaign, she won the backing of Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Elizabeth Warren, among other progressive leaders, and liberals largely united behind her candidacy.

“Progressives have coalesced around Maya Wiley as a candidate. And it is the coalescing that is the reason there is a progressive candidate in No. 2,” Ms. Wiley said, when asked by reporters to evaluate the performance of left-leaning candidates in the election.

Yet some argued that progressives, faced with several candidates competing for the left-wing mantle, had failed to unite early enough around a single candidate. As [*the campaigns of Scott M. Stringer and Dianne Morales collapsed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html), the Working Families Party and other left-leaning groups rescinded endorsements and followed Ms. Ocasio-Cortez to rally behind Ms. Wiley as early voting started.

“Maya managed to move a lot of voters in a relatively short period of time,” said Sochie Nnaemeka, the New York state director of the Working Families Party. “As we look to the final results in this mayor’s race, I think we feel, overall, there is real progressive ascendancy, and there’s a possibility to continue to elect more candidates with a clear anti-establishment, pro-working people viewpoint.”

Some aides and allies of his rivals argue that Mr. Adams evaded the kind of scrutiny that weakened candidates like Mr. Stringer, the city comptroller who stumbled after facing two allegations of sexual misconduct, and Andrew Yang. Others pointed to [*a deluge of super PAC spending*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html), which largely benefited moderate candidates, including Mr. Adams.

But the strong lead Mr. Adams has in the race also renews questions about the progressive movement’s ability to connect with Black and brown voters, particularly older voters who are more conservative on social issues and policing.

Mr. Adams’s ***working-class*** background enabled him to connect in a way that was more challenging for Ms. Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio and prominent analyst on MSNBC, some progressive strategists say. Mr. Adams, who barely campaigned in Manhattan, cast himself as a messenger of ***working-class*** anger and frustration with the management of the city.

Rebecca Katz, a strategist who worked for Mr. Stringer, noted that parts of Ms. Ocasio-Cortez’s district had supported Mr. Adams, who takes a far more conservative position on the role of the police than the congresswoman.

“Voters are not ideological if you look at how they’re looking at their candidates,” she said. “You can’t look at these results and say it was a referendum on ideology. This is more a story of which candidates are connecting with voters.”

PHOTOS: Maya Wiley, top, was trailing the more moderate Eric Ad- ams in the mayoral race. Early news was brighter for progres- sives elsewhere, including clockwise from above, Ju- maane Williams (public advo- cate); Alvin Bragg (Manhattan district attorney); and Brad Lander (comptroller). (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPHANIE KEITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ELIANEL CLINTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DEMETRIUS FREEMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 25, 2021

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[***Why Is There Still No Strategy to Defeat Donald Trump?; David Brooks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66D2-2WF1-JBG3-618Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 15, 2022 Thursday 21:22 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 911 words

**Byline:** David Brooks

**Highlight:** Trump-bashing makes us feel good; it doesn’t turn the tide.

**Body**

One of the stunning facts of the age is the continued prominence of Donald Trump. His candidates did well in the G.O.P. primaries this year. He won more votes in 2020 than he did in 2016. His [*favorability ratings*](https://civiqs.com/results/trump_favorable?uncertainty=true&amp;annotations=true&amp;zoomIn=true&amp;party=Republican) within his party have been high and basically unchanged since late 2016. In a range of polls, some have actually shown Trump leading President Biden in a race for re-election in 2024.

His prominence is astounding because over the past seven years the American establishment has spent enormous amounts of energy trying to discredit him.

Those of us in this establishment correctly identified Trump as a grave threat to American democracy. The task before us was clear. We were never going to shake the hard-core MAGA folks. The job was to peel away independents and those Republicans offended by and exhausted by his antics.

Many strategies were deployed in order to discredit Trump. There was the immorality strategy: Thousands of articles were written detailing his lies and peccadilloes. There was the impeachment strategy: Investigations were launched into his various scandals and outrages. There was the exposure strategy: Scores of books were written exposing how shambolic and ineffective the Trump White House really was.

The net effect of these strategies has been to sell a lot of books and subscriptions and to make anti-Trumpists feel good. But this entire barrage of invective has not discredited Trump among the people who will very likely play the most determinant role. It has probably pulled some college-educated Republicans into the Democratic ranks and pushed some ***working-class*** voters over to the Republican side.

The barrage has probably solidified Trump’s hold on his party. Republicans see themselves at war with the progressive coastal elites. If those elites are dumping on Trump, he must be their guy.

A couple weeks ago, Biden gave a speech in Philadelphia, declaring the MAGA movement a threat to democracy. The speech said a lot of true things about that movement, but there was an implied confession: We have no strategy. Denouncing Trump and discrediting Trump are two different tasks. And if there’s one thing we’ve learned, denunciation may be morally necessary, but it doesn’t achieve the goal the denouncers think it does.

Some commentators argued that Biden’s strategy in the speech was to make Trump the central issue of the 2022 midterms; both Biden and Trump have an interest in making sure that Trump is the sun around which all of American politics revolves.

This week, I talked with a Republican who was incensed by Biden’s approach. He is an 82-year-old émigré from Russia who is thinking of supporting Ron DeSantis in the 2024 primaries because he has less baggage. His parents were killed by the Nazis in World War II. “And now Biden’s calling me a fascist?!” he fumed.

You would think that those of us in the anti-Trump camp would have at one point stepped back and asked some elemental questions: What are we trying to achieve? Who is the core audience here? Which strategies have worked, and which have not?

If those questions were asked, the straightforward conclusion would be that most of what we are doing is not working. The next conclusion might be that there’s a lot of self-indulgence here. We’re doing things that help those of us in the anti-Trump world bond with one another and that help people in the Trump world bond with one another. We’re locking in the political structures that benefit Trump.

My core conclusion is that attacking Trump personally doesn’t work. You have to rearrange the underlying situation. We are in the middle of a cultural/economic/partisan/identity war between more progressive people in the metro areas and more conservative people everywhere else. To lead the right in this war, Trump doesn’t have to be honest, moral or competent; he just has to be seen taking the fight to the “elites.”

The proper strategy in this situation is to scramble the identity war narrative. That’s what Biden did in 2020. He ran as a middle-class moderate from Scranton. He dodged the culture war issues. That’s what the Democratic Senate candidate John Fetterman is trying to do in Pennsylvania.

A Democratic candidate who steps outside the culture/identity war narrative is going to have access to the voters who need to be moved. Public voices who don’t seem locked in the insular educated elite worldview are going to be able to reach the people who need to be reached.

Trumpists tell themselves that America is being threatened by a radical left putsch that is out to take over the government and undermine the culture. The core challenge now is to show by word and deed that this is a gross exaggeration.

Can Trump win again? Absolutely. I’m a DeSantis doubter. I doubt someone so emotionally flat and charmless can win a nomination in the age of intensive media. And then once Trump is nominated, he has some chance of winning, because nobody is executing an effective strategy against him.

If that happens, we can at least console ourselves with that Taylor Swift lyric: “I had a marvelous time ruinin’ everything.”

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Mark Peterson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 15, 2022

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[***How Doctors View Patients With Disabilities; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66W1-7711-JBG3-61PV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 15, 2022 Tuesday 00:06 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 1110 words

**Highlight:** When patients with disabilities receive substandard care. Also: Kari Lake’s defeat; Mike Pence; Ukraine; South African coal; Apple’s betrayal; when to brush.

**Body**

To the Editor:

Re “[*Doctors’ Real Thoughts on Disabled Patients*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/19/health/doctors-patients-disabilities.html)” (Science Times, Oct. 25):

When envisioning barriers to health care, one does not think of the physicians as the barrier. I understand that physicians are tied to a system driven by time constraints and financial incentives, so it’s not shocking that physicians discriminate against those with disabilities. This substantiates the need to re-examine health care reimbursement policies and practices.

Doctors have a legal responsibility to accommodate patients with disabilities and provide equitable care. Evading and denying care is a civil rights violation, a blatant disregard of the Hippocratic oath and a moral failure.

Lindsey Amina

Ewa Beach, Hawaii

The writer is the daughter of a disabled father.

To the Editor:

Let me tell you what my patients with disabilities have taught me over my 25 years of practice so far:

I have learned what a pleasure it is to hop on for a ride with a person who has a body that is one of a kind and is willing to tell you about it.

I have learned that it is downright awesome to watch a woman who has suffered a stroke recover, go to school in her electric wheelchair, get a degree and show us all what a strong, resilient and loving soul she has.

I have learned to be humbled by my many patients who have struggled with trauma, drug abuse and the stress of societal prejudice, and yet have learned to care for themselves and to live life fully, with soul and a sense of humor.

I hope all doctors will be as blessed as I have been to work with such superstars.

Susan Ferguson

Oakland, Calif.

The writer is a primary care doctor in inner-city Oakland.

To the Editor:

How can a doctor adequately treat any patients when, as one put it in your article, they are “seeing patients at a 15-minute clip”?

Who decided that 15 minutes was the amount of time needed to see a patient? I’m betting that insurance companies and money had a lot to do with that decision.

Let’s start there: Many patients, not only those who might be disabled, need more than 15 minutes with a doctor, especially those of us who are older.

What can be done about these arbitrary limits? Why can’t doctors push back?

Connie Knapp

Ossining, N.Y.

Kari Lake’s Well-Deserved Defeat in Arizona

To the Editor:

Re “[*Hobbs Defeats Trump’s Choice to Run Arizona*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/14/us/politics/katie-hobbs-arizona-governor.html)” (front page, Nov. 15):

Kari Lake, like her backer, Donald Trump, has shown herself to be totally unfit to serve in any office of public trust.

As a candidate she did not worry about adhering to the truth. But if she had become governor of Arizona, any form of lying or deception would have been destructive and unacceptable to the state and to the country.

Her defeat was a vital step in the arduous task of keeping our democracy from being systematically poisoned by Mr. Trump and his cohort of election deniers.

Ezra Cohen

Deal, N.J.

Pence? No Thanks.

To the Editor:

“[*Pence Says ‘Reckless’ Tweet by Trump Endangered Him and His Family on Jan. 6*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/14/us/politics/pence-abc-interview-trump.html?searchResultPosition=1)” (news article, Nov. 15) reports that former Vice President Mike Pence has now finally criticized Donald Trump for Jan. 6 in a more forceful and direct fashion than he ever has before.

Well, hello! Mr. Pence now has his book to sell, and it appears that he feels shielded by the rising tide of contempt now directed at Mr. Trump as a result of last week’s elections — further proof that Mr. Pence is a follower and certainly not a leader with a strong sense of self-worth.

What a spineless, oleaginous, obsequious sycophant he is, seemingly devoid of courage, perhaps thinking that he is protected by his pompous religious fervor.

A future president? No way.

C. Richard Brubaker

Novelty, Ohio

Don’t Undercut Ukraine

To the Editor:

Re “[*U.S. Officials Split on Talks for War’s End*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/10/us/politics/biden-ukraine-russia-diplomacy.html?searchResultPosition=2)” (front page, Nov. 11):

Various U.S. and Western officials are dropping not so subtle hints that Ukraine should start plans for negotiating with Russia. This risks undercutting Ukrainian morale and, more important, gives Vladimir Putin hope that the Western support of Ukraine is approaching its limits.

Instead, the West should tell Mr. Putin that if Russia does not immediately stop targeting Ukrainian civilians and basic infrastructure, the West may be unable to restrain Ukraine from attacking inside Russia’s borders and new, stronger sanctions will be imposed. Mr. Putin should not receive any gains from his war of aggression against democracy.

In addition, Biden administration officials should be stopped from airing foreign policy discussions and disagreement in the media.

Ron Kurtz

Alpharetta, Ga.

South African Coal

To the Editor:

Re “[*South Africa Faces an Uphill Battle to Transition From Coal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/08/world/africa/south-africa-coal-cop27-climate.html?searchResultPosition=1)” (news article, Nov. 9):

It’s disheartening that South Africa is focusing on coal as it builds its industrial base. Instead of relying on a dying and polluting industry, it could put its resources into becoming a world-class manufacturer (and user) of solar panels, wind turbines, and energy-efficient appliances and building materials, thereby helping its economy and the planet.

Winnie Boal

Cincinnati

A Betrayal by Apple

To the Editor:

Re “[*China Turning Into a Liability for the iPhone*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/business/apple-china-ymtc.html)” (front page, Nov. 8):

***Working-class*** families have been betrayed by companies like Apple. The manufacturing base in the United States has been the foundation for companies to prosper and be in a position to create valuable new products. Yet Apple, like so many other Silicon Valley companies, undercut American workers by rushing to China and acquiring dirt-cheap labor.

Can American workers assemble iPhones? Can they manufacture computer chips? Of course they can. Shame on Apple and all the companies that see labor as something to subvert and exploit rather than a solid investment in our society and well-being.

We can only hope that next time the Apples of the world will build their empires with American labor.

Daniel Dziedzic

Rochester Hills, Mich.

When to Brush Your Teeth

To the Editor:

Re “[*Is It Better to Brush My Teeth Before or After Breakfast?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/01/well/live/brushing-teeth-breakfast.html)” (Ask Well, Nov. 8):

As a retired dentist who practiced for 48 years, I vote strongly in favor of brushing after breakfast. First of all, if you thoroughly clean your teeth after the last meal or snack of the day (meaning brushing and flossing), there will usually be no “[*morning breath*](https://www.healthline.com/health/morning-breath#What-causes-morning-breath?).”

“Morning breath” is often the result of the bacteria on the teeth working on the food residue lingering on the teeth and excreting the waste products of that metabolism. I always counseled my patients to brush after breakfast to remove the overnight bacteria and remnants of breakfast — especially because they would be unlikely to brush again until bedtime.

Michael Marcus

Silver Spring, Md.

This article appeared in print on page A23.

**Load-Date:** November 16, 2022

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[***Growing Up in the Margins Without Being Marginalized; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y0W-CDT1-JBG3-613D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 17, 2020 Friday 22:40 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1020 words

**Byline:** Penelope Green

**Highlight:** The narrator of Jessica Andrews’s first novel, “Saltwater,” is a university graduate from the ***working class***, trying to find her place in the wider world.

**Body**

SALTWATER

By Jessica Andrews

We first meet Lucy Bailey in a rough stone cottage on the northwest coast of Ireland, although we don’t learn her last name until the final pages of this often gorgeous first novel by [*Jessica Andrews*](http://www.jessica-andrews.com/about). Lucy’s grandfather has died and left his house to Lucy and her mother, Susie, with whom she is newly estranged. Lucy is also newly graduated from a British university, too soon in her estimation. Her years in London have renovated her northern English vowels, taught her to push the ‘‘‘ewk’ out of ‘bewk,’” but they’ve left her wobbly, untethered from her ***working-class*** beginnings. She feels shut out by the city’s predacious, moneyed tribes, battered by its “impenetrable shapes” and “fierce elbows.”

Mother and daughter scour the moldy, vermin-infested cottage together, singing songs by the Ronettes and the Shangri-Las, setting its rotting contents on fire in a spectacular three-day pyre. Then Lucy’s mother flies home, “even though things were still not right between us.” Lucy is too broke to go anywhere else, and anyway the pace of this rural, clannish Donegal village and its raw, stinging climate (along with a salubrious affair) suit her purposes. It’s the right spot from which to look back and interrogate her precarious upbringing, her tricky maternal and paternal legacies.

Broken, unreliable men are the family’s inheritance. Lucy’s grandfather liked to hit the pub after work and then rage once he got home, hurling gravy boats and cans of food while Lucy’s grandmother locked her two daughters in the bathroom or whisked them out of the house to wait out the drink.

Lucy has grown up in the margins, in the taut silences between her mother and her drunken, hapless father, Tom, an erratic wreck of a man whom she nevertheless adores. When he came home in a good mood, singing songs and dancing as her mother worked, elbowing him out of the way as she tried to make tea, Lucy was elated, though it was her mother who, she admits, “was left to tie our shoelaces and wash our dirty clothes, while he drifted in and out on the wind.”

But the catastrophically alcoholic Tom wasn’t the only destabilizing force in the household. Lucy’s brother, Josh, was born with holes in his heart. Mysteriously and magically, they disappeared after a visit to a faith healer, but then Josh was found to be deaf. Although Susie and Lucy learned sign language, Tom signed up for a computer course instead. Later, they used their signing skills to talk around him. Was it safe for Lucy to entreat her father to play or should she “leave him be and let him crawl into bed with a stink in his hair?”

Lucy’s brother was given a cochlear implant, but his disabilities frustrated and inflamed him; his tantrums were operatic and destructive. When he was sent to a special boarding school, he ran away. At home, he smashed his toys while Lucy and her mother hid in the kitchen. “Lovely Lucy,” her mother sighed, “you’re our hope.”

As a teenager, Lucy was precocious, sensuous and questing, shiny with lip gloss and hormones. She wore crop tops and sequined skirts, and loved the triple surges of drugs, drink and dancing, though she was determined to stay on track in school. (She always remembered to pack her sixth-form polo shirt in case a party lasted all night, already an outlier as she picked her way over empty beer bottles and sleeping bodies, ready to make her way to the two buses that would take her to class.)

Her school was another in-between place, stuck in a grim landscape of council houses and high-rise tower blocks with “a big brutalist shopping center where mams pushed prams in velour tracksuits and babies with snotty noses and frilly socks clutched sausage rolls like pasty pastry angels.”

Andrews unspools Lucy’s coming-of-age story in short numbered fragments, prose poems that at first seem random and out of order, but build in a logical sequence all their own. The technique isn’t always successful and the flurry of pop cultural name checks can read like a confounding shorthand — especially the overwhelming array of bands and singers. But more often Andrews’s writing is transportingly voluptuous, conjuring tastes and smells and sounds like her literary godmother, [*Edna O’Brien*](http://www.jessica-andrews.com/about). Lucy notes “the wet sulk of chips” in the school cafeteria; “the sticky hoppy thrill” of breaking open a stolen keg of beer; and how the “posh girl skin” of her university classmates is “expensive and gold,” making her “dizzy with want.”

Adrift in London, Lucy finds herself “full of ideas but they didn’t seem to be the right ones.” Her privileged classmates, with their expensive clothes and Moleskine notebooks, “had quotations pursed between their lips like peregrine fruits.” Inspired by a creative writing assignment, she turns in an essay on Ai Weiwei’s millions of porcelain [*sunflower seeds*](http://www.jessica-andrews.com/about), which she’s seen at the Tate Modern, but the professor gives her an F, scrawling “Your prose is purple” at the top. What does it mean? she asks a new friend. “Haven’t a clue, mate,” the friend replies, stung by her own bad grade.

Andrews, now in her late 20s, is a poet, a podcaster and co-editor of [*The Grapevine*](http://www.jessica-andrews.com/about), a journal dedicated to publishing work by those who have been marginalized in the arts, particularly women, people of color, nonbinary artists and “those who identify as ***working class***.” Like Lucy, she grew up in northern England. She has a deaf brother. She studied English literature at King’s College in London, and, like Lucy, struggled to connect with the experiences of her classmates. It’s her mission, she has said, to tell the stories of ***working-class*** women. That’s a fine undertaking, but what makes her novel sing is its universal themes: how a young woman tries to make sense of her world, and how she grows up.

Penelope Green is a reporter for the Styles section of The Times. SALTWATER By Jessica Andrews 298 pp. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. $26.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Chloe Cushman FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Can Trump Wring More From His White Base?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6122-HP81-JBG3-63PV-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

With President Trump trailing Joseph R. Biden Jr. in Pennsylvania in nearly every poll, his last refuge and perhaps best hope is to maximize the turnout of ***working-class*** white voters.

OLYPHANT, Pa. -- President Trump's narrowing path to victory in Pennsylvania, and the country, runs through small towns like Olyphant, where Dave Mitchko's street might be quieter if not for the large sign he put on his front lawn urging supporters of the president to honk when they pass.

Trump signs are Mr. Mitchko's thing, and his front yard has become something of an informal sign depot for Republicans in greater northeastern Pennsylvania. He estimates that he's given away more than 26,000 signs this year. And his efforts were rewarded by the campaign with tarmac invitations for recent visits to the region by both Mr. Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, as well as a spot driving in the presidential motorcade. Mr. Mitchko wore a suit and a Trumpian red tie for the occasion.

''Your area -- this has always been a Democrat area, and yet the votes for Trump here are through the roof,'' Mr. Trump bragged that August day.

Mr. Trump was right. Mr. Mitchko was among the defectors. A 53-year-old lifelong Democrat who used to work at the local compact-disc factory, which has since shuttered, and who had a lawn-care business until health troubles put him on disability, he voted twice for Barack Obama. For 2020, he registered as a Republican for the first time.

''I opened my eyes,'' Mr. Mitchko explained.

With Mr. Trump trailing Joseph R. Biden Jr. in Pennsylvania in nearly every poll -- a New York Times/Siena College survey last week showed Mr. Trump behind by seven percentage points -- voter registration trends have stood out as a rare bright spot for Republicans in one of the nation's most important battleground states. Since Election Day 2016, Republicans have shrunk the Democratic advantage in Pennsylvania by nearly 200,000 voters, from just over 916,000 to just over 717,000 -- all in a state that Mr. Trump won in 2016 by fewer than 45,000 votes.

Many of those gains have been made in smaller, more rural and mostly white counties. The great unknown is how much of that movement consists of ancestral Democrats like Mr. Mitchko who voted for Mr. Trump in 2016, formalizing their departure from the party, and how much is fresh erosion.

Olyphant was once ''solid blue,'' Mr. Mitchko said. ''But it's definitely cracked now.'' Across the street, his neighbor, who said he had recently switched to become a Republican, was packing his truck for a cornhole tournament and bringing along his four-by-eight-foot Trump sign.

As Mr. Trump's disregard for science and health guidelines during the pandemic has increasingly repelled college-educated white voters, the president's last refuge and perhaps best hope is to maximize the turnout of ***working-class*** white voters, including former Democrats like Mr. Mitchko, whose regular Facebook postings showcase his full embrace of the culture wars of the Trump era.

On the wall of the garage where he stores the Trump signs, Mr. Mitchko has affixed the hate mail he has received (''Dear American turncoat,'' reads one piece). And on a recent Saturday, his newly purchased assault rifle was prominently displayed, too, along with the Glock pistol he said he carried with him for protection.

''I'm not worried about nobody. They better be worried,'' Mr. Mitchko said. Who exactly are ''they''? ''From what they say on TV, the Black Lives Matter people, rioters, the looters.''

What makes Pennsylvania, and its trove of 20 Electoral College votes, particularly alluring to the Trump campaign is just how many eligible white voters there are who are not college educated and who did not cast ballots in 2016 but could do so this year.

That number is about 2.4 million, according to Dave Wasserman, an elections analyst at the nonpartisan Cook Political Report who studies demographic data. Comparatively, he estimated that only about 500,000 college-educated white people who were eligible to vote in Pennsylvania failed to cast ballots in 2016.

''The potential for Trump to crank up the intensity of turnout among non-college whites is quite high,'' Mr. Wasserman said. According to his model, that demographic broke two to one for Mr. Trump in 2016: two million backed Mr. Trump and one million voted for Hillary Clinton.

Now, Mr. Wasserman said, ''There is a level of cultural attachment to Trump in places that voted for him last time that exceeds 2016.''

Mr. Trump still faces significant headwinds in Pennsylvania. Recent polling shows Mr. Trump's strength dipping among those voters compared with four years ago, despite the famous intensity of his supporters. In three Pennsylvania polls in the last week, Mr. Trump's support among white voters without college degrees landed at 52 percent, 57 percent and 58 percent -- all below the 64 percent he won in 2016, according to Pennsylvania exit polling. Then there is the fact that the overall share of the white population that doesn't go to college is declining, as more people get college degrees and more diversity comes to the state's cities.

''He's going after a population that's shrinking,'' said William Frey, a demographer at the Brookings Institution, who has produced similar models. ''He just has to eke out even more of them than he did last time.''

In 2004, when President George W. Bush ran for re-election, ***working-class*** whites voted at higher rates in Pennsylvania than they did in 2016, Mr. Frey noted. He estimated that if turnout increased to 2004 levels, that would add about 130,000 more such voters this year.

''It's a small path,'' Mr. Frey said of Mr. Trump's chances. ''But it's possible.''

John Yudichak, a moderate state senator from northeastern Pennsylvania, is among those who have left the Democratic Party in the Trump era. He became an independent in late 2019 and now caucuses with the Republicans in the State Capitol, even as he supports Mr. Biden. But Mr. Yudichak warned of his former party's drift from its ***working-class*** roots to become ''a party of the elite.''

''Politics is math,'' Mr. Yudichak said. ''If the Democratic Party is only going to be of the college-educated elite,'' he said, noting that nearly 90 percent of those in his district have attained only a high school education, ''the math doesn't work. You're going to lose a lot of elections.''

Luzerne County, at the center of Mr. Yudichak's district, is one of three Pennsylvania counties that Mr. Trump flipped in a dramatic fashion in 2016, carrying it by 19 percentage points -- only four years after Mr. Obama had carried it by almost five points.

''Trump -- I don't know how he did it,'' Mr. Yudichak said. ''He was able to connect and sincerely make people believe here in Luzerne County that he valued them.''

In small county after small county, Mr. Trump won in 2016 by staggeringly large margins. In neighboring Schuylkill County, where Republicans had previously carried 56 percent of the vote, Mr. Trump won with 69.4 percent.

The Trump campaign keeps a close tally on these figures. A campaign presentation in September noted that Mr. Trump's margin over Mrs. Clinton in Pennsylvania's 45 smallest counties was 230,000 more votes than the G.O.P. advantage in 2012.

''He can take a red county and make it even more intensely red -- it's remarkable,'' said Senator Bob Casey, Democrat of Pennsylvania, who vividly recalled watching the early 2016 returns and wrongly believing that the Democratic margins in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh would be enough to carry the state.

Mr. Casey has since memorized the exact number of votes that Mrs. Clinton lost by: 44,292. ''I wanted that number to haunt me,'' he said.

The flip side of Mr. Trump's strength in more rural areas, Mr. Casey said, is that Democrats are winning the suburbs, particularly those outside Philadelphia, by bigger margins than ever. Mr. Casey said he had won those suburbs in his 2018 re-election by more than double Mr. Obama's margin in 2012. ''Not because I'm the greatest candidate God ever created,'' he said. ''It's because people were damn angry.''

How much of Mr. Trump's strength among white ***working-class*** voters was simply a rejection of Mrs. Clinton rather than an embrace of Mr. Trump is one of the questions that 2020 will help answer. But there are many signs that deep animosity toward Mrs. Clinton played a critical role.

Mr. Yudichak said one run-in at the State Capitol with a Trump supporter was seared in his memory:

''He said, 'Look, Hillary Clinton and the Democratic Party make me feel bad about myself. Donald Trump makes me feel good about who I am. I only have a high school education, but I got a good union job. I go to work every day. Why am I a bad guy? Hillary's calling me deplorable.'''

In Mr. Biden, the Democrats have nominated a candidate whom David Axelrod, the former chief strategist for Mr. Obama, likes to call ''culturally inconvenient'' for Mr. Trump: a Scranton-born politician who has long emphasized his blue-collar roots, no matter that it has been nearly a half-century since his election to the Senate.

Of late, Mr. Biden has geographically located his pitch in northeastern Pennsylvania, framing the 2020 election as a choice between ''Scranton and Park Avenue.'' He first unfurled the line at a televised town hall not far from his hometown last month, and it quickly became a favorite.

''I will win Scranton,'' Mr. Biden told reporters on the tarmac that night. ''This is home. I know these people.''

In nearby Olyphant, Lauren Telep, 64, a rare lifelong Republican in these parts, stopped by Mr. Mitchko's house for a refill on signs and marveled at her hometown's transformation. Not so long ago, the politics here had been so blue that she said, ''God, the Almighty, if he ran on the Republican ticket in this town -- at one point was probably like 90 percent Catholic -- he would still lose.''

Political strategists of both parties say it is less about winning particular cities and instead about limiting the losses in hostile territory and running up the margins in favored strongholds.

Mr. Casey, who lives in Scranton, said he was confident that Mr. Biden's local roots would help him ''shave two points here, three points there'' from Mr. Trump's margins. But he also said that the Democratic Party faced a backlash in his home region for its necessary and worthwhile devotion to diversity -- its messaging this year on racial justice and policing as Mr. Trump has executed a campaign of white grievance.

''One consequence of being a party that wants to embrace diversity is you're going to lose -- you're going to lose white voters,'' Mr. Casey said. ''I think that's just a reality.''

Andy Mills and Alix Spiegal contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/11/us/politics/trump-white-base-pennsylvania.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/11/us/politics/trump-white-base-pennsylvania.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Dave Mitchko, who used to work at a compact-disc factory, at home in Olyphant, Pa. He voted twice for Barack Obama before supporting President Trump in 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HANNAH YOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

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**End of Document**



[***For Dua Lipa, Just Being a Pop Star Isn’t Enough***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68WG-8DG1-DXY4-X4HP-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Though the singer has maintained a strict line between her music and her private life, she’s leveraging her personal passions in a bid to become a media mogul.

**Body**

Though the singer has maintained a strict line between her music and her private life, she’s leveraging her personal passions in a bid to become a media mogul.

LET’S GET THIS out of the way: Dua Lipa is finishing her third album. It’s due for release in 2024 and, despite the trend of musicians announcing and delaying records for years, Lipa will almost certainly meet her deadline. It’s funny to think of a pop star — or any successful young artist — as just another striving professional. But at 27, Lipa has already become the kind of multihyphenate entrepreneur who not only finishes her assignments on time but discusses strategy and efficiency with the clarity of a company founder delivering a TED Talk. “If I wasn’t as organized as I am, I would be a mess right now,” she says when we meet one drizzly May afternoon in London. The singer had asked one of her favorite restaurants, Sushi on Jones, hidden on the second floor of a King’s Cross concert venue, to open before dinner so we could have the place to ourselves, then arrived 10 minutes early to make sure everything was as planned.

A lot happened in March 2020, so you probably won’t recall that Lipa’s second album, “Future Nostalgia,” [*leaked at the beginning of the lockdowns*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/07/arts/music/dua-lipa-future-nostalgia-coronavirus.html), denying her the precise rollout she’d spent many months finessing, postponing her international tour . . . and unintentionally cementing her as the leading pop star of the pandemic. Her barrage of shimmery singles — music for “dance crying,” as she describes it — later established her as the only female artist with two albums that have surpassed 10 billion streams on Spotify.

The next record will still be pop, she says, lest her “fans have a meltdown.” She doesn’t want to “alienate” them, although she’s developing a new sound that may be informed less by the house and disco beats beneath songs like “[*Physical*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HDEHj2yzew)” and “[*Hallucinate*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcZ7e9EOQTY)” than by 1970s-era psychedelia. She’s working with a smaller group of songwriting collaborators, supposedly including Kevin Parker of the Australian psych-rock band Tame Impala, a rumor she all but confirms by denying: “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” she says, then looks away and laughs a little. Lipa’s dressed — almost studiously — in pop star-off-duty drag: Ugg slip-ons, baggy white jeans, an old Elton John T-shirt, a few diamond-encrusted hoops in each ear.

She can come across as guarded, a little aloof, cool but not necessarily cold, which could be the way she’s been her whole life — or the result of having become globally famous during a period of deep isolation. She lacks the impulse, so common among people her age, to make unnecessary small talk or feign friendliness in order to appear likable. Instead, she remains assiduously on message, implying several times that she feels that journalists are usually trying to trap her or tease out information before she’s ready to share it. “Especially being in the public eye, someone’s always waiting for you to trip or fail or whatever,” she tells me. During our meal, which was arranged to last 90 minutes and ends exactly on time, “whatever” is one of the words she uses most, in a way that makes her sound wary of having to narrativize her own life.

But she’s particularly taciturn about the forthcoming album because it’s still in development — a process that’s “insular and exciting,” she says, even if “you have no idea what the reaction is going to be once it’s out, so there’s this nervous feeling” — but also because there’s so much else she prepared to discuss today: not herself, not the music, but the other elements comprising Lipa’s unusual plan for longevity, something she’s been working toward since she was 5, when she used to lead her classmates in schoolyard dance routines.

AFTER HER TOUR concluded last November, Lipa arrived in London and began focusing on several non-music projects, as well as cooking and relaxing in the house she’s renovating in North London, near where she was raised by a pair of Albanian immigrants, Dukagjin and Anesa Lipa. They’d fled Kosovo in 1992, during the conflicts in the region, then eventually returned to Pristina, the capital; four years after that, they let their eldest daughter (Dua, whose name means “love” in Albanian) move back to England by herself when she was 15, where she briefly modeled and began to pursue music: Two years later, after appearing in a [*2013 commercial*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wB2QICuUcPs) for “The X Factor,” she signed with Ben Mawson, Lana Del Rey’s manager.

Here in London — where her parents, younger brother (Gjin, 17) and sister (Rina, 22, an up-and-coming model) also live again — she enjoys eating vegetable samosas at Gymkhana and drinking orange wine at Westerns Laundry. Among her friends, who predate her fame and, she says, “ignore me in my own kitchen,” she’s the one who plans birthday dinners and trips. Many of these restaurants and destinations end up in [*Service95*](https://www.service95.com/), the arts and culture newsletter she launched in February of last year after wanting a place to write about the bakeries, bookstores and other venues she’d been keeping lists of since she was a teenager.

On the Covers

She’s currently recording a third season of her podcast, “Dua Lipa: At Your Service,” an accompaniment to Service95, for which Lipa interviews fellow artists like the singer Billie Eilish and the actor Dan Levy; queer activists like Brandon Wolf, who fights for gun reform after having survived the 2016 shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Fla.; and writers like [*Min Jin Lee*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/07/books/review/min-jin-lee-writer.html) and [*Esther Perel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/26/business/esther-perel-couples-therapy.html) (as well as Hanya Yanagihara, this magazine’s editor in chief). She finishes each conversation by asking for a list of recommendations, whether that’s Los Angeles restaurants (Levy) or activists to follow (Wolf); her hope, she says, is to be of service to her readers and listeners, many of whom were likely born around 1995, when she was, hence the name. Earlier this summer, she created a Service95 book club; Douglas Stuart’s “[*Shuggie Bain*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/books/douglas-stuart-shuggie-bain.html)” (2020), a gay coming-of-age story set in ***working-class*** Glasgow, was her first pick. Lipa also released a fashion collection that she co-designed with Donatella Versace, full of butterfly-print bikinis and floral stretch dresses. Its theme was La Vacanza, Italian for “vacation,” mirroring Lipa’s dominant, if slightly ironic, aesthetic on Instagram, where it looks like all she ever does is relax by a pool.

Not long after, she’d appear as a mermaid in Greta Gerwig’s “Barbie,” a fitting acting debut, given that it’s based on a doll who’s a former teenage fashion model and, in a single afternoon, bounces between her many demanding professions. “I don’t even want to show you my phone, because I’m embarrassed about it, but it’s really down to the minute: where I’m going, what I’m doing,” Lipa tells me, then opens her calendar app, frowns and eventually turns the screen in my direction. “Wake up, glam, prep for podcast,” she says, scrolling through a day of appointments. “I have to watch ‘Succession,’ so I’ve got to schedule that,” she adds, pointing at the 7 p.m. slot, which is also when she’ll eat dinner. She even plans her showers, wherever she can fit them in. “For as long as I’m having fun, I’m going to keep making music,” she says. “But why can’t I do other things that I love, too?”

IF THE DREAM of pop stardom is far-fetched for all but a few, the musical aspect of Lipa’s empire is, oddly, the least unique thing about it: With her husky voice and relatably imperfect dance moves, she releases catchy, inspirational who-needs-men anthems in collaboration with some of the world’s greatest audio minds and businesspeople. All of them have chosen to put millions of dollars into manufacturing and promoting her earwormy singles not only because she’s talented and beautiful and has good sonic instincts but also because she is — unlike most of her predecessors and peers — admittedly, almost defiantly, not sloppy. “I’ve probably spent more time waiting for artists to show up in the studio than I have working with artists,” says Mark Ronson, the 47-year-old record producer who has made two singles with Lipa, including “[*Dance the Night*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OiC1rgCPmUQ)” from this summer. “If she’s two minutes late — literally, if it’s 12:02 — there’s a text: ‘Sorry, running five minutes late.’ That’s not superstar behavior, you know? She still works with the mind-set that she hasn’t [made it] yet.” Lipa’s particularly good at editing, he adds, at tediously working and reworking a chorus or melody. She’s comfortable making decisions quickly and multitasking: Sometimes while she’s onstage doing her choreography, she says, she’s also thinking about what she’s going to eat afterward.

Pop, like all genres of creative expression, is more commercialized than ever. The musicians themselves are [*making less and less money*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/arts/music/streaming-music-payments.html), and those who grew up listening to artists like Britney Spears, Whitney Houston and Amy Winehouse (whom Lipa’s soulful raspiness sometimes summons) have clearly internalized the tragic lessons of those lives and careers. As women in a field driven by sex appeal — it’s no accident that Lipa announced her book club with some swimsuit selfies — they learn early on that people are constantly trying to use them. The smart ones, then, become alert to opportunities to diversify their portfolios and work their way to a kind of moguldom that outlasts radio trends. They grapple with the fact that popular music is a cat-and-mouse game, in which singers must switch up their sound often (while never straying too far from their original persona); refrain from releasing records too frequently so that their fans don’t get bored; and yet recognize, even then, that the audience and the industry might still discard them once they’re in their 30s.

Rihanna, who hasn’t released an album since 2016, has her multibillion-dollar Fenty Beauty line; Ariana Grande will soon star as Glinda in Universal’s “Wicked” juggernaut. Lipa, who has filed trademarks for merchandise including cosmetics and will appear next year in the spy film “Argylle,” has made inroads in both of those directions; watching her and her cohorts’ shared trajectory, you get the sense that they’re expanding into other realms as early and as widely as they can, in part to guarantee their ubiquity but also to ensure against obsolescence. But with her multipronged pursuits (most of which fall under the banner of Service95, “the ultimate cultural concierge,” according to its tag line), Lipa’s approach is distinct in that she’s leading with ideas and information, not products, curating culture in addition to contributing to it. What began as a minimally designed newsletter created with a few former magazine editors — the issues are free and the first one featured short pieces about South African house music and the Irish disability advocate and writer Sinéad Burke — has since grown to accommodate YouTube cooking videos, live book talks with authors (hosted by Lipa) and reported series dedicated to such topics as men’s mental health and the spiking crisis in London, where young people are unknowingly being drugged by strangers at bars.

Service95 represents who Lipa is “behind closed doors,” she says, a space where discussions around trans liberation are as common as those about jewelry and yoga. Though she’s a young, ambitious millennial, the content reflects the very Gen Z belief that all art and culture must be motivated by social justice and that all artists must talk about their ethics and values (at least those deemed palatably progressive) in all contexts and environments. “My intention is never to be political … but there’s a political bent to my existence,” Lipa says. “The easiest thing you can do is just hide away and not have an opinion about anything.” The singer is nevertheless cautious about how she lets her contributors use this microphone. She knows she’s the one who would face repercussions if a problem arose, so she approves every story herself and leads weekly editorial meetings. If it continues to grow, Service95 might one day replace the glossy, feminist-leaning fashion magazines of the 2000s; right now, it’s reminiscent of the chatty, lo-fi publications that the aughts-era blogger [*Tavi Gevinson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/06/t-magazine/tavi-gevinson-on-rookie-magazine-and-growing-up.html) offered young fans with “Rookie” before becoming an actress.

“I think it’s a marketing tool: How confessional can you be?” she says. “I also don’t put so much of my life out there for people to dig into the music in this weird, analytical way.”

Lipa, however, has taken the reverse course: Rather than amassing enough access and power within media to eventually jettison the industry for something more glamorous, she’s using her celebrity to expose her readers to everything she’s witnessing from her perch. “The world is really big, and maybe things don’t get to your [corner], so it’s a way of bringing everything together,” she says. This is a canny strategy, for it implies that Lipa’s a normal woman who just hustled her way into an abnormally charmed life while somehow staying grounded. It also makes her seem generous, despite the occasional tone-deaf moment, as when she wrote last November that she “saves up” to go shopping at Amore, the Tokyo vintage luxury handbag emporium.

Among famous women turned media mavens, a category that has recently grown to include the talk show hosts Drew Barrymore and Kelly Clarkson, Lipa’s closest analog might be Gwyneth Paltrow, although Goop is much larger and more lucrative than Service95. Lipa won’t share audience metrics, but she does plan to bring some readers together at a forthcoming event series that will focus on food, wine and books. (“Like Oprah?” I ask, but she shrugs off the comparison: “We don’t really have Oprah [in London].”) She’s more inspired by Reese Witherspoon, the actress best known for playing Type A go-getters like [*Tracy Flick*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/01/movies/tracy-flick-reese-witherspoon.html) in “Election” (1999) who later became one of the first celebrities to launch her [*own book club*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/10/books/review/inside-the-list-celebrity-book-clubs.html), partly to create a pipeline of women-centered stories that her company could option for film and television. Maybe Lipa will do something like that, she tells me, but she hasn’t thought of a model “to base Service95 on, which is cool because then it can be its own thing,” she adds, sounding like the content executive she’s becoming. “I’ve found being in the media this way very encouraging.”

She is, after all, a woman about whom many things have been written who now gets to write the story herself. In the newsletter, this takes the form of a short, paragraph-long editor’s letter. But on the podcast, the third season of which is now running weekly in partnership with the BBC, Lipa’s more present. Before speaking with each of her guests in conversations that can last an hour or longer, she says she does four or five days of research; Lisa Taddeo, a 43-year-old journalist who published the nonfiction sex narrative “Three Women” in 2019, told me the singer was among the most natural interviewers she’s talked to, “impeccably prepared, yet off book in the most conversational way.” What Lipa’s doing is different than journalism, though, if only because, as she admits, she avoids bringing up anything that might make her interviewees uncomfortable. She typically deflects inquiries about herself in favor of gathering advice from her subjects, who seem to open up in these conversations; it’s easy to forget that they’re speaking with another artist rather than any other geekily inquisitive host.

Last September, Monica Lewinsky went on the show, where she discussed the Clinton sex scandal and how she recovered from her despair. She was nearly “publicly humiliated to death,” she says, after which Lipa lets out a heavy sigh. “Something that really struck me was how feminists agonized over you,” Lipa responds. “Whether you were using your own agency. Were you a victim? And I really wonder how this has evolved, and how this experience has defined your own relationship with the feminist movement because, for me, it completely blew me away that feminism then isn’t how we know it now, and maybe abuse of power wasn’t at the top of the list.”

“It was your generation,” Lewinsky later reminds her, “that insisted on re-evaluating my story.” After their conversation, Lipa decided that the interviews in the third season should each be dedicated to a single topic, much like Lewinsky’s was centered on shame and healing. For the first episode, which premiered in June, the singer made what felt like a self-referential gambit: She invited on the English YouTuber [*Amelia Dimoldenberg*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/26/style/chicken-shop-date-amelia-dimoldenberg.html), the host of the series “Chicken Shop Date” — in which she awkwardly interviews actresses like Jennifer Lawrence and Keke Palmer in a fast-food restaurant — to discuss “how to grow your empire and build your brand,” as Lipa says in her editor’s note announcing the episode. Dimoldenberg’s advice: “Especially for women … you feel like you have to please everyone, you have to come across a certain type of way where you’re not being a diva,” to which Lipa murmurs in agreement. “Believe in your idea,” Dimoldenberg adds. “That’s the most important thing.”

EVEN IF LIPA can do all of this, the question remains: Why? Obviously, she could fill her days just being a massively successful musician. But a few weeks after our lunch, she tells me over the phone that she would be “doing a disservice” to herself if she weren’t “exploring all the things [she] loved and wanted to share.” It’s similar to other explanations she’s given me: She likes “being thrown into the deep end” and acquiring new skills, above all those that are “aligned” with her “activism and love of reading.” She’s been interested in media since high school, especially after her father got a master’s degree in journalism when he returned to Kosovo. (He became her manager last year after she parted ways with Mawson.) She wants to honor the sacrifices her parents made; these various gigs satisfy “what’s maybe the immigrant mentality … this thing I have in my head where I know that, if I don’t work hard enough, the rug could just be pulled from under my feet.” If the music stops bringing in audiences, maybe these other enterprises will.

She never says that last part; she probably never would. She also doesn’t say what I think is the real answer, which is this: Anyone who works in media can tell you that there’s no better way to lead the conversation without ever having to actually talk about yourself. While Lipa’s editorial initiative may seem like an act of self-exposure, it’s in fact one of self-protection — it allows her to connect regularly with her audience by sharing her favorite Spanish wine, the public art installations she enjoyed visiting in rural Japan, the causes or activists or artists she cares about. Sharing a lifestyle, however, is different than sharing a life.

During the rare instances when she has to address something more intimate, her own outlets are the ideal way to disseminate the message. After DaBaby, a rapper featured on a remix of her song “Levitating,” was videotaped making homophobic comments at a 2021 music festival, Lipa wrote a statement on Instagram, where she has 88.6 million followers, renouncing him and encouraging her fans to fight the stigma around H.I.V./AIDS. That sort of direct communication “was something artists didn’t have before,” she says. “Whatever was said about you in the press, that was it: That’s who you are.”

In 2021, an organization founded by the American Orthodox rabbi Shmuley Boteach ran a full-page ad in The New York Times accusing Lipa of antisemitism after she defended Palestinian human rights. Her representatives asked the paper’s leaders to apologize, but they didn’t. For more than two years, Lipa has turned down all coverage opportunities in The Times. Then she convinced Dean Baquet, the newspaper’s former executive editor, to come on her podcast last December. When she brought up the controversy, he had little to say about the company’s decisions (he still works here), explaining the church-and-state divisions between editorial and advertising departments. To her, the exchange went as anticipated: “It was enough for me to voice it to the guy at the top,” and she could then move on from something that had bothered her for years.

All these decisions are hers to make, of course — she owes the public no more or no less than she chooses. Still, it’s interesting, novel even, to watch a celebrity build a brand off her own interests and obsessions, rather than allow her private life to become an interest and obsession of others. Since the dawn of Madonna, we’ve expected pop stars (and indeed all female artists) to bare all — to reference their mental health struggles (Lady Gaga) or their partners’ cheating scandals (Beyoncé) — only to judge and punish them for doing so. Lipa refuses to engage on that level. Her music, too, avoids the strange dissonance of other female artists (Taylor Swift; Adele) who’ve achieved success by exposing everyday secrets and sadnesses, only to find themselves stuck looping those same narratives now that their lives aren’t so relatable. Lipa won’t sing about those kinds of [*Easter eggs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/13/t-magazine/easter-eggs-taylor-swift.html): “I think it’s a marketing tool: How confessional can you be?” she says. “I also don’t put so much of my life out there for people to dig into the music in this weird, analytical way.”

The next album will be “more personal,” she offers, but that’s not why she’s doing it. Two days before we’d met for sushi, Lipa had been rewatching “[*How Can You Mend a Broken Heart*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/11/movies/the-bee-gees-how-can-you-mend-a-broken-heart-review.html),” the 2020 documentary about the Bee Gees, “just bawling my eyes out,” she says, with her boyfriend, Romain Gavras, a 42-year-old French Greek film director. (Tellingly, her relationship with Gavras is the only thing her publicist asked that I not bring up myself.) In the film, someone talks about “music that just makes your body feel good,” she explains. “Those are the songs I get attached to — that’s the kind of feeling I want to convey.” Already, she’s proved herself adept as a singer in conjuring those sorts of sensations. But as she keeps talking, I notice that the ordinary gesture of recommending a film I haven’t seen is making her feel good, too. “You should definitely watch it,” she says, interrupting her thoughts about her own music. “It’s amazing. I cry every time.”

Hair by Rio Sreedharan. Makeup by Samantha Lau. Set design by Afra Zamara for Second Name. Production: Farago Projects. Manicurist: Michelle Humphrey for LMC Worldwide. Photo assistants: Daniel Rodriguez Serrato, Enzo Farrugia, Hermine Werner. Set designer’s assistants: Tatyana Rutherston, Viola Vitali, Oualid Boudrar. Tailor: Sabrina Gomis Vallée. Stylist’s assistants: Martí Serra, Alexis Landolfi, Anna Castellano

PHOTOS: The pop star Dua Lipa, photographed in Paris on May 25, 2023, wears a Gucci coat (with brooch), $12,900, pants, $5,200, sunglasses, $695, and shoes, $1,250, gucci.com; andSkims bra, $34, skims.com. Alaïa dress, $3,320, and scarf, $4,090, maison-alaia.com/us; Skims bra; Stuart Weitzman shoes, $495, stuartweitzman.com; her own earrings; and stylist’s own underwear. Hair by Rio Sreedharan for the Wall Group. Makeup by Samantha Lau. Set design by Afra Zamara for Second Name. Production: Farago projects. MANICURIST: MICHELLE HUMPHREY for LMC WORLDWIDE. Photo assistants: DANIEL RODRIGUEZ SERRATO, ENZO FARRUGIA, HERMINE WERNER. SET DESIGNER’s ASSISTANTS: TATYANA RUTHERSTON, VIOLA VITALI, OUALID BOUDRAR. TAILOR: SABRINA GOMIS VALLÉE. Stylist’s assistants: MARTí SERRA, ALEXIS LANDOLFI, ANNA CASTELLANO (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUIS ALBERTO RODRIGUEZ; STYLED BY CARLOS NAZARIO) This article appeared in print on page M2123, M2124, M2125, M2126, M2127.

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**End of Document**



[***5 Great Things Biden Has Already Done***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:615W-C991-DXY4-X3HH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 30, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 31

**Length:** 1006 words

**Byline:** By David Brooks

**Body**

We're learning not to underestimate the guy.

Many of our best presidents have been underestimated. Truman was seen as the tool of a corrupt political machine. Eisenhower was supposedly a bumbling middlebrow. Grant was thought a taciturn simpleton. Even F.D.R. was once considered a lightweight feather duster.

I've been reading Joe Biden's speeches and I'm beginning to think even his supporters are underestimating him.

He's walking across treacherous cultural ground, confronting conflicts that are shredding the nation, and he's mastering them with ease.

Biden is campaigning in a country that has lost faith in itself. Sixty-six percent of Americans believe our nation is in decline, according to a study from the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture.

He's also running in the middle of a political and cultural civil war. Eighty-two percent of Biden voters believe that ''Donald Trump would like to gradually transform our country into a dictatorship,'' according to that I.A.S.C. study. Ninety percent of Trump voters believe that the Democrats want to gradually turn America into a socialist country. According to a survey conducted by Braver Angels, a group that sponsors bipartisan conversations, 70 percent of Americans believe that if the ''wrong'' candidate wins, ''America will not recover.''

Biden is campaigning in a land filled with fear, hatred and apocalyptic thinking. It would be so easy for him to reflect that fear and hate back to voters. That's what Trump does.

But Biden is not doing that. Never in my life have I seen a candidate so confidently avoid wedge issues. Biden is instead running on the conviction that, despite it all, Americans deeply love their country, and viscerally long for its unity. He's running with the knowledge that when you ask America about the greatest threats to our future, ''political polarization and divisiveness'' comes out No. 1.

It's easy to say you're for healing division. But here's what Biden has actually done:

He's de-ideologized this election. He's made the campaign mostly about dealing with Covid-19. That's a practical problem, not an ideological one. Conservatives and moderates don't have to renounce their whole philosophy to vote for him. They can just say they're voting for the person who can take care of this.

He's separated politics from the culture war. Over the past generation, culture war issues have increasingly swallowed our politics. Trump has put this process into overdrive. He barely talks about policies. Instead, his every subject is really about why ''our'' identity group is better than ''their'' identity group.

So now the positions people take -- on issues ranging from climate change to immigration -- are determined by whether they see themselves as part of the rural white Christian conservative army or part of the urban multicultural secular progressive army. Policies are no longer debated discretely; they are just battles in one big, existential fight over who we are.

But Biden goes back to the New Deal, to an era of policymaking when there really wasn't a polarized culture war. He sidesteps the Kulturkampf issues -- which statues to take down -- to simply talk about helping the middle class.

Biden has scrambled the upscale/downscale dynamic. The most important fissure in our politics is education levels. The Democratic Party's greatest long-term challenge is that it might become the party of the highly credentialed college-educated class and let some future Republican rally a multiracial ***working-class*** coalition. Even Trump is now making surprising gains among Latino and Black men.

Biden has avoided all the little microaggressions that cultural elites use to show they are morally superior. Wokeness, for example, is partly about fighting oppression, but it's also become a status symbol. It's showing people that you are so intellectually evolved that you can use words like intersectionality, decolonizing and cultural appropriation. Political correctness is not just a means for the less privileged to set standards of behavior; it is also sometimes the way people with cultural power push others around.

Unlike, say, Hillary Clinton, Biden has a worldview and a manner that is both educated class and ***working class*** and defuses the divide.

Biden has avoided the stupid binaries about race. Donald Trump went to Mount Rushmore and made a speech essentially saying you can either believe in systemic racism or you can love America. Biden went to Gettysburg and argued that you can ''honestly face systemic racism'' and love America. He argued that you can believe in fighting racism and believe in law and order. His worldview is based on universal categories -- the things we share -- not identitarian ones -- the ways we supposedly can't understand each other across difference.

He's done a good job reaching out to white evangelicals. Right now, many of them think he's a godless socialist who will usher in a reign of anti-religious terror. In his campaign he's done a pretty good job reaching out to those voters. His campaign has run ads on Christian radio and reached out aggressively to evangelical leaders. If he can allay their cultural fears (by making it clear he will not shut down Christian charitable groups) and win them over with ***working-class*** economic policies, he can create a long-term governing majority.

Seventy percent of Americans in that Braver Angels survey say America is facing permanent harm, but 70 percent also say the most important job after the election is to heal our enmity, to do the hard job of working with people whose views we find completely objectionable. This unity impulse is powerful in the populace, but it is deeply hidden.

Joe Biden knew it was there.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 30, 2020

**End of Document**



[***New Housing? The West Side Says Bring It On.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:673J-X7X1-DXY4-X2NS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 16, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 13

**Length:** 1333 words

**Byline:** By Mihir Zaveri

**Body**

Local groups are known for opposing new development. But amid a housing shortage, one community board representing parts of Manhattan's West Side wants to see a lot more.

Few obstacles to new housing loom as large as powerful neighbors who dislike the idea of new construction. And few residents can be quite as loud or influential as New York City's community boards, which have a reputation for giving priority to a neighborhood's character and pushing back on new development.

With the city confronting a staggering housing crisis, however, members of one community board are pursuing an unusual path: calling for the construction of more homes in their community.

Their plan, formally announced on Thursday, would create 23,000 new homes, including roughly 1,400 affordable for lower-income New Yorkers, across a swath of Manhattan's West Side. The area, stretching from 14th Street to Columbus Circle, includes diverse areas like Hell's Kitchen and upscale ones like Chelsea and Hudson Yards, along with the High Line, the Port Authority bus terminal and a mix of building stock that ranges from art galleries to parking lots and rundown warehouses.

The group, Manhattan Community Board 4, has no power to implement its plan, which would involve zoning changes, multimillion-dollar public investments and the repurposing of buildings and property owned by the state, among other provisions.

But it has the backing of the area's City Council members, who wield significant power in determining what does or does not get built in their districts. And the board hopes it can achieve some success by capitalizing on the growing political momentum among city and state leaders to make it easier for developers to build homes. Its efforts, it hopes, may be a template of how New York City neighborhood leaders, particularly in wealthier neighborhoods that have traditionally resisted housing, can help make a dent in the city's housing shortage.

''This plan is really meant to be an opportunity, a gift, to the city and the state, from a community, saying: 'Build these apartments here,''' said Jeffrey LeFrancois, the chair of the board.

Mr. LeFrancois acknowledged the challenges of fulfilling all of the plan's provisions. But he added, ''If we achieve 25 percent of this plan, we've made a difference in the community and the City of New York.''

The New York metropolitan area needed more than 340,000 additional homes in 2019, according to a May analysis by Up For Growth, a Washington policy and research group. The city has issued fewer building permits per resident over most of the past decade than Boston, Austin and San Francisco, according to a recent study from the Citizens Budget Commission, a nonprofit research group.

Gov. Kathy Hochul has pledged to make housing issues a central part of her agenda in 2023. Mayor Eric Adams last week said the city would try to simplify development regulations, including eliminating environmental reviews for some residential buildings, in order to speed construction of new housing.

On Wednesday, Ms. Hochul and Mr. Adams both appeared together at a meeting of business and civic leaders and said they would jointly push for a slew of new ideas designed to address the housing shortage, including removing some state limits on residential building size, legalizing basement and garage homes and even creating an appeals process for when local governments reject new development.

Adrienne Adams, the City Council speaker, has lobbied her colleagues to support developments in their neighborhoods. On Thursday, she said at a news conference that she would push all neighborhoods across the city, particularly wealthier ones, to set housing production targets and ask the administration to invest more in homes that are affordable to the lowest-income New Yorkers.

''New York can be a leader on equitable housing development that is lacking in so many areas across our nation,'' she said.

Politicians on the left have said they would want far more public investment to keep homes affordable at below market rents and help lower-income New Yorkers who bear the brunt of the crisis, but some have even softened their opposition to developments that include market-rate apartments.

Local neighborhood leaders, who are often more inclined to resist big changes to their areas, have so far been less vocal about coming up with proposals to expand housing.

There are 59 community boards across New York City, each representing a different geographic area. Boards each have up to 50 volunteer members along with paid administrative staff, who are appointed by borough presidents, and while they do not have any formal power to veto projects, they must be consulted on many land use changes, and their opinions can be influential.

Some community boards have endorsed development projects, but they have earned a reputation for pushing back.

Earlier this year, a community board in the Bronx voted against a new housing project that will add almost 350 homes -- including almost half that would rent at below-market rates -- to an area with a relatively high share of single-family homes. The project was ultimately approved by the City Council.

Manhattan Community Board 4 itself has drawn scrutiny over opposing a proposal for an affordable housing development in Hell's Kitchen. In April, the board voted against the proposal, saying it had too many units slated for very low-income New Yorkers, and not enough for middle-income residents.

The board's new plan is a combination of several different strategies.

One part calls for building housing on sites owned or controlled by the state or its economic development corporation, including the former Bayview Women's Prison at the intersection of West 20th Street and 11th Avenue and a parking lot on West 46th Street. Together, the board estimates those proposals could add more than 5,400 new homes.

Another part of the plan, which would require city approval, seeks to rezone four areas. It would allow for more residential development near Hudson Yards and expand a ''special district'' in west Chelsea. Those proposals, the board estimates, could add more than 15,000 homes.

The community board also wants to crack down on illegal hotels and prevent illegal demolition of residential buildings. It also hopes to work with the state to prevent more than 1,600 units affordable to lower incomes -- about $80,000 per year for a family of four, for example -- from becoming market-rate units when their tax exemptions expire.

The plan, which incorporates earlier efforts to develop in the district, calls for more than 37,000 homes to be added to the community district overall. That includes the addition of 23,000 new homes, the preservation of more than 3,700 homes and thousands of homes under development and already completed between 2015 and 2019.

Of the 37,000 total, more than 14,000 units would be considered affordable for middle-class and ***working-class*** New Yorkers, the board estimates.

Vicki L. Been, faculty director of New York University's Furman Center, said she could not think of another example in recent memory of a community board creating such a detailed and ambitious plan.

''They are being constructive,'' said Ms. Been, a former deputy mayor for housing and economic development under former Mayor Bill de Blasio, who worked with community boards on housing projects. ''They are stepping up to the plate.''

But she said allowing community boards to set their own priorities could clash with citywide needs.

The plan, for example, calls for many of the new homes considered ''affordable'' to target middle-income people, such as families of four earning more than $133,400 a year. But the city may want and need to prioritize and invest in homes affordable for lower earners in relatively wealthier parts of Manhattan.

''The positive is, they're taking the initiative,'' she said. ''But the downside is, you can't have 59 different housing policies.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/15/nyregion/manhattan-community-board-housing.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/15/nyregion/manhattan-community-board-housing.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A community board in Manhattan is soliciting housing on sites owned or controlled by the state, such as the former Bayview Women's Prison in Chelsea.

JEFFREY LeFRANCOIS, chairman of Manhattan Community Board 4.

A large parking lot in Hell's Kitchen was flagged by the board as a possible site for an affordable housing development. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SASHA MASLOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A13.

**Load-Date:** December 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[***‘Derry Girls’: And Now Their Troubles Are Ended; Critic’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66JG-77X1-JBG3-6139-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 6, 2022 Thursday 21:56 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 999 words

**Byline:** James Poniewozik

**Highlight:** Netflix’s riotous comedy brings its coming-of-age story to a close, along with a chapter in Northern Ireland’s history.

**Body**

Netflix’s riotous comedy brings its coming-of-age story to a close, along with a chapter in Northern Ireland’s history.

“Derry Girls,” the raucous Netflix comedy created by [*Lisa McGee*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/31/arts/derry-girls.html), is about two long-simmering states of conflict: the Troubles in Northern Ireland and adolescence.

The series, which returns for its third and final season Friday, is first and foremost a brutally funny coming-of-age story, following five ***working-class*** friends at a Catholic girls’ school in the 1990s. But the larger political battle is ever-present, even in the show’s title. In the pilot, Erin (Saoirse-Monica Jackson) introduces herself, via a diary entry, as being 16 years old and living in “Derry — or Londonderry, depending on your persuasion.”

“Londonderry” is the official name, preferred by Protestant unionists who support Northern Ireland’s remaining part of the United Kingdom; “Derry” is how Erin’s Catholic friends and neighbors know it. In the intro, the camera sails above youths spray-painting over the “London-” on a road sign, as a military vehicle passes and [*“Dreams”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yam5uK6e-bQ) by the Cranberries plays on the soundtrack.

This is “Derry Girls,” made out of ’90s pop and spray paint. It’s a bubblegum-punk document of growing up in a conflict zone, with a feisty, optimistic spirit.

The earnest, awkward Erin and her friends — ditsy Orla (Louisa Harland); bag of nerves Claire ([*Nicola Coughlan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/18/arts/television/nicola-coughlan-bridgerton.html), “Bridgerton”); brassy Michelle (Jamie-Lee O’Donnell); and Michelle’s meek English cousin, James (Dylan Llewellyn) — know the times they’re living in. (In a running joke, each season opens with Erin’s mock-dramatic narration about her generation’s plight.) But their problems are teen problems: money, social status, breaking rules and evading Sister Michael (Siobhán McSweeney), their sardonic, suffer-no-fools headmistress.

Like a teenager in a strict school, McGee is an expert smuggler. In “Derry Girls” she has sewed a social-political commentary into the stuffing of a wild comedy.

Nearly every episode is built around a classic, gleefully executed sitcom premise — a scam, a road trip, a wacky misunderstanding — which inevitably spirals into an avalanche of poor decisions compounded by freakouts, ending, typically, in disciplinary action or perhaps a house fire.

But the antics are grounded by a lived sense of the teens’ reality, and the spiky chemistry among the leads. McGee’s writing is riotous and alive; the dialogue ricochets like a pinball and uses curse words like punctuation. (I regret that I cannot quote most of the best lines.) In “Derry Girls,” teen girlhood is imagined as a kind of unstable chemical reaction; its characters, delightfully, have absolutely no chill.

That they are also living in a place riven by sectarian violence is background noise, an intractable complication of daily life. In the pilot, the commute on the first day of school is complicated by a bomb scare. In a later episode, the friends sneak off to Belfast for a concert by the pop group Take That; Michelle brings a suitcase of vodka on the bus, then — after she denies ownership of it to avoid getting busted for underage drinking — the “unclaimed bag” causes an evacuation and is destroyed by the bomb squad.

Adolescence is itself a kind of bomb threat; it too has a ticking clock. The characters of “Derry Girls” are on the cusp of change, as is the place where they live. Season 2 ends with the 1995 visit to Northern Ireland by the U.S. president Bill Clinton to encourage the peace process. As Season 3 begins, the girls are facing what life might look like for them after graduation, even as Derry contemplates what might come after a peace agreement.

This theme gives the seven-episode final season a heightened sense of stakes, even as the chaos continues. One character is revealed to have a family member imprisoned because of the rebellion; more than one character is touched by death in the family.

Above everything looms adulthood. In the season premiere, the girls stress about their results on a crucial school exam, and Claire’s meltdown captures their anxieties: “Passing those exams was our only chance. We’re girls. We’re poor. We’re from Northern Ireland. We’re Catholic, for Christ’s sake!” (Coughlan’s transformations into a fireball of molten panic are a joy to watch.)

The final season underscores the odds against the girls, with a remarkable episode that flashes back to their parents as members of the class of ’77. The elders, who have been comic-support buffoons for much of the series, were once kids bursting with their own hormones and punk rebellion. (The episode features [*“Teenage Kicks”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PinCg7IGqHg) by Derry’s the Undertones, introduced as “our national anthem.”)

All this builds to the double-length finale, which takes place in 1998, when the girls are turning 18 and Northern Ireland is about to vote on the [*Good Friday Referendum*](https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/world/europe/052498nireland-vote.html), a power-sharing agreement between the warring factions. Maybe our heroines are just one generational link in a long chain of Derry girls and Derry women. But the finale suggests, buoyantly but not sappily, that things might be different — or at least that it’s essential to believe that they could be.

The relatively short run of “Derry Girls,” like that of many swift British comedies, allows it to condense adolescence into a fittingly packed space. So much happens in what, in retrospect, seems like such a short time. The series is able to end, pristine and in peak form, before the onset of implausible aging or the inevitable softening of characters that afflicts long-running sitcoms.

Don’t get me wrong: I could gladly have watched 200 episodes of “Derry Girls.” But its speedy ending is in keeping with the show’s unsentimental spirit. Like one’s own teenage kicks, it couldn’t go on forever.

PHOTOS: Top, from left, Nicola Coughlan, Louisa Harland, Saoirse-Monica Jackson, Dylan Llewellyn and Jamie-Lee O’Donnell in Season 3 of “Derry Girls.” Above, Harland’s ditsy Orla growing up in a conflict zone. (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA HAT TRICK PRODUCTIONS AND NETFLIX)

**Load-Date:** October 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Five Great Things Biden Has Already Done***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:615V-BP41-JBG3-60Y3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 29, 2020 Thursday 20:42 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1009 words

**Byline:** David Brooks

**Highlight:** We’re learning not to underestimate the guy.

**Body**

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Many of our best presidents have been underestimated. Truman was seen as the tool of a corrupt political machine. Eisenhower was supposedly a bumbling middlebrow. Grant was thought a taciturn simpleton. Even F.D.R. was once considered a lightweight feather duster.

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But Biden is not doing that. Never in my life have I seen a candidate so confidently avoid wedge issues. Biden is instead running on the conviction that, despite it all, Americans deeply love their country, and viscerally long for its unity. He’s running with the knowledge that when you ask America about the greatest threats to our future, “political polarization and divisiveness” comes out No. 1.

It’s easy to say you’re for healing division. But here’s what Biden has actually done:

He’s de-ideologized this election. He’s made the campaign mostly about dealing with Covid-19. That’s a practical problem, not an ideological one. Conservatives and moderates don’t have to renounce their whole philosophy to vote for him. They can just say they’re voting for the person who can take care of this.

He’s separated politics from the culture war. Over the past generation, culture war issues have increasingly swallowed our politics. Trump has put this process into overdrive. He barely talks about policies. Instead, his every subject is really about why “our” identity group is better than “their” identity group.

So now the positions people take — on issues ranging from climate change to immigration — are determined by whether they see themselves as part of the rural white Christian conservative army or part of the urban multicultural secular progressive army. Policies are no longer debated discretely; they are just battles in one big, existential fight over who we are.

But Biden goes back to the New Deal, to an era of policymaking when there really wasn’t a polarized culture war. He sidesteps the Kulturkampf issues — which statues to take down — to simply talk about helping the middle class.

Biden has scrambled the upscale/downscale dynamic. The most important fissure in our politics is education levels. The Democratic Party’s greatest long-term challenge is that it might become the party of the highly credentialed college-educated class and let some future Republican rally a multiracial ***working-class*** coalition. Even Trump is now making surprising gains among Latino and Black men.

Biden has avoided all the little microaggressions that cultural elites use to show they are morally superior. Wokeness, for example, is partly about fighting oppression, but it’s also become a status symbol. It’s showing people that you are so intellectually evolved that you can use words like intersectionality, decolonizing and cultural appropriation. Political correctness is not just a means for the less privileged to set standards of behavior; it is also sometimes the way people with cultural power push others around.

Unlike, say, Hillary Clinton, Biden has a worldview and a manner that is both educated class and ***working class*** and defuses the divide.

Biden has avoided the stupid binaries about race. Donald Trump went to Mount Rushmore and made a [*speech*](https://iasculture.org/research/publications/democracy-in-dark-times) essentially saying you can either believe in systemic racism or you can love America. Biden went to Gettysburg and [*argued*](https://iasculture.org/research/publications/democracy-in-dark-times) that you can “honestly face systemic racism” and love America. He argued that you can believe in fighting racism and believe in law and order. His worldview is based on universal categories — the things we share — not identitarian ones — the ways we supposedly can’t understand each other across difference.

He’s done a good job reaching out to white evangelicals. Right now, many of them think he’s a godless socialist who will usher in a reign of anti-religious terror. In his campaign he’s done a pretty good job reaching out to those voters. His campaign has run ads on Christian radio and reached out aggressively to evangelical leaders. If he can allay their cultural fears (by making it clear he will not shut down Christian charitable groups) and win them over with ***working-class*** economic policies, he can create a long-term governing majority.

Seventy percent of Americans in that [*Braver Angels*](https://iasculture.org/research/publications/democracy-in-dark-times) survey say America is facing permanent harm, but 70 percent also say the most important job after the election is to heal our enmity, to do the hard job of working with people whose views we find completely objectionable. This unity impulse is powerful in the populace, but it is deeply hidden.

Joe Biden knew it was there.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://iasculture.org/research/publications/democracy-in-dark-times) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://iasculture.org/research/publications/democracy-in-dark-times). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://iasculture.org/research/publications/democracy-in-dark-times).

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[***Status Anxiety Is Blowing Wind Into Trump’s Sails; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64RG-7Y31-DXY4-X2M5-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3028 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** The adverse economic developments resulting from trade imports that produced a sharp shift to the right are still wreaking political havoc.

**Body**

What is the role of status discontent in the emergence of right-wing populism? If it does play a key role, does it matter more where someone stands at any given moment or whether someone is moving up the ladder or down?

In the struggle for status, [*Michael Bang Petersen*](https://pure.au.dk/portal/en/michael@ps.au.dk), a political scientist at Aarhus University, Denmark, and the lead author of “[*Beyond Populism: The Psychology of Status-Seeking and Extreme Political Discontent*](http://www.sydneysymposium.unsw.edu.au/2020/chapters/PetersenSSSP2020.pdf),” argues:

[*Education*](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01402381003654544?casa_token=1XnWM2xbAX8AAAAA%3Ax7dcnllgCWumPWUWV8b036MN6ywYdUx29MrHhmZicqssZZx_9M51CrsKzjSgUGMv4yXa_skot_-nJA) has emerged as a clear cleavage in addition to more traditional indicators of social class. The highly educated [*fare better*](https://ejpr.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2006.00644.x) in a more globalized world that puts a premium on human capital. Since the 1980s the highly educated left in the U.S. and elsewhere have been [*forging alliances*](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/pops.12485?casa_token=OmXoWh11vdMAAAAA%3AP4Z0-HtPMhJUx8HEahlEFQEmjIjRCfLMXJOd4ZyhdrrkTB7oS28QsRVmihabf_EItkeE0W7HmNi6F-k) with minority groups (e.g., racial, ethnic and sexual minorities), who also have been increasing their status in society. This, in turn, pushes those with lower education or those who feel challenged by the new emerging groups towards the right.

It is hardly a secret that the white ***working class*** has struggled in recent decades — and clearly many factors play a role — but what happens to those without the skills and abilities needed to move up the education ladder to a position of prestige in an increasingly competitive world?

Petersen’s answer: They have become populism’s frontline troops.

Over the past six decades, according to Petersen, there has been a realignment of the parties in respect to their position as pro-establishment or anti-establishment: “In the 1960s and 1970s the left was associated with an [*anti-systemic*](https://sk.sagepub.com/reference/geography/n48.xml#:~:text=Antisystemic%20movements%20(ASMs)%20may%20be,have%20existed%20throughout%20human%20history.) stance but this position is now more aligned with the right wing.”

Those trapped in a downward spiral undergo a devastating experience.

[*Lea Hartwich*](https://www.imis.uni-osnabrueck.de/personen/imis_mitglieder/hartwich_lea.html), a social psychologist at the Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies at Osnabrueck University in Germany, wrote in an email:

Those falling behind face a serious threat to their self-worth and well-being: Not only are the societal markers of personal worth and status becoming unattainable but, according to the dominant cultural narrative of individual responsibility, this is supposedly the result of their own lack of hard work or merit.

Instead of focusing on the economic system and its elites, Hartwich continued,

Right-wing populists usually identify what they call liberal elites in culture, politics and the media as the “enemies of the people.” Combined with the rejection of marginalized groups like immigrants, this creates targets to blame for dissatisfaction with one’s personal situation or the state of society as a whole while leaving a highly unequal economic system intact. Right-wing populists’ focus on the so-called culture wars, the narrative that one’s culture is under attack from liberal elites, is very effective because culture can be an important source of identity and self-worth for people. It is also effective in organizing political conflicts along cultural rather than economic lines.

In a January 2021 paper — “[*Neoliberalism can reduce well-being by promoting a sense of social disconnection, competition, and loneliness*](https://bpspsychub.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/bjso.12438)” — Hartwich, [*Julia C. Becker*](https://www.in-mind.org/users/julia-c-becker), also of Osnabrueck, and [*S. Alexander Haslam*](https://psychology.uq.edu.au/profile/3181/alex-haslam) of Queensland University found that “exposure to neoliberal ideology,” which they describe as the belief that “economies and societies should be organized along the principles of the free market,” results in “loneliness and, through this, decreases well-being. We found that exposure to neoliberal ideology increased loneliness and decreased well-being by reducing people’s sense of connection to others and by increasing perceptions of being in competition with others.”

[*Diana Mutz*](https://live-sas-www-polisci.pantheon.sas.upenn.edu/people/standing-faculty/diana-mutz), a political scientist at the University of Pennsylvania, described the political consequences of white status decline in her 2018 paper “[*Status threat, not economic hardship, explains the 2016 presidential vote*](https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/115/19/e4330.full.pdf).”

“Candidate preferences in 2016 reflected increasing anxiety among high-status groups,” Mutz wrote. “Both growing domestic racial diversity and globalization contributed to a sense that white Americans are under siege by these engines of change.”

Mutz found:

Change in financial well-being had little impact on candidate preference. Instead, changing preferences were related to changes in the party’s positions on issues related to American global dominance and the rise of a majority-minority America: issues that threaten white Americans’ sense of dominant-group status.

In fact, status decline and economic decline, which have fueled the increasing conservatism of the Republican Party, are closely linked both psychologically and politically.

[*Gordon Hanson*](https://www.hks.harvard.edu/faculty/gordon-hanson), a professor of urban policy at Harvard and the author of “[*Economic and Political Consequences of Trade-Induced Manufacturing Decline*](https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9780691198866/pdf#page=137),” emailed me saying that before the 2016 election, the assumption was that “the political consequences of regionally concentrated manufacturing job loss” would be that “left-leaning politicians” would be “the primary beneficiaries.” Trump’s victory “dramatically altered our thinking on the matter.”

Instead, Hanson continued, “large-scale job loss led to greater tribalism (as represented by the populist nationalism of Trump and his acolytes) rather than greater support for redistribution (as represented by your run-of-the-mill Democrat).” There was, in fact, “precedence for this outcome,” he wrote, citing a 2013 paper, “Political Extremism in the 1920s and 1930s: Do German Lessons Generalize?” by [*Alan de Bromhead*](https://pure.qub.ac.uk/en/persons/alan-de-bromhead), [*Barry Eichengreen*](https://eml.berkeley.edu/~eichengr/) and [*Kevin H. O’Rourke*](https://nyuad.nyu.edu/en/academics/divisions/social-science/faculty/kevin-o-rourke.html), economists at Queen’s University Belfast, Berkeley and N.Y.U. Abu Dhabi.

The three economists wrote:

Consistent with German experience, we find a link between right-wing political extremism and economic conditions, as captured by the change in G.D.P. Importantly, however, what mattered for right-wing anti-system party support was not just deterioration in economic conditions lasting a year or two, but economic conditions over the longer run.

Many of the U.S. counties that moved toward Trump in 2016 and 2020 experienced long-run adverse economic conditions that began with the 2000 entry of China into the World Trade Organization, setbacks that continue to plague those regions decades later.

Hanson and his co-authors, [*David Autor*](https://economics.mit.edu/faculty/dautor) and [*David Dorn*](https://www.ddorn.net/), economists at M.I.T. and the University of Zurich, found in their October 2021 paper “On the Persistence of the China Shock”:

Local labor markets more exposed to import competition from China suffered larger declines in manufacturing jobs, employment-population ratios, and personal income per capita. These effects persist for nearly two decades beyond the intensification of the trade shock after 2001, and almost a decade beyond the shock reaching peak intensity.

They go on:

Even using higher-end estimates of the consumer benefits of rising trade with China, a substantial fraction of commuting zones appears to have suffered absolute declines in average real incomes.

In their oft-cited 2020 paper, “[*Importing Political Polarization? The Electoral Consequences of Rising Trade Exposure*](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/gordonhanson/files/importing_political_polarization_paper.pdf),” Autor, Dorn, Hanson and [*Kaveh Majlesi*](https://www.kavehmajlesi.com/), an economist at Monash University, found that in majority-white regions, adverse economic developments resulting from trade imports produced a sharp shift to the right.

Autor and his co-authors describe “an ideological realignment in trade-exposed local labor markets that commences prior to the divisive 2016 U.S. presidential election.” More specifically, “trade-impacted commuting zones or districts saw an increasing market share for the Fox News Channel, stronger ideological polarization in campaign contributions and a relative rise in the likelihood of electing a Republican to Congress.”

Counties with a majority-white population “became more likely to elect a G.O.P. conservative, while trade-exposed counties with an initial majority-minority population became more likely to elect a liberal Democrat,” Autor and his colleagues write.

They continue:

In presidential elections, counties with greater trade exposure shifted toward the Republican candidate. These results broadly support an emerging political economy literature that connects adverse economic shocks to sharp ideological realignments that cleave along racial and ethnic lines and induce discrete shifts in political preferences and economic policy.

The trade-induced shift to the right has deeper roots dating back to at least the early 1990s.

In “Local Economic and Political Effects of Trade Deals: Evidence from NAFTA,” [*Jiwon Choi*](https://irs.princeton.edu/people/jiwon-choi) and [*Ilyana Kuziemko*](https://scholar.princeton.edu/kuziemko/home), both of Princeton, [*Ebonya Washington*](https://economics.yale.edu/people/faculty/ebonya-washington) of Yale and [*Gavin Wright*](https://economics.stanford.edu/people/gavin-wright) of Stanford make the case that the enactment of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1993 played a crucial role in pushing ***working-class*** whites out of the Democratic Party and into the Republican Party:

We demonstrate that counties whose 1990 employment depended on industries vulnerable to NAFTA suffered large and persistent employment losses relative to other counties. These losses begin in the mid-1990s and are only modestly offset by transfer programs. While exposed counties historically voted Democratic, in the mid-1990s they turn away from the party of the president (Bill Clinton) who ushered in the agreement and by 2000 vote majority Republican in House elections.

The trade agreement with Mexico and Canada “led to lasting, negative effects on Democratic identification among regions and demographic groups that were once loyal to the party,” Choi and her co-authors write.

Before enactment, the Republican share of the vote in NAFTA-exposed counties was 38 percent, well below the national average, but “by 1998, these once solidly Democratic counties voted as or more Republican in House elections as the rest of the country,” according to Choi and her colleagues.

Before NAFTA, the authors write, Democratic Party support for protectionist policies had been the glue binding millions of white ***working-class*** voters to the party, overcoming the appeal of the Republican Party on racial and cultural issues. Democratic support for the free trade agreement effectively broke that bond: “For many white Democrats in the 1980s, economic issues such as trade policy were key to their party loyalty because on social issues such as guns, affirmative action and abortion they sided with the G.O.P.”

The consequences of trade shocks have been devastating both to whole regions and to the individuals living in them.

[*Katheryn Russ*](https://www.econ.ucdavis.edu/people/knruss) — an author, along with [*Katherine Eriksson*](http://kaeriksson.ucdavis.edu/) and [*Minfei Xu*](https://economics.ucdavis.edu/people/xumf), economists at the University of California-Davis, and [*Jay C. Shambaugh*](https://economics.columbian.gwu.edu/jay-c-shambaugh), an economist at George Washington University, of the 2020 paper “[*Trade Shocks and the Shifting Landscape of U.S. Manufacturing*](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w25646/w25646.pdf)” — wrote in an email that trade-induced economic downturns “affect entire communities, as places with the lowest fractions of high school or college-educated workers are finding themselves falling with increasing persistence into the set of counties with the highest unemployment rates.”

Even worse, these counties “do not bounce back out with the same frequency that counties with the highest fraction of high school and college-educated workers do. So we aren’t just talking about a phenomenon that may influence the self-perceived status of individual workers, but of entire communities.”

Russ cited a 2017 study, “[*Trade Shocks and the Provision of Local Public Goods”*](https://www.anderson.ucla.edu/sites/default/files/documents/areas/fac/gem/papers/Feler%20AEJ%20Trade%20Shocks%20Paper.pdf) by [*Leo Feler*](https://www.anderson.ucla.edu/about/centers/ucla-anderson-forecast/about-us/leo-feler) and [*Mine Z. Senses*](https://www.iza.org/person/8658/mine-zeynep-senses), economists at U.C.L.A. and Johns Hopkins, which finds that “increased competition from Chinese imports negatively affects local finances and the provision of public services across U.S. localities.”

Specifically, “a $1,000 increase in Chinese imports per worker results in a relative decline in per capita expenditures on public welfare, 7.7 percent; on public transport, 2.4 percent; on public housing, 6.8 percent; and on public education, 0.9 percent.”

These shortfalls emerge just as demand increases, Feler and Senses write: “The demand for local public goods such as education, public safety, and public welfare is increasing more in trade-affected localities when resources for these services are declining or remaining constant.”

For example:

Public safety expenditures remain constant at a time when local poverty and unemployment rates are rising, resulting in higher property crime rates by 3.5 percent. Similarly, a relative decline in education spending coincides with an increase in the demand for education as students respond to a deterioration in employment prospects for low-skilled workers by remaining in school longer.

As if that were not enough:

In localities that are more exposed to trade shocks, we also document an increase in the share of poor and low-income households, which tend to rely more on government services such as public housing and public transportation, both of which experience spending cuts.

Eroded social standing, the loss of quality jobs, falling income and cultural marginalization have turned non-college white Americans into an ideal recruiting pool for Donald Trump — and stimulated the adoption of more authoritarian, anti-immigrant and anti-democratic policies.

[*Rui Costa Lopes*](https://www.ruicostalopes.com/), a research fellow at the University of Lisbon, emailed in response to my inquiry about the roots of right-wing populism: “As we’re talking more about those who suffer from relative deprivation, status insecurity or powerlessness, then we’re talking more about the phenomenon of ‘politics of resentment’ and there is a link between those types of resentment and adhesion to right populist movements.”

Lopes continued: “Recent research shows that the link between relative deprivation, status insecurity or powerlessness and political populist ideas (such as Euroscepticism) occurs through cultural (anti-immigrant) and political (anti-establishment) blame attributions.”

“The promise of economic well-being achieved through meritocratic means lies at the very heart of Western liberal economies,” write three authors — [*Elena Cristina Mitrea*](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Elena-Cristina-Mitrea) of the University of Sibiu in Romania, and [*Monika Mühlböck*](https://people.ceu.edu/monika_muhlbock) and [*Julia Warmuth*](https://ufind.univie.ac.at/en/person.html?id=54602) of the University of Vienna — in “[*Extreme Pessimists? Expected Socioeconomic Downward Mobility and the Political Attitudes of Young Adults*](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11109-020-09593-7).” In reality, “the experience of upward mobility has become less common, while the fear of downward mobility is no longer confined to the lower bound of the social strata, but pervades the whole society.”

Status anxiety has become a driving force, Mitrea and her colleagues note: “It is not so much current economic standing, but rather anxiety concerning future socioeconomic decline and déclassement, that influences electoral behavior.”

“Socially disadvantaged and economically insecure citizens are more susceptible to the appeals of the radical right,” Mitrea, Mühlböck and Warmuth observe, citing data showing “that far-right parties were able to increase their vote share by 30 percent in the aftermath of financial crises.”

Economic insecurity translates into support for the far-right through feelings of relative deprivation, which arise from negative comparisons drawn between actual economic well-being and one’s expectations or a social reference group. Coping with such feelings increases the likelihood of rejecting political elites and nurturing anti-foreign sentiments.

The concentration of despair in the United States among low-income whites without college degrees compared with their Black and Hispanic counterparts is striking.

[*Carol Graham*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/carol-graham/), a Brookings senior fellow, and [*Sergio Pinto*](https://sites.google.com/view/sergiopinto), a doctoral candidate at the University of Maryland’s School of Public Policy, document this divide in “The Geography of Desperation in America: Labor Force Participation, Mobility Trends, Place, and Well-being,” a paper presented at a 2019 conference sponsored by the Boston Federal Reserve:

Poor blacks are by far the most optimistic group compared to poor whites: They are 0.9 points higher on the 0-10 scale (0.43 standard deviations). Poor blacks are also 14 percentage points (0.28 standard deviations) less likely to report stress the previous day, half as likely as poor whites to report stress in the previous day, while poor Hispanics fall somewhere in the middle.

Graham and Pinto measured poll respondents’ sense of purpose, sense of community and their financial and social well-being and found that “blacks and Hispanics typically score higher than whites,” noting that “these findings highlight the remarkable levels of resilience among blacks living in precarious circumstances compared to their white counterparts.”

Graham and Pinto write:

The deepest desperation is among cohorts in the white ***working class*** who previously had privileged access to jobs (and places) that guaranteed stable, middle-class lives. Rather ironically, African Americans and Hispanics — the cohorts that historically faced high levels of discrimination — retain higher levels of well-being, especially hope for the future.

The data suggest that a large segment of the white, non-college population lives day-by-day in a cauldron of dissatisfaction, a phenomenon that stands apart from the American tradition.

This discontent drew many disaffected Americans to Donald Trump, and Trump’s defeat in 2020 has produced millions of still more disaffected voters who support his claim that the election was stolen.

Michael Bang Petersen puts it this way:

We [*know*](https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fa0030398) that humans essentially have two routes to acquire status: prestige and dominance. Prestige is earned respect from having skills that are useful to others. Dominance is status gained from intimidation and fear. Individuals who are high in the pursuit of dominance play a central role in political destabilization. They are more likely to commit [*political violence*](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0956797620922476?casa_token=siZWT4fZDm4AAAAA%3A6HruSpGaYAkwbBV5DaIcH2yVZn93I0R_js4KIthr11j81FAXFfckTNrLimAUOsDCtrB4jBKMil2lZw), to engage in [*hateful online interactions and to be motivated to share misinformation*](https://psyarxiv.com/puqzs).

That this is dangerous does not need repeating.

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[***Fear of an A.I. Pundit; Ross Douthat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67X1-BJ41-JBG3-603M-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1924 words

**Byline:** Ross Douthat

**Highlight:** Could machine intelligence become prophetic?

**Body**

Nick Bostrom’s 2014 book, “Superintelligence,” a crucial text for the community of worriers about the risks of artificial intelligence, begins with a fable: A tribe of sparrows, weary of a marginal existence, becomes convinced that everything would be better if they could only have an owl to help them out — to build nests, to assist with care and feeding, to keep an eye out for other predators. Delighted by this idea, the sparrows decide to go hunting for an owl egg or owl chick that they might bring up as their own.

Only Scronkfinkle, “a one-eyed sparrow with a fretful temperament,” points out that maybe they should consider the dangers of living with a full-grown owl and put some thought into owl taming and owl domestication first. But he’s overruled on the grounds that merely getting an owl will be hard enough and there will be time to worry about taming it once it’s been acquired and reared. So while the others fly off to search for eggs and chicks, Scronkfinkle and a few other sparrows try to put their minds to the taming problem — a difficult challenge, lacking an owl to work with, and one shadowed by the fear that at any moment their nest mates might come back with an owlet and put their sketched-out theories to a brutal test.

It’s a neat fable about what A.I. alarmists think is happening right now. The accelerating power of artificial intelligence, manifest publicly so far in chatbots and image generators, is a growing owlet in our nest, and our alarmists are still unprepared to tame it. And it’s in the spirit of Scronkfinkle that a collection of Silicon Valley notables, including Elon Musk, just signed [*an open letter*](https://futureoflife.org/open-letter/pause-giant-ai-experiments/) urging at least a six-month pause in large-scale A.I. experiments to allow our safety protocols to catch up.

But there’s a crucial difference between the fable and our own situation, which helps explain why the human pause urgers have a harder task even than Scronkfinkle. Note that the sparrows, for all their guilelessness, at least know generally what an owl looks like, what it is and what it does. So it shouldn’t be hard for them, and it isn’t hard for the reader, to imagine the powers that an untamed owl would bring to bear — familiar powers of speed and sight and strength, which could tear and gouge and devour the luckless sparrow clan.

With a notional-for-now superintelligence, however, the whole point is that there isn’t an analogue in existence right now for us to observe, understand and learn to fear. The alarmists don’t have a simple scenario of risk, a clear description of the claws and beak; they have a lot of highly uncertain scenarios based on even more uncertain speculation about what an intelligence somehow greater than ours might be capable of doing.

That doesn’t make their arguments wrong. Indeed, you could argue that the very uncertainty makes superintelligent A.I. that much more worth fearing. But generally, when human beings turn against a technology or move to restrain it, we have a good idea of what we’re afraid of happening, what kind of apocalypse we’re trying to forestall. The nuclear test ban treaties came after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, not before. Or a less existential example: The current debate about limiting kids’ exposure to social media is potent because we’ve lived with the internet and the iPhone for some time; we know a lot about what the downsides of online culture seem to be. Whereas it’s hard to imagine persuading someone to pre-emptively regulate TikTok in the year 1993.

I write this as someone who struggles to understand the specific dooms that might befall us if the A.I. alarmists are correct or even precisely what we mean when we say “superintelligence.”

Some of my uncertainty attaches to the debates about machine consciousness and whether A.I. would need to acquire a sense of self-awareness to become genuinely dangerous. But it’s also possible to distill the uncertainty to narrower questions that don’t require taking a position on the nature of the self or soul.

So let’s walk through one of them: Will supercharged machine intelligence find it significantly easier to predict the future?

I like this question because it’s connected to my own vocation — or at least what other people think my vocation is supposed to be: No matter how many times you disclaim prophetic knowledge, there is no more reliable dinner-party question for a newspaper columnist than, “What’s going to happen in Ukraine?” Or “Who’s going to win the next primary?”

I don’t think my own intelligence is especially suited to this kind of forecasting. When I look back on my own writing, I do OK at describing large-scale trends that turn out to have a shaping influence on events — like the transformation of the Republican Party into a downscale, ***working-class*** coalition, say. But where the big trends distill into specific events, I’m just doing guesswork like everybody else: Despite my understanding of the forces that gave rise to Donald Trump, I still consistently predicted that he wouldn’t be the Republican nominee in 2016.

There are forms of intelligence, however, that do better than mine at concrete prediction. If you read the work of Philip Tetlock, who studies superforecasters, it’s clear that certain habits of mind yield better predictions than others, at least when their futurology is expressed in percentages averaged over a wide range of predictions.

Thus (to use an example from Tetlock’s book, “[*Superforecasting*](https://wsp.wharton.upenn.edu/book/superforecasting/),” written with Dan Gardner) the average pundit, early in the Syrian civil war, might have put the likelihood of President Bashar al-Assad losing power within six months at around 40 percent. But the superforecasters, with a slightly deeper focus on the situation, put the odds at less than 25 percent. Assad’s subsequent survival alone doesn’t prove that the superforecasters had it exactly right — maybe the dictator just beat the odds — but it helps their overall batting average, which across a range of similar predictive scenarios is higher than the pundit baseline.

But not so much higher that a statesman can just rely on their aggregates to go on some kind of geopolitical winning streak. So one imaginable goal for a far superior intelligence would be to radically improve on this kind of merely human prognostication.

We know that artificial intelligence already has powers of pattern recognition that exceed and sometimes mystify its human makers. For instance, A.I. [*can predict*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-021-89743-x%5d) a person’s sex at above-average rates based on a retina photograph alone, for reasons that remain unclear. And there’s [*growing evidence*](https://erictopol.substack.com/p/the-gpt-x-revolution-in-medicine) that artificial intelligence will be able to do remarkable diagnostic work in medicine.

So imagine some grander scale of pattern recognition being applied to global politics, predicting not just some vague likelihood of a dictator’s fall, but this kind of plot, in this specific month, with these particular conspirators. Or this particular military outcome in this particular province with these events rapidly following.

Superintelligence in this scenario would be functioning as a version of the “psychohistory” imagined by Isaac Asimov in his “Foundation” novels, which enables its architect to guide future generations through the fall of a galactic empire. And a prophetic gift of this sort would have obvious applications beyond politics — to stock market forecasting, for instance, or to the kind of “precrime” prediction engine envisioned by Philip K. Dick and then, [*in adaptation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/21/movies/film-review-halting-crime-in-advance-has-its-perils.html), Steven Spielberg.

It would also fit neatly into some of the speculation from A.I. pessimists. When the Silicon Valley-adjacent writer Scott Alexander set out to write [*a vision*](https://slatestarcodex.com/2015/04/07/no-physical-substrate-no-problem/) of a malevolent A.I.’s progress, for instance, he imagined it attaching itself initially to Kim Jong-un and taking over his country through a kind of superforecasting prowess: “Its advice is always excellent — its political stratagems always work out, its military planning is impeccable and its product ideas turn North Korea into an unexpected economic powerhouse.”

But is any intelligence, supercharged or otherwise, capable of such foresight? Or is the world so irreducibly complex that even if you pile pattern recognition upon pattern recognition and let A.I. run endless simulations, you will still end up with probabilities that aren’t all that much more accurate than what can be achieved with human judgment and intelligence?

My assumption is that it’s the latter, that there are diminishing returns to any kind of intelligence as a tool of prophecy, that the world is not fashioned to be predicted in such detailed ways — any more than the current trawl-the-internet capacities of ChatGPT have enabled it to resolve current mysteries that don’t require prophecy. When a chatbot reveals, Sherlock Holmes-style, the detailed evidence that our all-too-human powers missed that solves the Nord Stream pipeline bombing or explains the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines flight 370, then I’ll start to expect psychohistory in a future iteration. But it seems more likely that the power of real prophecy will escape A.I., and any doomsday scenario requiring perfect Machiavellian foresight from our would-be overlord isn’t terribly credible, no matter how super its forecasting becomes.

Or maybe I’m just a sparrow who’s never seen an owl and can’t imagine how it would see so clearly in the dark.

Breviary

[*Tyler Cowen*](https://marginalrevolution.com/marginalrevolution/2023/03/existential-risk-and-the-turn-in-human-history.html) and [*James Pethokoukis*](https://fasterplease.substack.com/p/no-to-the-ai-pause) against the A.I. pause.

[*Scott Alexander*](https://astralcodexten.substack.com/p/mr-tries-the-safe-uncertainty-fallacy) and [*Zvi Mowshowitz*](https://thezvi.substack.com/p/response-to-tyler-cowens-existential) against Tyler Cowen.

Freddie deBoer [*on reality itself*](https://freddiedeboer.substack.com/p/you-are-you-we-live-here-this-is).

[*Elliot Kaufman*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/whats-next-for-bibi-netanyahus-judicial-reform-supreme-court-elite-protest-democracy-israel-likud-7eebf5e2) and [*Damon Linker*](https://damonlinker.substack.com/p/what-israels-political-turmoil-teaches) on Israel’s turmoil.

Dan Drezner [*argues with me*](https://danieldrezner.substack.com/p/is-iraq-worse-than-vietnam) about Vietnam and Iraq.

Can this novel [*save heterosexuality*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/29/style/mating-norman-rush.html)

This Week in Decadence

“In the early 1990s, two Russian artists named Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid took the unusual step of hiring a market research firm. Their brief was simple. Understand what Americans desire most in a work of art ….

“Komar and Melamid then set about painting a piece that reflected the results. The pair repeated this process in a number of countries including Russia, China, France and Kenya.

“Each piece in the series, titled ‘People’s Choice,’ was intended to be a unique collaboration with the people of a different country and culture.

“But it didn’t quite go to plan.

“Describing the work in his book ‘Playing to the Gallery,’ the artist Grayson Perry said:

In nearly every country, all people really wanted was a landscape with a few figures around, animals in the foreground, mainly blue.

“Despite soliciting the opinions of over 11,000 people, from 11 different countries, each of the paintings looked almost exactly the same ….

“Thirty years after People’s Choice, it seems the landscapes which Komar and Melamid painted have become the landscapes in which we live ….

“The interiors of our homes, coffee shops and restaurants all look the same. The buildings where we live and work all look the same. The cars we drive, their colors and their logos all look the same. The way we look and the way we dress all looks the same. Our movies, books and video games all look the same. And the brands we buy, their adverts, identities and taglines all look the same.

“But it doesn’t end there. In the age of average, homogeneity can be found in an almost indefinite number of domains.

“The Instagram pictures we post, the tweets we read, the TV we watch, the app icons we click, the skylines we see, the websites we visit and the illustrations which adorn them all look the same. The list goes on, and on, and on.”

— “[*The Age of Average*](https://www.alexmurrell.co.uk/articles/the-age-of-average),” Alex Murrell (March 20)

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alain Pilon FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 1, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Madison Cawthorn loses his re-election bid after a deluge of scandals.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GB-5J11-JBG3-605M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 17, 2022 Tuesday 08:32 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 686 words

**Byline:** Jazmine Ulloa

**Highlight:** Chuck Edwards, a three-term state senator who represents the Republican old guard, defeated Mr. Cawthorn, once seen as a rising star in his party.

**Body**

Chuck Edwards, a three-term state senator who represents the Republican old guard, defeated Mr. Cawthorn, once seen as a rising star in his party.

Chuck Edwards, a three-term state senator and business owner, has edged out Representative Madison Cawthorn in the Republican primary for a House seat representing North Carolina’s 11th District.

Luke Ball, a representative for Mr. Cawthorn, said late Tuesday that the congressman had called Mr. Edwards to concede. Mr. Edwards’s narrow triumph was called by The Associated Press.

The outcome served as a rebuke of Mr. Cawthorn, a right-wing firebrand and the youngest freshman in Congress, who was once seen as a rising star of the Republican Party.

It is also a significant victory for the old guard Republicans in North Carolina and Washington who in recent months had been feuding with Mr. Cawthorn over his personal and political errors and foibles.

Mr. Edwards, 61, has served in the state Legislature since 2016 and has built a staunch conservative brand by pushing measures to overhaul tax laws, enact a constitutional amendment for voter identification, and require county sheriffs to work with immigration enforcement agencies.

He entered the race with a natural constituency of traditional Republican primary voters, as well as endorsements from Senator Thom Tillis and most of the members of the Legislature in his district. Like Mr. Cawthorn, he was born and raised in rural Hendersonville, a city of 14,000 south of Asheville.

Mr. Edwards will now face Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, a Christian minister and organizer who is the Democratic nominee, for the House seat overseeing a largely rural and ***working-class*** Republican stronghold tucked against the Blue Ridge and Smoky Mountains.

Mr. Edwards’s triumph capped months of political turbulence for Mr. Cawthorn, 26, who faced an avalanche of bad press and political attacks from establishment Republicans at home and in Washington over his numerous run-ins with the law, childish behavior and sexual innuendo, and what his opponents described as a lack of political leadership.

The winner on Tuesday had needed to draw only 30 percent of the vote to avoid a runoff in a crowded field split among seven other challengers. But late Tuesday, Mr. Edwards and Mr. Cawthorn were both clearing the 30 percent threshold.

Mr. Cawthorn had hoped to win by heavily promoting his endorsement from former President Donald J. Trump.

But Mr. Cawthorn, who has used a wheelchair since a car crash that almost took his life at 18, struggled to overcome a series of old and new personal and political errors. He previously faced accusations that he had lied about key parts of his background and that he had been sexually and verbally aggressive toward women.

In recent months, he also has been accused of engaging in insider trading, charged with driving with a revoked license and stopped for trying to bring a gun through airport security — a second time. Photos and videos of him partying and emulating sexual antics circulated.

In March, he said [*on a conservative YouTube channel*](https://twitter.com/patriottakes/status/1508127124498141187) that people he had admired in Washington had invited him to orgies and used cocaine. Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, the House minority leader, told reporters he had spoken with Mr. Cawthorn and told him that he had lost trust in him.

But perhaps most damaging was Mr. Cawthorn’s track record of missing important votes in Congress and his announcement last year that he would run in a new district near Charlotte, only to change his mind and return to his old district after the new district was redrawn and tilted Democratic.

It also changed the dynamics in the race, providing the opening that Mr. Edwards and Michele Woodhouse, the elected Republican chair of Mr. Cawthorn’s district and once one of Mr. Cawthorn’s staunch supporters, needed to jump into the electoral contest.

One of Mr. Edwards’s tag lines was “Always for the mountains,” a jab at Mr. Cawthorn for moving away.

PHOTO: Representative Madison Cawthorn speaks to supporters at his election night watch party. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Nell Redmond/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[***N.Y.C. Community Boards Usually Oppose New Housing. Not This One.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:673C-8VH1-JBG3-633K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 15, 2022 Thursday 22:49 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1392 words

**Byline:** Mihir Zaveri

**Highlight:** Local groups are known for opposing new development. But amid a housing shortage, one community board representing parts of Manhattan’s West Side wants to see a lot more.

**Body**

Local groups are known for opposing new development. But amid a housing shortage, one community board representing parts of Manhattan’s West Side wants to see a lot more.

Few obstacles to new housing loom as large as powerful neighbors who dislike the idea of new construction. And few residents can be quite as loud or influential as [*New York City’s community boards*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/30/nyregion/greater-diversity-sought-for-new-york-citys-community-boards.html), which have a reputation for giving priority to [*a neighborhood’s character*](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/escr/downloads/pdf/FEIS/ESCR-EIS-Chapter-5.10-Neighborhood-Character.pdf) and pushing back on new development.

With the city confronting a staggering housing crisis, however, members of one community board are pursuing an unusual path: calling for the construction of more homes in their community.

Their plan, formally announced on Thursday, would create 23,000 new homes, including roughly 1,400 affordable for lower-income New Yorkers, across a swath of Manhattan’s West Side. The area, stretching from 14th Street to Columbus Circle, includes diverse areas like Hell’s Kitchen and upscale ones like Chelsea and Hudson Yards, along with the High Line, the Port Authority bus terminal and a mix of building stock that ranges from art galleries to parking lots and rundown warehouses.

The group, Manhattan Community Board 4, has no power to implement its plan, which would involve zoning changes, multimillion-dollar public investments and the repurposing of buildings and property owned by the state, among other provisions.

But it has the backing of the area’s City Council members, who wield significant power in determining what does or does not get built in their districts. And the board hopes it can achieve some success by capitalizing on the growing political momentum among city and state leaders to make it easier for developers to build homes. Its efforts, it hopes, may be a template of how New York City neighborhood leaders, particularly in wealthier neighborhoods that have traditionally resisted housing, can help make a dent in the city’s housing shortage.

“This plan is really meant to be an opportunity, a gift, to the city and the state, from a community, saying: ‘Build these apartments here,’” said Jeffrey LeFrancois, the chair of the board.

Mr. LeFrancois acknowledged the challenges of fulfilling all of the plan’s provisions. But he added, “If we achieve 25 percent of this plan, we’ve made a difference in the community and the City of New York.”

The New York metropolitan area [*needed more than 340,000 additional homes*](https://www.upforgrowth.org/news/growth-2022-housing-underproduction-us-report-finds-nations-housing-deficit-has-more-doubled) in 2019, according to a May analysis by Up For Growth, a Washington policy and research group. The city [*has*](https://cbcny.org/research/strategies-boost-housing-production-new-york-city-metropolitan-area)issued[*fewer building permits per resident*](https://cbcny.org/research/strategies-boost-housing-production-new-york-city-metropolitan-area) over most of the past decade than Boston, Austin and San Francisco, according to a recent study from the Citizens Budget Commission, a nonprofit research group.

Gov. Kathy Hochul has [*pledged to make housing issues*](https://twitter.com/GovKathyHochul/status/1598468881294585856) a central part of her agenda in 2023. Mayor Eric Adams last week said the city would try to [*simplify development regulations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/08/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-affordable-housing-crisis.html), including eliminating environmental reviews for some residential buildings, in order to speed construction of new housing.

On Wednesday, Ms. Hochul and Mr. Adams both appeared together at a meeting of business and civic leaders and said they would [*jointly push for a slew of new ideas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/14/nyregion/adams-hochul-ny-plan.html) designed to address the housing shortage, including removing some state limits on residential building size, legalizing basement and garage homes and even creating an appeals process for when local governments reject new development.

Adrienne Adams, the City Council speaker, [*has lobbied her colleagues*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/22/nyregion/innovation-queens-nyc-housing.html) to support developments in their neighborhoods. On Thursday, she said at a news conference that she would push all neighborhoods across the city, particularly wealthier ones, to set housing production targets and ask the administration to invest more in homes that are affordable to the lowest-income New Yorkers.

“New York can be a leader on equitable housing development that is lacking in so many areas across our nation,” she said.

Politicians on the left have said they would want far more public investment to keep homes affordable at below market rents and help lower-income New Yorkers who bear the brunt of the crisis, but some [*have even softened their opposition to developments*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/16/nyregion/politicians-housing-crisis-real-estate.html) that include market-rate apartments.

Local neighborhood leaders, who are often more inclined to resist big changes to their areas, have so far been less vocal about coming up with proposals to expand housing.

There are 59 community boards across New York City, each representing a different geographic area. Boards each have up to 50 volunteer members along with [*paid administrative staff*](https://www.thecity.nyc/civic-newsroom/2022/1/12/22880779/how-to-join-a-community-board-and-what-to-know-before-you-apply), who are appointed by borough presidents, and while they do not have any formal power to veto projects, they must be consulted on many land use changes, and their opinions can be influential.

Some community boards have endorsed development projects, but they have earned a reputation for pushing back.

Earlier this year, a community board in the Bronx [*voted against a new housing project*](http://bronxink.org/2022/09/29/29181-all-eyes-on-throggs-neck-amid-new-york-citys-affordable-housing-crisis/)that will add almost 350 homes — including almost half that would rent at below-market rates — to an area with a relatively high share of single-family homes. The project was ultimately approved by the City Council.

Manhattan Community Board 4 itself has [*drawn scrutiny over opposing a proposal*](https://www.curbed.com/2022/10/affordable-housing-lirio-apartments-nyc.html) for an affordable housing development in Hell’s Kitchen. In April, the [*board voted against the proposal*](https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2022/03/01-CHKLU_HHHS-Letter-MTA-Site-Proposed-Affordable-Housing-FINAL-compressed.pdf), saying it had too many units slated for very low-income New Yorkers, and not enough for middle-income residents.

The board’s new plan is a combination of several different strategies.

One part calls for building housing on sites owned or controlled by the state or its economic development corporation, including the former Bayview Women’s Prison at the intersection of West 20th Street and 11th Avenue and a parking lot on West 46th Street. Together, the board estimates those proposals could add more than 5,400 new homes.

Another part of the plan, which would require city approval, seeks to rezone four areas. It would allow for more residential development near Hudson Yards and expand a “special district” in west Chelsea. Those proposals, the board estimates, could add more than 15,000 homes.

The community board also wants to crack down on illegal hotels and prevent illegal demolition of residential buildings. It also hopes to work with the state to prevent more than 1,600 units affordable to lower incomes — about $80,000 per year for a family of four, for example — from becoming market-rate units when their tax exemptions expire.

The plan, which incorporates earlier efforts to develop in the district, calls for more than 37,000 homes to be added to the community district overall. That includes the addition of 23,000 new homes, the preservation of more than 3,700 homes and thousands of homes under development and already completed between 2015 and 2019.

Of the 37,000 total, more than 14,000 units would be considered affordable for middle-class and ***working-class*** New Yorkers, the board estimates.

Vicki L. Been, faculty director of New York University’s Furman Center, said she could not think of another example in recent memory of a community board creating such a detailed and ambitious plan.

“They are being constructive,” said Ms. Been, a former deputy mayor for housing and economic development under former Mayor Bill de Blasio, who worked with community boards on housing projects. “They are stepping up to the plate.”

But she said allowing community boards to set their own priorities could clash with citywide needs.

The plan, for example, calls for many of the new homes considered “affordable” to target middle-income people, such as families of four earning more than $133,400 a year. But the city may want and need to prioritize and invest in homes affordable for lower earners in relatively wealthier parts of Manhattan.

“The positive is, they’re taking the initiative,” she said. “But the downside is, you can’t have 59 different housing policies.”

PHOTOS: A community board in Manhattan is soliciting housing on sites owned or controlled by the state, such as the former Bayview Women’s Prison in Chelsea.; JEFFREY LeFRANCOIS, chairman of Manhattan Community Board 4.; A large parking lot in Hell’s Kitchen was flagged by the board as a possible site for an affordable housing development. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SASHA MASLOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A13.

**Load-Date:** December 15, 2022

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[***Universities, Meet Monasteries***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68BB-W4B1-JBG3-652J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 28, 2023 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 8; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 2675 words

**Byline:** By Molly Worthen

**Body**

Nery Rodriguez just graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a major in economics, but one of the most significant courses she took there had nothing to do with marginal utility or game theory. When she registered last fall for the seminar known around campus as the monk class, she wasn't sure what to expect.

''You give up technology, and you can't talk for a month,'' Ms. Rodriguez told me. ''That's all I'd heard. I didn't know why.'' What she found was a course that challenges students to rethink the purpose of education, especially at a time when machine learning is getting way more press than the human kind.

On the first day of class -- officially called Living Deliberately -- Justin McDaniel, a professor of Southeast Asian and religious studies, reviewed the rules. Each week, students would read about a different monastic tradition and adopt some of its practices. Later in the semester, they would observe a one-month vow of silence (except for discussions during Living Deliberately) and fast from technology, handing over their phones to him.

Yes, he knew they had other classes, jobs and extracurriculars; they could make arrangements to do that work silently and without a computer. (Dr. McDaniel offers to talk to any instructors, employers or relatives who have concerns.)

The class eased into the vow of silence, first restricting speech to 100 words a day. Other rules began on Day 1: no jewelry or makeup in class. Men and women sat separately and wore different ''habits'': white shirts for the men, women in black. (Nonbinary and transgender students sat with the gender of their choice.)

Dr. McDaniel discouraged them from sharing personal information; they should get to know one another only through ideas. ''He gave us new names, based on our birth time and day, using a Thai birth chart,'' Sophie Ouyang, who also took the class and just graduated with a major in nursing, said. ''We were practicing living a monastic life. We had to wake up at 5 a.m. and journal every 30 minutes.'' If you tried to cruise to a C, you missed the point: ''I realized the only way for me to get the most out of this class was to experience it all,'' she said. (She did get Dr. McDaniel's permission to break her vow of silence in order to talk to patients during her clinical rotation.)

Dr. McDaniel also teaches a course called Existential Despair. Students meet once a week from 5 p.m. to midnight in a building with comfy couches, turn over their phones and curl up to read an assigned novel (cover to cover) in one sitting -- books like James Baldwin's ''Giovanni's Room'' and José Saramago's ''Blindness.'' Then they stay up late discussing it. ''The course is not about hope, overcoming things, heroic stories,'' Dr. McDaniel said. Many of the books ''start sad. In the middle they're sad. They stay sad. I'm not concerned with their 20-year-old self. I'm worried about them at my age, dealing with breast cancer, their dad dying, their child being an addict, a career that never worked out -- so when they're dealing with the bigger things in life, they know they're not alone.''

Both courses have long wait lists. Students are hungry for a low-tech, introspective experience -- and not just students in the Ivy League. Research suggests that underprivileged young people have far fewer opportunities to think for unbroken stretches of time, so they may need even more space in college to develop what social scientists call cognitive endurance.

Yet the most visible higher ed trends are moving in the other direction. Rather than ban phones and laptops from class, some professors are brainstorming ways to embrace students' tech addictions with class Facebook and Instagram accounts, audience response apps -- and perhaps even including the friends and relatives whom students text during class as virtual participants in class discussion.

Then there's that other unwelcome classroom visitor: artificial intelligence. A survey of 1,000 college students by the college-ranking website Intelligent found that 30 percent of respondents had already used ChatGPT to complete a written assignment. Some campus experts on teaching encourage faculty members to stop worrying and love the bot by designing assignments that ''help students develop their prompting skills'' or ''use ChatGPT to generate a first draft,'' according to a tip sheet produced by the Center for Teaching and Learning at Washington University in St. Louis.

It's not at all clear that we want a future dominated by A.I.'s amoral, Cheez Whiz version of human thought. It is abundantly clear that texting, tagging and chatbotting are making students miserable right now. One recent national survey found that 60 percent of American college students reported the symptoms of at least one mental health problem and that 15 percent said they were considering suicide. A recent meta-analysis of 36 studies of college students' mental health found a significant correlation between longer screen time and higher risk of anxiety and depression. And while social media can sometimes help suffering students connect with peers, research on teenagers and college students suggests that overall, the support of a virtual community cannot compensate for the vortex of gossip, bullying and Instagram posturing that is bound to rot any normal person's self-esteem.

We need an intervention: maybe not a vow of silence but a bold move to put the screens, the pinging notifications and the creepy humanoid A.I. chatbots in their proper place. They are our tools, not our masters. That doesn't mean a futile attempt to wall off higher education from the modern world; it does mean selectively returning to the university's roots in the monastic schools of medieval Europe and rekindling the old-fashioned quest for meaning.

Colleges should offer a radically low-tech first-year program for students who want to apply: a secular monastery within the modern university, with a curated set of courses that ban glowing rectangles of any kind from the classroom. Students could opt to live in dorms that restrict technology, too. We can work individually with students who have accessibility accommodations to find the best low-tech solutions for them (like turning off Wi-Fi, rationing screen time and deleting attention-guzzling apps).

I prophesy that universities that do this will be surprised by how much demand there is. I frequently talk to students who resent the distracting laptops all around them during class. They feel the tug of the ''imaginary string attaching me to my phone, where I have to constantly check it,'' as Ms. Rodriguez, who took the monk class and Existential Despair, put it. Many, if not most, students want the elusive experience of uninterrupted thought, the kind where a hash of half-baked notions slowly becomes an idea about the world.

Even if your goal is effective use of the latest chatbot, it behooves you to read books in hard copies and read enough of them to learn what an elegant paragraph sounds like. How else will students recognize when ChatGPT churns out decent prose instead of bureaucratic drivel?

Most important, students need head space to think about their ultimate values. Contemplation and marathon reading are not ends in themselves or mere vacations from real life but are among the best ways to figure out your own answer to the question of what a human being is for -- a question that is all the more pressing at a time when the robots soon may be coming for the white-collar jobs in medicine, law and finance that the secular intelligentsia treats as shorthand for personal fulfillment. To use the trendy pedagogical jargon, here are the student learning outcomes universities should focus on: cognitive endurance and existential clarity.

Colleges could do all this in classes integrated with general education requirements: ideally, a sequence of great books seminars focused on classic texts from across different civilizations. When students finish, they can move right into their area of specialization and wire up their skulls with all the technology they want, armed with the habits and perspective to do so responsibly. Risk-averse college presidents and deans, I'm looking at you: If you can't quite see starting this as a full-year program, try piloting it as summer school or a winter-break technology detox course.

But before we domesticate the monastic impulse, it's worth learning from the radicals. Dr. McDaniel, the religious studies professor at Penn, has a long history with different monastic traditions. He grew up in Philadelphia, educated by Hungarian Catholic monks. After college, he volunteered in Thailand and Laos and lived as a Buddhist monk.

As his teaching career took him from Ohio University to the University of California, Riverside, and then to Penn, he found that no amount of academic reading could help undergraduates truly understand why ''people voluntarily take on celibacy, give up drinking and put themselves under authorities they don't need to,'' he told me. So for 20 years, he has helped students try it out -- and question some of their assumptions about what it means to find themselves.

''On college campuses, these students think they're all being individuals, going out and being wild,'' he said. ''But they're in a playpen. I tell them, 'You know you'll be protected by campus police and lawyers. You have this entire apparatus set up for you. You think you're being an individual, but look at your four friends: They all look exactly like you and sound like you. We exist in these very strict structures we like to pretend don't exist.''' (It's worth mentioning that Dr. McDaniel describes his politics as ''philosophical anarchist.'') His course offers a chance to temporarily exchange those unconscious structures for a set of deliberate, countercultural ones.

No one understands discipline better than the Benedictines, members of the monastic order who follow the rule written by St. Benedict in the sixth century. Undergraduates at Belmont Abbey College outside Charlotte, N.C., share their quadrangles, sidewalks and even their chess clubs with Benedictine monks who live in an abbey in the middle of campus. ''For the last 1,500 years, Benedictines have had to deal with technology,'' Placid Solari, the abbot there, told me. ''For us, the question is: How do you use the tool so it supports and enhances your purpose or mission and you don't get owned by it?''

Mental distraction was a struggle even for the ancient ascetics who didn't have Snapchat. When the mind wanders and a monk wants ''to bind it fast with the firmest purpose of heart, as if with chains, while we are making the attempt, it slips away from the inmost recesses of the heart swifter than a snake,'' John Cassian, a fourth-century monk, wrote. Many monasteries don't totally reject the latest technology, but they are mindful of how they use it. Abbot Placid told me that for novices at his monastery, ''part of the formation is discipline to learn how to control technology use.'' After this initial time of limited phone and TV ''to wean them away from overdependence on technology and its stimulation,'' they get more access and mostly make their own choices.

Evan Lutz graduated this May from Belmont Abbey with a major in theology. He stressed the special Catholic context of Belmont's resident monks; if you experiment with monastic practices without investigating the whole worldview, it can become a shallow kind of mindfulness tourism. The monks at Belmont Abbey do more than model contemplation and focus. Their presence compels even non-Christians on campus to think seriously about vocation and the meaning of life. ''Either what the monks are doing is valuable and based on something true, or it's completely ridiculous,'' Mr. Lutz said. ''In both cases, there's something striking there, and it asks people a question.''

Pondering ultimate questions and cultivating cognitive endurance should not be luxury goods. David Peña-Guzmán, who teaches philosophy at San Francisco State University, read about Dr. McDaniel's Existential Despair course and decided he wanted to create a similar one. He called it the Reading Experiment. A small group of humanities majors gathered once every two weeks for five and a half hours in a seminar room equipped with couches and a big round table. They read authors ranging from Jean-Paul Sartre to Frantz Fanon. ''At the beginning of every class I'd ask students to turn off their phones and put them in 'the Basket of Despair,' which was a plastic bag,'' he told me. ''I had an extended chat with them about accessibility. The point is not to take away the phone for its own sake but to take away our primary sources of distraction. Students could keep the phone if they needed it. But all of them chose to part with their phones.''

Dr. Peña-Guzmán's students are mostly ***working-class***, first-generation college students. He encouraged them to be honest about their anxieties by sharing his own: ''I said, 'I'm a very slow reader, and it's likely some or most of you will get further in the text than me because I'm E.S.L. and read quite slowly in English.' Once I put that on the table, other students went around and also opened up about their experience of reading and not trusting themselves to maintain attention for a long period.''

For his students, the struggle to read long texts is ''tied up with the assumption that reading can happen while multitasking and constantly interacting with technologies that are making demands on their attention, even at the level of a second,'' Dr. Peña-Guzmán said. ''These draw you out of the flow of reading. You get back to the reading, but you have to restart the sentence or even the paragraph. Often, because of these technological interventions into the reading experience, students almost experience reading backward -- as constant regress, without any sense of progress. The more time they spend, the less progress they make.''

Dr. Peña-Guzmán dismissed the idea that a course like his is suitable only for students who don't have to worry about holding down jobs or paying off student debt. ''I'm worried by this assumption that certain experiences that are important for the development of personality, for a certain kind of humanistic and spiritual growth, should be reserved for the elite, especially when we know those experiences are also sources of cultural capital,'' he said. Courses like the Reading Experiment are practical, too, he added. ''I can't imagine a field that wouldn't require some version of the skill of focused attention.''

The point is not to reject new technology but to help students retain the upper hand in their relationship with it. Ms. Rodriguez said that before she took Living Deliberately and Existential Despair, she didn't distinguish technology from education. ''I didn't think education ever went without technology. I think that's really weird now. You don't need to adapt every piece of technology to be able to learn better or more,'' she said. ''It can form this dependency.''

The point of college is to help students become independent humans who can choose the gods they serve and the rules they follow rather than allow someone else to choose for them. The first step is dethroning the small silicon idol in their pocket -- and making space for the uncomfortable silence and questions that follow. The experience stuck with Ms. Ouyang, the nursing major. ''I didn't look forward to getting my phone back,'' she said.

Molly Worthen is the author, most recently, of the audio course ''Charismatic Leaders Who Remade America'' and an associate professor of history at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

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**Graphic**

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[***Five International Movies to Stream Right Now***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62DW-5C51-DXY4-X1RN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 11, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1337 words

**Byline:** By Devika Girish

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: Shardul Bhardwaj and some of his co-stars in the satire ''Eeb Allay Ooo!'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY NA MA PRODUCTIONS)

**Load-Date:** April 12, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Five International Movies to Stream Right Now***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62DF-5B91-DXY4-X4MK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 10, 2021 Saturday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk

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**Byline:** By Devika Girish

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: Shardul Bhardwaj in ''Eeb Allay Ooo!'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY Na Ma Productions FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 10, 2021

**End of Document**



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The New York Times

April 9, 2021 Friday 09:59 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1341 words

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**Highlight:** Take a cinematic trip around the world with these fine options.

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Larissa, a German woman, arrives with her 9-year-old twins at her husband’s family home in the Spanish Sierra Morena mountains, where her mother-in-law and sister-in-law live a quiet, secluded life. Her husband is supposed to join them soon, but when his flight is delayed, the three women and two kids bide their time, waiting for his arrival.

This is the entirety of what might be described as “plot” in Salka Tiziana’s “For the Time Being,” an atmospheric, slow-burning feature that turns uneventfulness into something thrilling. Larissa (Melanie Straub) and her in-laws communicate awkwardly across a language barrier, while the boys (Jon and Ole Bader) explore the lush outdoors with curiosity. The film’s growing sense of intrigue derives from sensory stimuli rather than narrative. Nearby wildfires make the air shimmer, and strange explosions from a military test punctuate the passing time. As days go by with no news of the father, Tiziana fills the characters’ uneasy limbo with thick, intoxicating natural sounds (whooshing winds, chirping cicadas) while alternating between drone shots and crackling, 16-millimeter images of the sun-faded landscape. It’s a lovely film to watch while at home during the pandemic, both for its transporting shots of the mountains and its charged depiction of stillness and anticipation.

PHOTO: Shardul Bhardwaj and some of his co-stars in the satire “Eeb Allay Ooo!” (PHOTOGRAPH BY NA MA PRODUCTIONS)

**Load-Date:** April 16, 2021

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[***New Jersey Governor Sets His Sights Beyond Term Limits and Trenton***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67RY-3XF1-DXY4-X18R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 12, 2023 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 18

**Length:** 1727 words

**Byline:** By Tracey Tully

**Body**

The New Jersey governor, re-elected in 2021, is term-limited and has an eye on Washington.

It was a whirlwind few days for New Jersey's term-limited governor, Philip D. Murphy.

On a Tuesday in mid-February he publicly chided Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, a Republican, by name, calling his education policies ''shameful.'' The next day at noon, he proposed requiring all new cars sold after 2035 to be electric, following California's lead. By early Thursday, Mr. Murphy, a Democrat, had made an unannounced stop in Ukraine en route to a security conference in Germany.

Back home in Jersey, the message was clear: The governor's slow-windup romance with Washington was now a full-boil courtship, though his primary audience might have trouble finding Trenton on a map.

''You don't fade into the woodwork if you have national ambitions,'' said Patrick Murray, director of the Polling Institute at Monmouth University, who for decades has watched New Jersey politicians use the state's quirky off-year election cycle and proximity to New York's media market as a springboard toward higher office.

''You never know when opportunity might strike.''

The 2024 presidential contest is well underway. President Biden is expected to run for a second term and the list of Republicans who have announced campaigns or are expected to run already includes Mr. DeSantis (who did not respond to Mr. Murphy's criticism), former President Donald J. Trump, former Vice President Mike Pence, and Nikki Haley, a former governor of South Carolina.

Mr. Murphy has consistently said he would be Mr. Biden's No. 1 booster if he runs again, and he recently signed on to an advisory board of Democratic loyalists who are expected to be deployed as Biden surrogates when the campaign ramps up.

Still, Mr. Murphy, a wealthy former Democratic National Committee finance chairman and ambassador to Germany who amassed a fortune at the investment bank Goldman Sachs, has never completely closed the door to running for the White House should the president's plans change.

And, either way, he appears as intent as ever at cultivating a national image, aware, perhaps, that there are often consolation prizes.

On Saturday, Mr. Murphy will try to spit-polish his résumé with humor when he takes the mic at the annual Gridiron Club dinner, a famously irreverent white-tie-and-tails roast that draws Washington's top journalists and political insiders. (The other speaker that night will be Mr. Pence.)

Close associates say Mr. Murphy, who declined to comment for this article, is genuinely unsure about the job he might want next, but they speculate that he could be interested in again being an ambassador or perhaps even secretary of state.

A graduate of Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania who grew up outside of Boston, he now counts the musician Jon Bon Jovi among his closest friends. But he comes from humble means, the youngest of four children in a ***working-class*** Irish-Catholic family. Only his mother graduated from high school; his father worked for a time managing a liquor store near their home.

Always social, Mr. Murphy has become a retail-politics pro. He gamely drapes his arm around shoulders when asked to pose for selfies, his grin wide and pointer finger aimed, showman-style, toward the new best friend at his side.

But it is the hundreds of off-camera calls he made to families that lost relatives to Covid-19 that his chief of staff, George Helmy, cites when calling him ''one of the most authentic human beings I've ever seen.''

Mr. Murphy came to Trenton with few allies, yet has managed a notable share of wins.

During his first term, New Jersey lawmakers increased taxes on income over $1 million, approved a $15 minimum wage, legalized marijuana, strengthened gun-control laws, locked in paid sick leave for workers and reduced long-ignored pension debt by billions of dollars, resulting in several upgrades to the state's credit ratings.

But after being re-elected in 2021 by a narrower margin than expected, Mr. Murphy has made an overt effort to appeal more to moderate voters, leaving some of his left-leaning base frustrated by what they see as a lack of urgency to finish up strong.

Michael Feldman, a communications consultant and friend of Mr. Murphy, said none of the governor's policy victories had been ''a layup.''

''His ambition now is to try to help advance the agenda that he's pursued in New Jersey -- to help advance some of these issues at a national level,'' said Mr. Feldman, who was a senior adviser to former Vice President Al Gore.

''I don't know what the job is or will be, but there's plenty of places that a person with his experience could be helpful in getting some of these things done.''

New Jersey governors cannot serve more than two consecutive terms. And for the past year observers wondering about Mr. Murphy's next move have taken note of his suddenly youthful hairdo, hip new glasses and shifting rhetoric.

The governor who once suggested that New Jersey was not the best fit for residents or businesses concerned mainly about low taxes now describes himself as a ''coldblooded capitalist.'' His budget address concluded with an ode to the value of hard work. And his State of the State stressed the importance of bipartisanship, buried in a humblebrag about his friendship with the Republican governor of Utah, the vice chairman of the National Governors Association, which Mr. Murphy now leads.

Mr. Murphy, 65, is also chairman of the Democratic Governors Association -- the first governor to hold both leadership posts at the same time. He has leveraged the roles to his advantage.

During a recent trip to Los Angeles for the National Governors Association, he and his wife, Tammy, dined with leaders of film studios to pitch New Jersey's assets as a moviemaking hub, while also raising funds for the four political accounts they now juggle. Alliances he has formed have led to speaking gigs in Nevada and Florida. And both of the governors' associations are holding major conferences this year in New Jersey.

There are younger Democratic governors with bigger names or bigger bank accounts, including Gavin Newsom of California, Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan and J.B. Pritzker of Illinois.

But during Mr. Biden's presidency, New Jersey has been a regular stop for members of the administration, with at least two visits apiece by the president, the first lady, Vice President Kamala Harris and Pete Buttigieg, the transportation secretary.

If Mr. Biden were to win re-election and tap Mr. Murphy for a job he found enticing enough to take, it could mean leaving Trenton before his term ends in 2026, making the race for governor -- already shaping up to be a grab-the-popcorn thriller -- even livelier.

Still, even among liberals inclined to support him, Mr. Murphy's second-term reviews have grown increasingly mixed.

Last year he reinstituted a bear hunt he had vowed to outlaw, enraging animal rights activists. He opened the door to private development in Liberty State Park, the state's largest and busiest public oasis, at the urging of groups funded by the billionaire owner of an adjacent golf club. And there are so many judicial vacancies that some counties have had to halt divorce trials.

A coalition of environmental groups is suing the state to force Mr. Murphy to follow through on ambitious climate-change rules he ordered as part of a 2019 law. ''A poster child for actions not meeting the rhetoric,'' David Pringle, a leader of the coalition, said.

And residents of communities as disparate as Jersey City, Newark and Gibbstown, in the rural southwest portion of the state, are furious over Mr. Murphy's support for expanding the turnpike near New York City and failing to stop six new fossil-fuel projects, which are expected to worsen air quality in minority communities already overburdened by pollution.

''The governor has a lot of words for environmental justice but does not actually demonstrate leadership on behalf of our community,'' said Maria Lopez-Nuñez, who lives in Newark and is fighting to block the construction of a backup power plant in the city's Ironbound neighborhood.

Ms. Lopez-Nuñez is also a member of Mr. Biden's White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council.

''I would love to cheer on the governor,'' she said. ''But I need to see the work.''

A spokesman for Mr. Murphy, Mahen Gunaratna, said some opposition was to be expected, particularly after a first term in which Mr. Murphy delivered on so many of the campaign promises his progressive base held dear. His second-term priorities are hewing closer to the center.

At least part of his change in tone is tied to November's legislative races. Democratic leaders who control the State Legislature remain jittery over the loss of seven seats in 2021, and Republicans believe that they are in striking range of regaining majority control -- an outcome that would undermine Mr. Murphy's legacy.

A January poll by Monmouth University suggested that Mr. Murphy's popularity was holding steady at 52 percent. But fewer than a third of those surveyed said he would make a good president.

Only one governor from New Jersey has ever been elected president: Woodrow Wilson, whose memory is now so tainted by his racist policies that Princeton removed his name from its school of public and international affairs.

Other New Jersey luminaries have also had designs on the White House in recent years: Senator Bill Bradley was eclipsed in the 2000 Democratic primary by Mr. Gore; Gov. Chris Christie ended his campaign in 2016 before endorsing Mr. Trump; and Senator Cory Booker bowed out of the last presidential contest after a yearlong campaign.

Mr. Booker, 53, a Democrat and former mayor of Newark, appears to be keeping his options as open as Mr. Murphy. ''I'm not running in '24 if Joe Biden is running,'' Mr. Booker said in a recent television interview.

''My goal in life is to put more 'indivisible' back into this 'one nation under God,''' he said, adding, ''so we'll see about the future.''

Jennifer Palmieri, a Democratic strategist who was director of communications for President Barack Obama, has known Mr. Murphy since 2005 and considers him a friend. She said she did not know what he was hoping to do next. But, she added, ''it does not seem like he's anywhere near done.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/11/nyregion/phil-murphy-new-jersey.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/11/nyregion/phil-murphy-new-jersey.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Gov. Phil Murphy stressed the importance of bipartisanship in his State of the State address. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A18.

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2023

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[***Test Your Knowledge on the Swings of the 2020 Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642Y-BSP1-DXY4-X53G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1765 words

**Byline:** By Ryan Matsumoto and Toni Monkovic

**Body**

At the one-year mark of the 2020 election, test yourself on its key demographic trends, some of which have emerged only in recent months as deeper analyses have become available. No data source is perfect, but the broad direction of shifts have become clearer. (The last question of the quiz is subjective, but we think there's a right answer.)

1. The first question measures your baseline knowledge. What was Joe Biden's final margin of victory in the popular vote?

A. 0 to 3 percentage points

B. 3 to 6 percentage points

C. 6 to 9 percentage points

Answer: Mr. Biden won by almost 4.5 percentage points, 51.3 percent to 46.9 percent, which translated to a popular vote victory of just over seven million votes and an Electoral College victory of 306 to 232.

2. Where did Biden make his biggest gains relative to Hillary Clinton's showing in 2016?

A. Suburbs

B. Cities

C. Rural areas

Answer: Mr. Biden made his biggest gains in the suburbs.

According to Pew Research, Donald J. Trump won suburban voters in 2016, 47 percent to 45 percent, but Mr. Biden won them in 2020, 54-43. In Michigan, for example, he did very well in Oakland County. While Mrs. Clinton won this large suburban county outside of Detroit by eight points in 2016, Mr. Biden won it by 14 points in 2020. Similar gains in suburban areas outside of Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Phoenix and Atlanta were crucial to Mr. Biden's victory.

Mr. Biden's suburban surge may be explained in part by gains with independent voters, who favored him by nine points after backing Mr. Trump by one point in 2016, according to Pew.

3. Which of these two statements is accurate?

A. Biden made significant gains among women

B. Biden made significant gains among men

Answer: Democratic support among women held relatively steady -- Mr. Biden won them convincingly -- but he gained significant ground among men, according to the Democratic data firm Catalist.

The Democratic share of the male vote increased to 46 percent in 2020, from 41 percent in 2016. Both Pew and Catalist suggest that the gender gap decreased from 2016 to 2020. One possible reason among many might be sexism. Mr. Trump's opponent was a woman in 2016, and a man in 2020.

4. Were Trump's gains with Hispanic voters primarily regional, as in South Florida and South Texas, or did he make those gains throughout the country?

A. Primarily South Florida and South Texas

B. Throughout the country

Answer: Mr. Trump's gains with Hispanic voters were throughout the country.

As an example, Mr. Biden underperformed Mrs. Clinton overall in Los Angeles County, the Bronx and Philadelphia County. While he still won these counties easily, Mr. Trump's vote share increased to 27 percent from 22 percent in Los Angeles County, to 16 percent from 9 percent in the Bronx, and to 18 percent from 15 percent in Philadelphia. A look at precinct data tells us that much of Mr. Trump's gains in these diverse, urban counties can be attributed to gains with Latino voters.

Pew data suggests Democrats especially lost ground among Hispanic voters without college degrees, but analysts may never fully sort out all the possible reasons for the decline. Hispanic voters still supported Mr. Biden overall, giving him 63 percent of the two-party vote share, according to Catalist.

5. Did Biden gain ground among white Americans without a college degree relative to Hillary Clinton's performance in 2016?

A. He lost ground

B. He gained ground

Answer: Democrats hoped Mr. Biden was the right person to gain ground with these voters, and it appears he did.

Data from Pew Research suggests that he lost white voters without a college degree by 32 points, an improvement on Mrs. Clinton's 36-point loss among this demographic. Catalist also showed a slight gain for Mr. Biden. But his success with this group may have varied by geography. He continued to struggle in some heavily white ***working-class*** counties in the Midwest, but appeared to have made substantial gains in white ***working-class*** counties throughout the Northeast and Pacific Northwest.

6. Did Biden make significant gains among married men or among single men?

A. Among single men

B. Among married men

Answer: Mr. Biden made significant gains among married men.

Data from Pew Research suggests that Mr. Trump won married men, 54 percent to 44 percent, down significantly from a 62-32 margin in 2016. Catalist found a smaller but still meaningful shift toward Mr. Biden among married men.

7. Did Trump gain or lose ground among voters who are part of veteran households?

A. He gained ground

B. He lost ground

C. He did about the same

Answer: According to Pew Research, Mr. Trump lost ground with veteran households.

He won veteran households, 55 percent to 43 percent, down from his 61-35 percent advantage with them in 2016. The American Communities Project also showed a shift toward Democrats in and around military bases.

8. Did Trump gain ground among white Catholics or lose ground with them?

A. He gained ground

B. He lost ground

C. He did about the same

Answer: Mr. Trump lost ground with white Catholics.

While Pew Research says Mr. Trump won white non-Hispanic Catholic voters, 57 percent to 42 percent, this was a decrease from his 64-31 winning margin in 2016. The gains by Mr. Biden, who is Catholic, among white Catholics may have contributed to his strong showing in Northeastern states like Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.

9. What about Trump's performance with Black voters relative to 2016?

A. Trump appeared to gain some ground with Black voters

B. Trump appeared to lose some ground with Black voters

C. Trump appeared to do about the same with Black voters

Answer: Mr. Trump appeared to gain with Black voters.

Data from Catalist suggests that he won 10 percent of the Black vote in 2020, an increase from 7 percent in 2016. These findings are consistent with precinct results from predominantly Black areas of cities like Chicago, Philadelphia and Washington. As Catalist pointed out, despite this small shift toward Mr. Trump, an increased turnout by Black voters resulted in more net Democratic votes in 2020 than in 2016, including in some battleground states.

10. How did Trump do with Asian American voters relative to 2016?

A. Trump gained significant ground with Asian American voters

B. Trump lost significant ground with Asian American voters

C. Trump appeared to do roughly the same with Asian American voters

Answer: Mr. Trump appeared to do roughly the same with Asian American voters, within a percentage point, possibly gaining slightly.

Data from Catalist suggests that Democrats dropped one point in the two-party vote share with this group, to 67 percent.

However, swings among Asian American voters varied greatly depending on ethnicity and location. Mr. Trump made strong gains in predominantly Vietnamese neighborhoods, perhaps because of his anti-socialist message. He also made gains in heavily Asian American precincts in large cities like Chicago, Philadelphia and New York. However, as theorized by the data scientist David Shor, Mr. Trump's gains with Asian American voters in ***working-class*** areas may have been balanced by losses in more affluent neighborhoods.

A very high turnout increase for this group was a big net gain for Democrats.

11. Which party appeared to make gains in neighborhoods with a particularly high concentration of Jewish voters?

A. Democrats

B. Republicans

C. Neither

Answer: Mr. Trump appeared to have made substantial gains in such neighborhoods.

There were sizable swings toward Mr. Trump in areas with high percentages of Orthodox Jews, like Rockland County, N.Y., and parts of Brooklyn like Borough Park. In California, Mr. Trump made double-digit gains in Beverly Hills, which has a large Persian Jewish population. These voters may have shifted right because of some of Mr. Trump's policies related to the Middle East, such as moving the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem; exiting the Iran deal; killing Qassim Suleimani, a powerful Iranian commander. Another possible factor was Democrats' support of Covid-19 restrictions on gatherings at houses of worship.

12. Did the Republicans' advantage in the Electoral College relative to the popular vote grow in 2020, decline, or stay roughly the same?

A. It grew

B. It stayed the same

C. It declined

Answer: The Republicans' edge grew, from 2.9 percentage points to around 3.8 points.

In 2016, the state that gave Mr. Trump his decisive 270th electoral vote was Wisconsin, which he won by 0.8 points. Given that Hillary Clinton won the popular vote by 2.1 points, the state that decided the election was 2.9 points more Republican than the nation. In 2020, the state that gave Mr. Biden his decisive 270th electoral vote was also Wisconsin, which he won by 0.6 points. Given that Mr. Biden won the popular vote by nearly 4.5 points, the state that decided the election was 3.8 points more Republican than the nation. In other words, Mr. Biden could have won the popular vote by 3.7 percentage points and still lost the election.

13. Bonus question: Which describes the election better?

A. It was quite close

B. It was fairly decisive

Answer: Admittedly this one is somewhat subjective, but most analysts agree that there's a stronger case that the election was quite close, given that it's the Electoral College that counts.

Although Mr. Biden won the popular vote by nearly 4.5 percentage points and won more than 300 electoral votes, it would not have taken much of a shift in the political environment for Mr. Trump to win. If the right distribution of about 21,500 people -- across three key states -- had voted for Mr. Trump instead of Mr. Biden, Mr. Biden would have lost Georgia, Arizona and Wisconsin, leaving the Electoral College at a 269-269 tie. In that case, Mr. Trump most likely would have won the election on the basis of Republicans' advantage in U.S. House delegations by state.

The 21,500 people who decided the election in a nation of 330 million could fit in one large basketball arena. But it's also true that Democrats had multiple paths to victory: Three states needed to flip, not one, and those states were in different regions, distinct from one another. In contrast with the close 2016 Republican victory based on three key Northern states, the Democrats didn't have all their demographic eggs in one basket.

There's no official right answer, obviously, but consider whether the election was closer than you might have thought.

Ryan Matsumoto is a contributing analyst with Inside Elections.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/05/upshot/how-well-do-you-understand-the-swings-in-the-2020-election.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/05/upshot/how-well-do-you-understand-the-swings-in-the-2020-election.html)

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[***The Democrats’ Historic Successes and Contemporary Failures; nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YW-CH51-JBG3-61G9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1482 words

**Byline:** Timothy Noah

**Highlight:** Two books, “What It Took to Win,” by Michael Kazin, and “Left Behind,” by Lily Geismer, trace the history of the Democratic Party from its origins down to the present.

**Body**

WHAT IT TOOK TO WIN

A History of the Democratic Party

By Michael Kazin

LEFT BEHIND

The Democrats’ Failed Attempt to Solve Inequality

By Lily Geismer

The Democrats have always been the party of working people, but for most of their existence they were really the party of working white men. Not until the 1960s did Democrats expand their mission decisively beyond what contemporary historians have called “egalitarian whiteness,” and not until the 1970s did they fully commit themselves to women’s rights.

This course correction, when it finally happened, made the party home to the majority of women voters and the overwhelming majority of Black voters. But it also prompted white flight. Before 1948, no Democrat entered the White House without winning a majority of the white vote. After 1964, no Democrat entered the White House without losing it. Democratic losses were especially heavy among the group whose interests once defined the party: the white male ***working class***.

The practical and moral challenges of repatriating this diaspora animate important books by two historians. “What It Took to Win,” by [*Michael Kazin*](https://gufaculty360.georgetown.edu/s/contact/00336000014RfPKAA0/michael-kazin), takes the story back to the party’s origins two centuries ago. “Left Behind,” by [*Lily Geismer*](https://www.cmc.edu/academic/faculty/profile/lily-geismer), picks up the narrative in the 1990s. Both authors conclude that the glue necessary to put Humpty Dumpty together again is the labor movement.

Kazin’s shrewd and very absorbing history begins by noting that the Democrats are the “oldest mass party in the world.” They were the first party anywhere to hold regular nominating conventions, the first to establish a national committee, the first to create a congressional caucus and the first to judge party politics as something better than a necessary evil. The founder of this political apparatus is widely presumed to be Thomas Jefferson, but the party, Kazin explains, was really the handiwork of Martin Van Buren, a largely forgotten figure whose one-term presidency turned out to be the least interesting thing about him.

Yes, Jefferson founded, in opposition to Alexander Hamilton’s Federalists, the Democratic-Republicans, more often called just the Republicans (thereby creating some confusion with today’s Republican Party, founded half a century later). The Democratic-Republicans certainly influenced Van Buren’s Democratic Party. But Hamilton’s and Jefferson’s rival crews weren’t political parties at all; they were more akin to caucuses. Jefferson “detested competitive political parties,” Kazin notes, and with fewer than 10 percent of eligible landholding males voting in 1800, there wouldn’t have been enough customers to sustain one.

The Democratic Party’s true origins lay in the Bucktails, a caucus that Van Buren created after becoming a New York state senator in 1813. Van Buren and his Bucktails successfully pressed to eliminate New York’s landholding requirement to vote. Other states followed suit, and in 1827 Van Buren, now a United States senator, joined with Thomas Ritchie, the editor and publisher of The Richmond Enquirer, to unite “the planters of the South and the plain Republicans of the North.” The organization that did this was initially called the “Jackson Party” in honor of its first presidential candidate, Andrew Jackson. But a dozen years later, it was renamed the Democratic Party.

It wasn’t obvious that the planters of the South and the “plain” (i.e., nonwealthy) Republicans of the North had much in common, but they did. They shared a loathing for Northern industrialists, high tariffs, financiers — and abolitionists. ***Working-class*** Northern whites (by the mid-19th century, mostly Irish) were no keener than Southern planters to free enslaved Blacks, because doing so would create competition for jobs. Abolitionists were typically Protestant ministers with little sympathy for the papist shanty-dwellers crowding their cities. The antislavery Unitarian minister Theodore Parker of Boston called the Irish “a wretched race of people for us to import and breed from.”

American history has produced two extended periods of Democratic dominance. These were (to borrow from the historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr.) the Age of Jackson and the Age of Roosevelt. The first began in 1828 and ended on the eve of the Civil War. The second began in 1932 and ended around 1970. During both periods, Democrats won all but three presidential elections and enjoyed two-house majorities in almost every Congress.

The intervening losses of power were brutal. From Abraham Lincoln’s 1860 victory to the century’s end, no Democrat except Grover Cleveland was elected president. Democrats survived their second dethronement better (probably because they didn’t lose a Civil War, just the Vietnam War). But Presidents Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama never commanded a political apparatus half so powerful as that of their 20th-century predecessors. Why not?

They’d lost the Solid South. Democrats spent four decades trying to win it back before mostly writing it off. Lily Geismer’s “Left Behind” tells this sad story through the prism of the Democratic Leadership Council, a nonprofit organization founded in 1984 that grew out of efforts by Representative Gillis Long of Louisiana,, chairman of the House Democratic Caucus and nephew to the former Louisiana governor and senator Huey Long Jr., to give the Democrats a more Southern flavor. Its followers favored trimming government waste and applying market-based solutions to social problems. They became known as New Democrats. One of them, the Arkansas governor Bill Clinton, used his chairmanship of the organization as a springboard into the White House.

Geismer’s book is a wonderfully detailed history of a now-extinct faith; the D.L.C. closed its doors in 2011. She’s especially good at tracing the evolution of the “microfinance” model developed by the Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus in Bangladesh, which was embraced with great enthusiasm by both Bill and Hillary Clinton. The trouble with microfinance was that, at least in the United States, very few low-income people could benefit from taking high-interest microloans of a few thousand dollars to start their own businesses. A better solution for nearly everyone, Geismer observes, was a job that paid a living wage.

There’s a tendency today on the left to judge the New Democrats by an impossible standard, and Geismer succumbs to this periodically. For example, she faults Bill Clinton’s praising of the working poor who “played by the rules” for serving to “stigmatize those poor people who allegedly did not.” That was one of three or four places where I scribbled in the margin, “Oh, please.” The New Democrats weren’t evil, just cautious, and in Bill Clinton’s case that was partly because his most ambitious proposal — Hillarycare — was blocked by a Democratic Congress that quickly turned Republican.

The Democrats’ main problem, both Kazin and Geismer recognize, is that they lost power and purpose by drifting away from labor. Franklin Roosevelt enacted labor protections early in his administration and created an army of supporters; union membership ballooned from three million in 1933 to 15 million in 1945. Kazin’s New Deal chapter is titled, fittingly, “An American Labor Party?”

It didn’t last. The two-time presidential nominee Adlai Stevenson of the 1950s was bafflingly indifferent to labor, and George Meany, who took control of the newly merged A.F.L.-C.I.O. in 1955, was at best a complacent mediocrity. Global trade took its toll. But the heaviest blow fell in 1947 when Republicans and Southern Democrats passed, over Harry Truman’s veto, the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act, which sharply restricted union recruiting. The percent of private-sector workers who belonged to unions started shrinking in the 1950s and it never stopped.

Eventually, the Democrats lost interest in labor and started courting Silicon Valley and college-educated urbanites. “The New Democrats deliberately aimed to constrain the power and influence of the labor movement,” Geismer writes. The enormity of this error became evident in 2016 when Donald Trump showed the Democrats that there weren’t enough college-educated urbanites to elect Hillary Clinton. Four years later the Democrats elected their first genuinely pro-labor president since Truman. Your current commander in chief wants to rebuild organized labor. If Congress lets him, maybe our children will one day call the next three decades the Age of Biden.

Timothy Noah is a staff writer at The New Republic and the author of “The Great Divergence: America’s Growing Inequality Crisis And What We Can Do About It.” WHAT IT TOOK TO WIN A History of the Democratic Party By Michael Kazin 416 pp. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. $35. LEFT BEHIND The Democrats’ Failed Attempt toSolve Inequality By Lily Geismer 448 pp. PublicAffairs. $30.

PHOTO: Democrats demonstrating for lower taxes, 1868. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** March 23, 2022

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[***Why Universities Should Be More Like Monasteries; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:689P-DXN1-DXY4-X1HR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2660 words

**Byline:** Molly Worthen

**Highlight:** College students need a taste of the monk’s life.

**Body**

Nery Rodriguez just graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a major in economics, but one of the most significant courses she took there had nothing to do with marginal utility or game theory. When she registered last fall for the seminar known around campus as the monk class, she wasn’t sure what to expect.

“You give up technology, and you can’t talk for a month,” Ms. Rodriguez told me. “That’s all I’d heard. I didn’t know why.” What she found was a course that challenges students to rethink the purpose of education, especially at a time when machine learning is getting way more press than the human kind.

On the first day of class — officially called Living Deliberately — Justin McDaniel, a professor of Southeast Asian and religious studies, reviewed the rules. Each week, students would read about a different monastic tradition and adopt some of its practices. Later in the semester, they would observe a one-month vow of silence (except for discussions during Living Deliberately) and fast from technology, handing over their phones to him.

Yes, he knew they had other classes, jobs and extracurriculars; they could make arrangements to do that work silently and without a computer. (Dr. McDaniel offers to talk to any instructors, employers or relatives who have concerns.)

The class eased into the vow of silence, first restricting speech to 100 words a day. Other rules began on Day 1: no jewelry or makeup in class. Men and women sat separately and wore different “habits”: white shirts for the men, women in black. (Nonbinary and transgender students sat with the gender of their choice.)

Dr. McDaniel discouraged them from sharing personal information; they should get to know one another only through ideas. “He gave us new names, based on our birth time and day, using a Thai birth chart,” Sophie Ouyang, who also took the class and just graduated with a major in nursing, said. “We were practicing living a monastic life. We had to wake up at 5 a.m. and journal every 30 minutes.” If you tried to cruise to a C, you missed the point: “I realized the only way for me to get the most out of this class was to experience it all,” she said. (She did get Dr. McDaniel’s permission to break her vow of silence in order to talk to patients during her clinical rotation.)

Dr. McDaniel also teaches a course called Existential Despair. Students meet once a week from 5 p.m. to midnight in a building with comfy couches, turn over their phones and curl up to read an assigned novel (cover to cover) in one sitting — books like James Baldwin’s “Giovanni’s Room” and José Saramago’s “Blindness.” Then they stay up late discussing it. “The course is not about hope, overcoming things, heroic stories,” Dr. McDaniel said. Many of the books “start sad. In the middle they’re sad. They stay sad. I’m not concerned with their 20-year-old self. I’m worried about them at my age, dealing with breast cancer, their dad dying, their child being an addict, a career that never worked out — so when they’re dealing with the bigger things in life, they know they’re not alone.”

Both courses have long wait lists. Students are hungry for a low-tech, introspective experience — and not just students in the Ivy League. [*Research*](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fnMY_tSYM6bMVn2w3zvCDzLNPq_lXt4_/view) suggests that underprivileged young people have far fewer opportunities to think for unbroken stretches of time, so they may need even more space in college to develop what social scientists call cognitive endurance.

Yet the most visible higher ed trends are moving in the other direction. Rather than ban phones and laptops from class, some professors are [*brainstorming*](https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/07/22/snapchat-instagram-and-other-unexpected-guests-college-classroom-opinion) ways to embrace students’ tech addictions with class Facebook and Instagram accounts, audience response apps — and perhaps even including the friends and relatives whom students text during class as virtual participants in class discussion.

Then there’s that other unwelcome classroom visitor: artificial intelligence. A [*survey*](https://www.intelligent.com/nearly-1-in-3-college-students-have-used-chatgpt-on-written-assignments/) of 1,000 college students by the college-ranking website Intelligent found that 30 percent of respondents had already [*used ChatGPT*](https://www.chronicle.com/article/im-a-student-you-have-no-idea-how-much-were-using-chatgpt) to complete a written assignment. Some campus experts on teaching encourage faculty members to stop worrying and love the bot by designing assignments that “help students develop their prompting skills” or “use ChatGPT to generate a first draft,” according to a [*tip sheet*](https://ctl.wustl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Using-ChatGPT-in-Assignments.pdf) produced by the Center for Teaching and Learning at Washington University in St. Louis.

It’s [*not at all clear*](https://garymarcus.substack.com/p/inside-the-heart-of-chatgpts-darkness) that we want a future dominated by A.I.’s amoral, Cheez Whiz version of human thought. It is abundantly clear that texting, tagging and chatbotting are making students miserable right now. One recent national [*survey*](https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/new-from-nea/mental-health-crisis-college-campuses) found that 60 percent of American college students reported the symptoms of at least one mental health problem and that 15 percent said they were considering suicide. A recent [*meta-analysis*](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36942345/) of 36 studies of college students’ mental health found a significant correlation between longer screen time and higher risk of anxiety and depression. And while social media can [*sometimes*](https://mental.jmir.org/2021/7/e24512) help suffering students connect with peers, research on [*teenagers*](https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/new-from-nea/social-medias-impact-students-mental-health-comes-focus) and [*college students*](https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.20211218) suggests that overall, the support of a virtual community cannot compensate for the vortex of gossip, bullying and Instagram posturing that is bound to rot any normal person’s self-esteem.

We need an intervention: maybe not a vow of silence but a bold move to put the screens, the pinging notifications and the creepy humanoid A.I. chatbots in their proper place. They are our tools, not our masters. That doesn’t mean a futile attempt to wall off higher education from the modern world; it does mean selectively returning to the university’s roots in the monastic schools of medieval Europe and rekindling the old-fashioned quest for meaning.

Colleges should offer a radically low-tech first-year program for students who want to apply: a secular monastery within the modern university, with a curated set of courses that ban glowing rectangles of any kind from the classroom. Students could opt to live in dorms that restrict technology, too. We can work individually with students who have accessibility accommodations to find the best low-tech solutions for them (like turning off Wi-Fi, rationing screen time and deleting attention-guzzling apps).

I prophesy that universities that do this will be surprised by how much demand there is. I frequently talk to students who resent the distracting laptops all around them during class. They feel the tug of the “imaginary string attaching me to my phone, where I have to constantly check it,” as Ms. Rodriguez, who took the monk class and Existential Despair, put it. Many, if not most, students want the elusive experience of uninterrupted thought, the kind where a hash of half-baked notions slowly becomes an idea about the world.

Even if your goal is effective use of the latest chatbot, it behooves you to read books in hard copies and read enough of them to learn what an elegant paragraph sounds like. How else will students recognize when ChatGPT churns out decent prose instead of bureaucratic drivel?

Most important, students need head space to think about their ultimate values. Contemplation and marathon reading are not ends in themselves or mere vacations from real life but are among the best ways to figure out your own answer to the question of what a human being is for — a question that is all the more pressing at a time when the robots soon may be coming for the white-collar jobs in [*medicine*](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9955430/), [*law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/10/technology/ai-is-coming-for-lawyers-again.html) and [*finance*](https://www.businessinsider.com/ai-legal-finance-jobs-construction-trade-careers-tech-2023-3) that the secular intelligentsia treats as shorthand for personal fulfillment. To use the trendy pedagogical jargon, here are the student learning outcomes universities should focus on: cognitive endurance and existential clarity.

Colleges could do all this in classes integrated with general education requirements: ideally, a sequence of [*great books*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/03/opinion/sunday/can-i-go-to-great-books-camp.html) seminars focused on classic texts from across different civilizations. When students finish, they can move right into their area of specialization and wire up their skulls with all the technology they want, armed with the habits and perspective to do so responsibly. Risk-averse college presidents and deans, I’m looking at you: If you can’t quite see starting this as a full-year program, try piloting it as summer school or a winter-break technology detox course.

But before we domesticate the monastic impulse, it’s worth learning from the radicals. Dr. McDaniel, the religious studies professor at Penn, has a long history with different monastic traditions. He grew up in Philadelphia, educated by Hungarian Catholic monks. After college, he volunteered in Thailand and Laos and lived as a Buddhist monk.

As his teaching career took him from Ohio University to the University of California, Riverside, and then to Penn, he found that no amount of academic reading could help undergraduates truly understand why “people voluntarily take on celibacy, give up drinking and put themselves under authorities they don’t need to,” he told me. So for 20 years, he has helped students try it out — and question some of their assumptions about what it means to find themselves.

“On college campuses, these students think they’re all being individuals, going out and being wild,” he said. “But they’re in a playpen. I tell them, ‘You know you’ll be protected by campus police and lawyers. You have this entire apparatus set up for you. You think you’re being an individual, but look at your four friends: They all look exactly like you and sound like you. We exist in these very strict structures we like to pretend don’t exist.’” (It’s worth mentioning that Dr. McDaniel describes his politics as “philosophical anarchist.”) His course offers a chance to temporarily exchange those unconscious structures for a set of deliberate, countercultural ones.

No one understands discipline better than the [*Benedictines,*](https://osb.org/our-roots/a-brief-history-of-the-benedictine-order/) members of the monastic order who follow the rule written by St. Benedict in the sixth century. Undergraduates at Belmont Abbey College outside Charlotte, N.C., share their quadrangles, sidewalks and even their chess clubs with Benedictine monks who live in an abbey in the middle of campus. “For the last 1,500 years, Benedictines have had to deal with technology,” Placid Solari, the abbot there, told me. “For us, the question is: How do you use the tool so it supports and enhances your purpose or mission and you don’t get owned by it?”

Mental distraction was a struggle even for the ancient ascetics who didn’t have Snapchat. When the mind wanders and a monk wants “to bind it fast with the firmest purpose of heart, as if with chains, while we are making the attempt, it slips away from the inmost recesses of the heart swifter than a snake,” John Cassian, a fourth-century monk, wrote. Many monasteries don’t totally reject the latest technology, but they are mindful of how they use it. Abbot Placid told me that for novices at his monastery, “part of the formation is discipline to learn how to control technology use.” After this initial time of limited phone and TV “to wean them away from overdependence on technology and its stimulation,” they get more access and mostly make their own choices.

Evan Lutz graduated this May from Belmont Abbey with a major in theology. He stressed the special Catholic context of Belmont’s resident monks; if you experiment with monastic practices without investigating the whole worldview, it can become a shallow kind of mindfulness tourism. The monks at Belmont Abbey do more than model contemplation and focus. Their presence compels even non-Christians on campus to think seriously about vocation and the meaning of life. “Either what the monks are doing is valuable and based on something true, or it’s completely ridiculous,” Mr. Lutz said. “In both cases, there’s something striking there, and it asks people a question.”

Pondering ultimate questions and cultivating cognitive endurance should not be luxury goods. David Peña-Guzmán, who teaches philosophy at San Francisco State University, read about Dr. McDaniel’s Existential Despair course and decided he wanted to create a similar one. He called it the Reading Experiment. A small group of humanities majors gathered once every two weeks for five and a half hours in a seminar room equipped with couches and a big round table. They read authors ranging from Jean-Paul Sartre to Frantz Fanon. “At the beginning of every class I’d ask students to turn off their phones and put them in ‘the Basket of Despair,’ which was a plastic bag,” he told me. “I had an extended chat with them about accessibility. The point is not to take away the phone for its own sake but to take away our primary sources of distraction. Students could keep the phone if they needed it. But all of them chose to part with their phones.”

Dr. Peña-Guzmán’s students are mostly ***working-class***, first-generation college students. He encouraged them to be honest about their anxieties by sharing his own: “I said, ‘I’m a very slow reader, and it’s likely some or most of you will get further in the text than me because I’m E.S.L. and read quite slowly in English.’ Once I put that on the table, other students went around and also opened up about their experience of reading and not trusting themselves to maintain attention for a long period.”

For his students, the struggle to read long texts is “tied up with the assumption that reading can happen while multitasking and constantly interacting with technologies that are making demands on their attention, even at the level of a second,” Dr. Peña-Guzmán said. “These draw you out of the flow of reading. You get back to the reading, but you have to restart the sentence or even the paragraph. Often, because of these technological interventions into the reading experience, students almost experience reading backward — as constant regress, without any sense of progress. The more time they spend, the less progress they make.”

Dr. Peña-Guzmán dismissed the idea that a course like his is suitable only for students who don’t have to worry about holding down jobs or paying off student debt. “I’m worried by this assumption that certain experiences that are important for the development of personality, for a certain kind of humanistic and spiritual growth, should be reserved for the elite, especially when we know those experiences are also sources of cultural capital,” he said. Courses like the Reading Experiment are practical, too, he added. “I can’t imagine a field that wouldn’t require some version of the skill of focused attention.”

The point is not to reject new technology but to help students retain the upper hand in their relationship with it. Ms. Rodriguez said that before she took Living Deliberately and Existential Despair, she didn’t distinguish technology from education. “I didn’t think education ever went without technology. I think that’s really weird now. You don’t need to adapt every piece of technology to be able to learn better or more,” she said. “It can form this dependency.”

The point of college is to help students become independent humans who can choose the gods they serve and the rules they follow rather than allow someone else to choose for them. The first step is dethroning the small silicon idol in their pocket — and making space for the uncomfortable silence and questions that follow. The experience stuck with Ms. Ouyang, the nursing major. “I didn’t look forward to getting my phone back,” she said.

Molly Worthen is the author, most recently, of the audio course “[*Charismatic Leaders Who Remade America*](https://www.audible.com/pd/Charismatic-Leaders-Who-Remade-America-Audiobook/B0884GB2DT)” and an associate professor of history at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

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[***The Mixed Messages in the Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:618F-VX31-JBG3-63FN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 11, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 24; LETTERS

**Length:** 670 words

**Body**

In response to David Brooks, readers offer their own analyses of what voters were telling us.

To the Editor:

In ''What Voters Are Trying to Tell Us'' (column, Nov. 6), David Brooks argues, ''Election after election, the emerging Democratic majority fails to emerge,'' because of a supposed emphasis on political correctness rather than policy. Yet Joe Biden, a good man but not an especially charismatic candidate, will take the presidency by restoring the blue wall of Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, perhaps flipping Georgia (!) and probably Arizona, and winning the popular vote by around five million votes.

Democrats may yet take the Senate by winning two runoffs in Georgia, and have retained a majority in the House. This follows a blue wave in 2018 and a near miss in 2016 by a historically polarizing candidate, Hillary Clinton, who nonetheless won the popular vote by more than three million. And Donald Trump may have been unique among Republicans in his ability to galvanize disaffected, white, male ***working-class*** voters, who in any event comprise a shrinking demographic.

I am not blue about the future of the Democratic Party.

Jesse SiegelGreenlawn, N.Y.

To the Editor:

I am a registered Democrat and a moderate. David Brooks's interpretation is exactly my take on the election. I have said many of the same things to friends in the past few days, believing now, though, that the country is ripe for a third party that is centrist.

Ouida VincentCortez, Colo.

To the Editor:

Working the polls on Election Day, I saw two Americas: In one America Republicans and Democrats had respectful, cordial disagreements. I saw the Republican candidate for the North Carolina House of Representatives, Don Pomeroy, and his Democratic competitor, Brandon Lofton, have a cordial conversation for about 15 minutes. I saw Republican and Democratic poll workers have polite conversations.

In another America, I saw a Republican man yell at a young Democrat about the Brett Kavanaugh hearings. I saw a ''woke'' Democrat call out a friend on social media because of his Halloween costume. In this second America both sides thrive on moral outrage, but it frequently alienates the moderate voter.

The news media focuses on the angry America, but the calm, respectful America exists. I hope and pray that the America of civil, productive debates will win.

James HortonCharlotte, N.C.

To the Editor:

One need only look around David Brooks's own newspaper to understand why he and other members of the public see Democrats as ''smug, self-congratulatory and off-putting.'' As I sit here in the heartland and read The Times, I can't count the number of references I've seen to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and ''the Squad.'' I'm sure President Trump and the other Republican leadership are delighted every time you spotlight them.

Meanwhile, my reasonable and responsible Democratic representative (Mark Pocan) and senator (Tammy Baldwin) are largely ignored by the national media. Certainly they are much closer to the typical Democratic voter and could share important insights if you asked.

I guess you will pay attention to them only when the president includes them in a rant and gives them childish nicknames.

Bruce HarvilleMadison, Wis.

To the Editor:

After I read David Brooks's column describing the continuing state of polarization, and how the Democrats have failed to connect with a large group of ***working-class*** voters who supported Democrats in the past but have shifted their support to Republicans recently, an idea emerged: As soon as his term starts, Joe Biden should send a high administration official on a listening tour around the country to try to understand voters' concerns, and then work on addressing those concerns. I think this would build good will and hopefully strengthen the Democratic Party's connection to the voters.

That administration official could be Kamala Harris, or a cabinet member or perhaps a special adviser hired for just that effort.

Andrew RothSouth Orange, N.J.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/10/opinion/letters/biden-trump-election.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/10/opinion/letters/biden-trump-election.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Endings; A Fleeting Run***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:672H-XT11-DXY4-X0X4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 11, 2022 Sunday

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 3

**Length:** 1178 words

**Byline:** By Sarah Bahr

**Body**

'Walking With Ghosts,' which closed Nov. 20, allowed the Irish actor to showcase his passion for the humor of everyday life.

Gabriel Byrne is well aware he is not a Disney franchise. ''I'm just one person, writing about myself,'' said Byrne, 72, in a video interview on a recent morning before one of the final performances of his autobiographical one-man Broadway show, ''Walking With Ghosts,'' which closed more than a month early on Nov. 20. ''I understand the reality of the marketplace and at the same time feel profoundly grateful I got here at all.''

Originally slated to run through the end of December at the Music Box Theater, the show closed after just 25 performances and eight previews amid -- to put it kindly -- ticket sales that were a few zeros away from ''Hamilton'' or ''Lion King'' territory. But Byrne, who with his tousled gray hair, serious face and bright blue eyes behind tortoiseshell glasses, cuts a grandfatherly figure -- if the grandfather in question were a famous Irish actor with a Golden Globe and a tendency to quote James Joyce -- is a good sport about his early eviction notice. ''How long a thing lasts isn't a reflection of its essential worth,'' he said. ''A relationship that lasts 18 months can contain more within it than relationships that last 10 or 15 years.''

The show, which is based on Byrne's 2020 memoir of the same name, certainly had its fans, particularly when he performed it to sold-out crowds in Ireland, where he was born and spent the first 11 years of his life, and then in London's West End earlier this year. While the Broadway run received mixed reviews, the New York Times critic Alexis Soloski praised Byrne's charisma and stage presence, calling him ''compulsively watchable.'' ''Who wouldn't want to spend a clinical hour with this man?'' she wrote. ''Or two, plus intermission.''

Byrne, who last appeared on Broadway in 2016 in a revival of Eugene O'Neill's 1956 play ''Long Day's Journey Into Night,'' is best known for his roles in the HBO show ''In Treatment'' and the 1995 film ''The Usual Suspects.'' Even after the latter became a sleeper hit, opening a new chapter in his career as a leading man -- during which he starred in ''Stigmata'' (1999) and ''End of Days'' (1999) -- he maintained the workmanlike ethos of his journeyman days, gaining a reputation as a fiercely private person reluctant to claim the spotlight.

So it was perhaps surprising that he chose to publish a second memoir. (His first, ''Pictures in my Head,'' was published in 1994 and covered his childhood in Ireland and the start of his acting career.) The second book, which a Washington Post reviewer wrote ''dazzles with unflinching honesty,'' similarly focuses on Byrne's upbringing in a ***working-class*** family on the rural outskirts of Dublin and his subsequent journey to Hollywood. But it also travels to darker places, like the period in the early 1960s when the 11-year-old Byrne was sexually abused by a priest at the Catholic seminary school he attended in England.

The biggest challenge in adapting his latest memoir for the stage, he said, was trimming some of its reflective aspects to make space for moments that would be more compelling for a live audience. ''If it doesn't work dramatically -- if it's not propulsive, emotional -- you get rid of it,'' he said. ''You can't put big lumps of prose onstage.'' He opted to perform the play on a nearly bare stage, wearing the same blue shirt, blue vest, blue blazer, gray slacks and black boots throughout and striding from one end to the other between scenes as the house went dark to indicate changes in time and location. ''The anti-razzle dazzle allows you to concentrate on what's being said,'' he said.

Growing up, Byrne wanted to be a priest. But after he was sexually abused, he renounced his faith, cycling through jobs as a dishwasher, a plumber and a toilet attendant before joining an amateur acting troupe in Dublin, where he rediscovered his boyhood love of theater.

That led to his TV debut in 1978 in the soap opera ''The Riordans,'' then to his film debut in the 1981 retelling of the King Arthur legend ''Excalibur,'' and finally to Hollywood stardom, which brought him into the same circles as luminaries like Richard Burton and Vanessa Redgrave. But that's not the part of his life he chose to highlight in either of his memoirs or his stage play, which essentially ignores the latter part of his life and acting career. ''What you do is only a very small part of who you are,'' he said. ''Finding your identity through your work is a limited way of knowing yourself.''

Instead, he said, he wanted to emphasize experiences people could relate to, themes that felt universal -- for instance, that of searching for a sense of rootedness as an immigrant living away from his homeland (he moved to New York in the mid-1980s to be with his then partner, the actor Ellen Barkin; they divorced in 1999 but he remained in the States). ''Every immigrant has a yearning to be at home,'' he said. ''But you can never be at home anywhere once you leave. You trade one place for another, but you don't really belong in either.''

Of course, he said, dredging up his memories of abuse or recounting the death of a boyhood friend every night is hardly enjoyable. But it is a willingness to explore those uncomfortable places, he said, that gives the show its power. ''By going there, you're opening the door for somebody else in the audience to maybe go there, too,'' he explained.

That is not to say there weren't lighthearted moments. Among the dozens of characters from his past that Byrne embodies are friends, teachers, religious figures, family members and even the various actors in the amateur theater troupe he joined (Soloski wrote that the show ''allows him to show a playful side and a gift, neglected in Hollywood, for physical comedy''). ''You can't just get up there and start telling serious stories,'' Byrne said. ''You have to leaven it with a spoonful of sugar.''

Though he is finished with ''Walking With Ghosts'' -- for now -- he suggested that a return to the blue blazer and black boots may not be far off. He's had offers to do the show in other cities -- he has his eye on Boston, Chicago and San Francisco, he said -- and international plans are in the works. ''The producers want it to go to Australia and Canada,'' said Byrne, who lives in Rockport, Maine, with his wife, Hannah Beth King, a documentary filmmaker, and their young daughter. (He has two adult children with Barkin.) ''We'll see. I don't think Sunday night is the end of it.''

In the meantime, he's working on a new book, his first novel, which will explore themes of immigration and exile. He's also looking forward to catching up on the movies he hasn't had time to see and popping in and out of Broadway theaters -- now as an audience member. (On his list: The recent revival of ''Death of a Salesman.'') ''I've been living in the world of books and the streets of New York, which is a continuous novel,'' he said. ''You never stop turning the pages.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/02/t-magazine/gabriel-byrne-walking-with-ghosts.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/02/t-magazine/gabriel-byrne-walking-with-ghosts.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES (GABRIEL BYRNE)

RON GALELLA, VIA GETTY IMAGES (PHOTOGRAPH OF THE DESIGNER HALSTON, SECOND FROM LEFT, AND THE ACTOR PAT AST, CENTER)) This article appeared in print on page ST3.

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[***The 10 Best Books of 2022***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:672H-XT11-DXY4-X13R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1333 words

**Byline:** By The New York Times Books Staff

**Body**

Fiction

The Candy House, by Jennifer Egan

You don't need to have read Egan's Pulitzer-winning ''A Visit From the Goon Squad'' to jump feet first into this much-anticipated sequel. But for lovers of the 2010 book's prematurely nostalgic New Yorkers, cerebral beauty and laser-sharp take on modernity, ''The Candy House'' is like coming home -- albeit to dystopia. This time around, Egan's characters are variously the creators and prisoners of a universe in which, through the wonders of technology, people can access their entire memory banks and use the contents as social media currency. The result is a glorious, hideous fun house that feels more familiar than sci-fi, all rendered with Egan's signature inventive confidence and -- perhaps most impressive of all -- heart. ''The Candy House'' is of its moment, with all that implies.

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Checkout 19, by Claire-Louise Bennett

Bennett, a British writer who makes her home in Ireland, first leaped onto the scene with her 2015 debut novel, ''Pond.'' Her second book contains all of the first's linguistic artistry and dark wit, but it is even more exhilarating. ''Checkout 19,'' ostensibly the story of a young woman falling in love with language in a ***working-class*** town outside London, has an unusual setting: the human mind -- a brilliant, surprising, weird and very funny one. All the words one might use to describe this book -- experimental, autofictional, surrealist -- fail to convey the sheer pleasure of ''Checkout 19.'' You'll come away dazed, delighted, reminded of just how much fun reading can be, eager to share it with people in your lives. It's a love letter to books, and an argument for them, too.

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Demon Copperhead, by Barbara Kingsolver

Kingsolver's powerful new novel, a close retelling of Charles Dickens's ''David Copperfield'' set in contemporary Appalachia, gallops through issues including childhood poverty, opioid addiction and rural dispossession even as its larger focus remains squarely on the question of how an artist's consciousness is formed. Like Dickens, Kingsolver is unblushingly political and works on a sprawling scale, animating her pages with an abundance of charm and the presence of seemingly every creeping thing that has ever crept upon the earth.

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The Furrows, by Namwali Serpell

After losing her brother when she was 12, one of the narrators of Serpell's second novel keeps coming across men who resemble him as she works through her trauma long into adulthood. She enters an intimate relationship with one of them, who's also haunted by his past. This richly layered book explores the nature of grief, how it can stretch or compress time, reshape memories and make us dream up alternate realities. ''I don't want to tell you what happened,'' the narrator says. ''I want to tell you how it felt.''

Read the review | Buy from local booksellers | Buy from Amazon | Buy from Apple Books | Buy from Barnes & Noble

Trust, by Hernan Diaz

Diaz uncovers the secrets of an American fortune in the early 20th century, detailing the dizzying rise of a New York financier and the enigmatic talents of his wife. Each of the novel's four parts, which are told from different perspectives, redirects the narrative (and upends readers' expectations) while paying tribute to literary titans from Henry James to Jorge Luis Borges. Whose version of events can we trust? Diaz's spotlight on stories behind stories seeks out the dark workings behind capitalism, as well as the uncredited figures behind the so-called Great Men of history. It's an exhilarating pursuit.

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Nonfiction

An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us, by Ed Yong

Yong certainly gave himself a formidable task with this book -- getting humans to step outside their ''sensory bubble'' and consider how nonhuman animals experience the world. But the enormous difficulty of making sense of senses we do not have is a reminder that each one of us has a purchase on only a sliver of reality. Yong is a terrific storyteller, and there are plenty of surprising animal facts to keep this book moving toward its profound conclusion: The breadth of this immense world should make us recognize how small we really are.

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Stay True: A Memoir, by Hua Hsu

In this quietly wrenching memoir, Hsu recalls starting out at Berkeley in the mid-1990s as a watchful music snob, fastidiously curating his tastes and mercilessly judging the tastes of others. Then he met Ken, a Japanese American frat boy. Their friendship was intense, but brief. Less than three years later, Ken would be killed in a carjacking. Hsu traces the course of their relationship -- one that seemed improbable at first but eventually became a fixture in his life, a trellis along which both young men could stretch and grow.

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Strangers to Ourselves: Unsettled Minds and the Stories That Make Us, by Rachel Aviv

In this rich and nuanced book, Aviv writes about people in extreme mental distress, beginning with her own experience of being told she had anorexia when she was 6 years old. That personal history made her especially attuned to how stories can clarify as well as distort what a person is going through. This isn't an anti-psychiatry book -- Aviv is too aware of the specifics of any situation to succumb to anything so sweeping. What she does is hold space for empathy and uncertainty, exploring a multiplicity of stories instead of jumping at the impulse to explain them away.

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Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of Our Nation, by Linda Villarosa

Through case histories as well as independent reporting, Villarosa's remarkable third book elegantly traces the effects of the legacy of slavery -- and the doctrine of anti-Blackness that sprang up to philosophically justify it -- on Black health: reproductive, environmental, mental and more. Beginning with a long personal history of her awakening to these structural inequalities, the journalist repositions various narratives about race and medicine -- the soaring Black maternal mortality rates; the rise of heart disease and hypertension; the oft-repeated dictum that Black people reject psychological therapy -- as evidence not of Black inferiority, but of racism in the health care system.

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We Don't Know Ourselves, by Fintan O'Toole

O'Toole, a prolific essayist and critic, calls this inventive narrative ''a personal history of modern Ireland'' -- an ambitious project, but one he pulls off with élan. Charting six decades of Irish history against his own life, O'Toole manages to both deftly illustrate a country in drastic flux, and include a sly, self-deprecating biography that infuses his sociology with humor and pathos. You'll be educated, yes -- about increasing secularism, the Celtic tiger, human rights -- but you'll also be wildly, uproariously entertained by a gifted raconteur at the height of his powers.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/29/books/best-books-2022.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/29/books/best-books-2022.html)

**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page BR11, BR12.

**Load-Date:** December 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Trip to Ukraine. A Jab at Ron DeSantis. What Is Phil Murphy Up To?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67RP-SNM1-DXY4-X090-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 11, 2023 Saturday 15:15 EST

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**Length:** 1740 words

**Byline:** Tracey Tully

**Highlight:** The New Jersey governor, re-elected in 2021, is term-limited and has an eye on Washington.

**Body**

The New Jersey governor, re-elected in 2021, is term-limited and has an eye on Washington.

It was a whirlwind few days for New Jersey’s term-limited governor, Philip D. Murphy.

On a Tuesday in mid-February he publicly chided Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, a Republican, by name, calling his [*education policies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/15/nyregion/nj-ap-african-american-studies-high-schools.html) “shameful.” The next day at noon, he proposed requiring all new cars sold after 2035 to be electric, following [*California’s lead*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/24/climate/california-gas-cars-emissions.html). By early Thursday, Mr. Murphy, a Democrat, had made an [*unannounced stop in Ukraine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/16/world/europe/new-jerseys-governor-makes-an-unannounced-trip-to-ukraine.html) en route to a security conference in Germany.

Back home in Jersey, the message was clear: The governor’s slow-windup romance with Washington was now a full-boil courtship, though his primary audience might have trouble finding Trenton on a map.

“You don’t fade into the woodwork if you have national ambitions,” said Patrick Murray, director of the Polling Institute at Monmouth University, who for decades has watched New Jersey politicians use the state’s quirky off-year election cycle and proximity to New York’s media market as a springboard toward higher office.

“You never know when opportunity might strike.”

The 2024 [*presidential contest*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/us/politics/presidential-candidates-2024.html) is well underway. President Biden is expected to run for a second term and the list of Republicans who have announced campaigns or are expected to run already includes [*Mr. DeSantis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/05/us/ron-desantis-florida-legislature.html) (who did not respond to Mr. Murphy’s criticism), former President [*Donald J. Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/04/us/politics/trump-desantis-cpac-2024.html), former Vice President Mike Pence, and [*Nikki Haley*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/14/us/politics/nikki-haley-president-trump.html), a former governor of South Carolina.

Mr. Murphy has consistently said he would be Mr. Biden’s No. 1 booster if he runs again, and he recently signed on to an [*advisory board*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2023/03/02/biden-democratic-stars-unity-campaign/) of Democratic loyalists who are expected to be deployed as Biden surrogates when the campaign ramps up.

Still, Mr. Murphy, a wealthy former Democratic National Committee finance chairman and ambassador to Germany who amassed a fortune at the investment bank Goldman Sachs, has never completely closed the door to running for the White House should the president’s plans change.

And, either way, he appears as intent as ever at cultivating a national image, aware, perhaps, that there are often consolation prizes.

On Saturday, Mr. Murphy will try to spit-polish his résumé with humor when he takes the mic at the annual Gridiron Club dinner, a famously irreverent white-tie-and-tails roast that draws Washington’s top journalists and political insiders. (The other speaker that night will be [*Mr. Pence*](https://twitter.com/Mike_Pence/status/1613581521692102664).)

Close associates say Mr. Murphy, who declined to comment for this article, is genuinely unsure about the job he might want next, but they speculate that he could be interested in again being an ambassador or perhaps even secretary of state.

A graduate of Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania who grew up outside of Boston, he now counts the musician Jon Bon Jovi among his closest friends. But he comes from humble means, the youngest of four children in a ***working-class*** Irish-Catholic family. Only his mother graduated from high school; his father worked for a time managing a liquor store near their home.

Always social, Mr. Murphy has become a retail-politics pro. He gamely drapes his arm around shoulders when asked to pose for selfies, his grin wide and pointer finger aimed, showman-style, toward the new best friend at his side.

But it is the hundreds of off-camera calls he made to families that lost relatives to Covid-19 that his chief of staff, George Helmy, cites when calling him “one of the most authentic human beings I’ve ever seen.”

Mr. Murphy came to Trenton with few allies, yet has managed a notable share of wins.

During his first term, New Jersey lawmakers increased taxes on [*income over $1 million*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/17/nyregion/nj-millionaires-tax.html), approved a [*$15 minimum wage*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/17/nyregion/nj-minimum-wage.html), [*legalized marijuana*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/05/nyregion/nj-marijuana-ballot-question.html), strengthened gun-control laws, locked in [*paid sick leave*](https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562018/approved/20181029d.shtml) for workers and reduced [*long-ignored pension debt*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/nyregion/phil-murphy-nj-budget.html) by billions of dollars, resulting in several upgrades to the state’s credit ratings.

But after being [*re-elected in 2021*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/murphy-wins-nj-governor.html) by a [*narrower margin*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/11/02/us/elections/results-new-jersey.html) than expected, Mr. Murphy has made an overt effort to appeal more to moderate voters, leaving some of his left-leaning base frustrated by what they see as a lack of urgency to finish up strong.

Michael Feldman, a communications consultant and friend of Mr. Murphy, said none of the governor’s policy victories had been “a layup.”

“His ambition now is to try to help advance the agenda that he’s pursued in New Jersey — to help advance some of these issues at a national level,” said Mr. Feldman, who was a senior adviser to former Vice President Al Gore.

“I don’t know what the job is or will be, but there’s plenty of places that a person with his experience could be helpful in getting some of these things done.”

New Jersey governors cannot serve more than two consecutive terms. And for the past year observers wondering about Mr. Murphy’s next move have taken note of his suddenly youthful hairdo, hip new glasses and shifting rhetoric.

The governor who once [*suggested*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vN8Nym-NcIA) that New Jersey was not the best fit for residents or businesses concerned mainly about low taxes now describes himself as a “[*coldblooded capitalist*](https://www.insidernj.com/doubling-down-on-cold-blooded-capitalism/).” His [*budget address*](https://nj.gov/governor/news/addresses/approved/20230228_budget.shtml) concluded with an ode to the value of hard work. And his [*State of the State*](https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562023/20230110b.shtml) stressed the importance of bipartisanship, buried in a humblebrag about his friendship with the Republican governor of Utah, the vice chairman of the National Governors Association, which Mr. Murphy now leads.

Mr. Murphy, 65, is also chairman of the Democratic Governors Association — the first governor to hold both leadership posts at the same time. He has leveraged the roles to his advantage.

During a recent trip to Los Angeles for the National Governors Association, he and his wife, Tammy, dined with leaders of film studios to pitch New Jersey’s assets as a [*moviemaking hub*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/nyregion/lionsgate-newark-movie-studio.html), while also raising funds for the four political accounts they now juggle. Alliances he has formed have led to speaking gigs in Nevada and Florida. And both of the governors’ associations are holding major conferences this year in New Jersey.

There are younger Democratic governors with bigger names or bigger bank accounts, including [*Gavin Newsom*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/21/us/politics/gavin-newsom-2024-president.html) of California, [*Gretchen Whitmer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/25/magazine/gretchen-whitmer-coronavirus-michigan.html) of Michigan and [*J.B. Pritzker*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/03/us/politics/jb-pritzker-democrats-biden.html) of Illinois.

But during Mr. Biden’s presidency, New Jersey has been a regular stop for members of the administration, with at least two visits apiece by the president, the first lady, Vice President Kamala Harris and Pete Buttigieg, the transportation secretary.

If Mr. Biden were to win re-election and tap Mr. Murphy for a job he found enticing enough to take, it could mean leaving Trenton before his term ends in 2026, making the race for governor — already shaping up to be a grab-the-popcorn thriller — even livelier.

Still, even among liberals inclined to support him, Mr. Murphy’s second-term reviews have grown increasingly mixed.

Last year he [*reinstituted a bear hunt*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/15/nyregion/bear-hunt-new-jersey.html) he had [*vowed to outlaw*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/21/nyregion/murphy-bears-new-jersey.html), enraging animal rights activists. He [*opened the door*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/17/nyregion/liberty-state-park-nj.html) to private development in Liberty State Park, the state’s largest and busiest public oasis, at the urging of groups funded by the [*billionaire owner*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/02/nyregion/liberty-state-park-nj-golf.html) of an adjacent golf club. And there are so many judicial vacancies that some counties have had to halt divorce trials.

A coalition of environmental groups is suing the state to force Mr. Murphy to follow through on ambitious climate-change [*rules*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/27/nyregion/climate-change-nj-environmental-rules.html) he ordered as part of a [*2019 law*](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2018/AL19/197_.PDF). “A poster child for actions not meeting the rhetoric,” David Pringle, a leader of the coalition, said.

And residents of communities as disparate as Jersey City, Newark and Gibbstown, in the rural southwest portion of the state, are furious over Mr. Murphy’s support for [*expanding the turnpike*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/19/nyregion/holland-tunnel-turnpike-extension.html) near New York City and failing to stop six new fossil-fuel projects, which are expected to worsen air quality in minority communities already overburdened by pollution.

“The governor has a lot of words for environmental justice but does not actually demonstrate leadership on behalf of our community,” said Maria Lopez-Nuñez, who lives in Newark and is fighting to block the construction of a backup power plant in the city’s Ironbound neighborhood.

Ms. Lopez-Nuñez is also a member of Mr. Biden’s [*White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/white-house-environmental-justice-advisory-council/).

“I would love to cheer on the governor,” she said. “But I need to see the work.”

A spokesman for Mr. Murphy, Mahen Gunaratna, said some opposition was to be expected, particularly after a first term in which Mr. Murphy delivered on so many of the campaign promises his progressive base held dear. His second-term priorities are hewing closer to the center.

At least part of his [*change in tone*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/nyregion/nj-governor-murphy-budget-address.html) is tied to November’s legislative races. Democratic leaders who control the State Legislature remain jittery over the [*loss of seven seats in 2021*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/26/nyregion/edward-durr-new-jersey-republican.html), and Republicans believe that they are in striking range of regaining majority control — an outcome that would undermine Mr. Murphy’s legacy.

A January [*poll by Monmouth University*](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_nj_011123/) suggested that Mr. Murphy&#39;s popularity was holding steady at 52 percent. But fewer than a third of those surveyed said he would make a good president.

Only [*one governor from New Jersey*](https://governors.rutgers.edu/governors-and-the-white-house/) has ever been elected president: Woodrow Wilson, whose memory is now so tainted by his [*racist policies that Princeton*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/27/nyregion/princeton-university-woodrow-wilson.html) removed his name from its school of public and international affairs.

Other New Jersey luminaries have also had designs on the White House in recent years: Senator Bill Bradley was eclipsed in the 2000 Democratic primary by [*Mr. Gore*](https://www.nytimes.com/1999/12/19/nyregion/their-not-so-favorite-son-politicians-at-home-are-cool-to-bradley.html); Gov. Chris Christie [*ended his campaign in 2016*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/11/us/politics/chris-christie.html) before endorsing Mr. Trump; and Senator Cory Booker [*bowed out of the last presidential contest*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/13/us/politics/cory-booker-drops-out.html) after a yearlong campaign.

Mr. Booker, 53, a Democrat and former mayor of Newark, appears to be keeping his options as open as Mr. Murphy. “I’m not running in ’24 if Joe Biden is running,” Mr. Booker said in a recent [*television interview*](https://abc7ny.com/up-close-bill-ritter-cory-booker-tyre-nichols/12916635/).

“My goal in life is to put more ‘indivisible’ back into this ‘one nation under God,’” he said, adding, “so we’ll see about the future.”

Jennifer Palmieri, a Democratic strategist who was director of communications for President Barack Obama, has known Mr. Murphy since 2005 and considers him a friend. She said she did not know what he was hoping to do next. But, she added, “it does not seem like he’s anywhere near done.”

PHOTO: Gov. Phil Murphy stressed the importance of bipartisanship in his State of the State address. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A18.

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2023

**End of Document**



[***The Mixed Messages in the Election; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6189-7CK1-DXY4-X2BF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 10, 2020 Tuesday 00:37 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 674 words

**Highlight:** In response to David Brooks, readers offer their own analyses of what voters were telling us.

**Body**

In response to David Brooks, readers offer their own analyses of what voters were telling us.

To the Editor:

In “[*What Voters Are Trying to Tell Us*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/05/opinion/trump-biden-voters.html)” (column, Nov. 6), David Brooks argues, “Election after election, the emerging Democratic majority fails to emerge,” because of a supposed emphasis on political correctness rather than policy. Yet Joe Biden, a good man but not an especially charismatic candidate, will take the presidency by restoring the blue wall of Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, perhaps flipping Georgia (!) and probably Arizona, and winning the popular vote by around five million votes.

Democrats may yet take the Senate by winning two runoffs in Georgia, and have retained a majority in the House. This follows a blue wave in 2018 and a near miss in 2016 by a historically polarizing candidate, Hillary Clinton, who nonetheless won the popular vote by more than three million. And Donald Trump may have been unique among Republicans in his ability to galvanize disaffected, white, male ***working-class*** voters, who in any event comprise a shrinking demographic.

I am not blue about the future of the Democratic Party.

Jesse Siegel

Greenlawn, N.Y.

To the Editor:

I am a registered Democrat and a moderate. David Brooks’s interpretation is exactly my take on the election. I have said many of the same things to friends in the past few days, believing now, though, that the country is ripe for a third party that is centrist.

Ouida Vincent

Cortez, Colo.

To the Editor:

Working the polls on Election Day, I saw two Americas: In one America Republicans and Democrats had respectful, cordial disagreements. I saw the Republican candidate for the North Carolina House of Representatives, Don Pomeroy, and his Democratic competitor, Brandon Lofton, have a cordial conversation for about 15 minutes. I saw Republican and Democratic poll workers have polite conversations.

In another America, I saw a Republican man yell at a young Democrat about the Brett Kavanaugh hearings. I saw a “woke” Democrat call out a friend on social media because of his Halloween costume. In this second America both sides thrive on moral outrage, but it frequently alienates the moderate voter.

The news media focuses on the angry America, but the calm, respectful America exists. I hope and pray that the America of civil, productive debates will win.

James Horton

Charlotte, N.C.

To the Editor:

One need only look around David Brooks’s own newspaper to understand why he and other members of the public see Democrats as “smug, self-congratulatory and off-putting.” As I sit here in the heartland and read The Times, I can’t count the number of references I’ve seen to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and “the Squad.” I’m sure President Trump and the other Republican leadership are delighted every time you spotlight them.

Meanwhile, my reasonable and responsible Democratic representative (Mark Pocan) and senator (Tammy Baldwin) are largely ignored by the national media. Certainly they are much closer to the typical Democratic voter and could share important insights if you asked.

I guess you will pay attention to them only when the president includes them in a rant and gives them childish nicknames.

Bruce Harville

Madison, Wis.

To the Editor:

After I read David Brooks’s column describing the continuing state of polarization, and how the Democrats have failed to connect with a large group of ***working-class*** voters who supported Democrats in the past but have shifted their support to Republicans recently, an idea emerged: As soon as his term starts, Joe Biden should send a high administration official on a listening tour around the country to try to understand voters’ concerns, and then work on addressing those concerns. I think this would build good will and hopefully strengthen the Democratic Party’s connection to the voters.

That administration official could be Kamala Harris, or a cabinet member or perhaps a special adviser hired for just that effort.

Andrew Roth

South Orange, N.J.

PHOTO:   (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 11, 2020

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[***'Tick, Tick ... Boom!' Is His Showcase***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:644M-7021-DXY4-X232-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 22, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 991 words

**Byline:** By Laura Zornosa

**Body**

In the film, this queer Puerto Rican actor gets to showcase his range, stepping into a more mature role as Michael.

The T-shirt says it all: ''This body was built on arroz con gandules.''

Arroz con gandules, or rice with pigeon peas, is a Puerto Rican classic, and Robin de Jesús wears the shirt with pride under a burnt orange jacket. When mounds of maduros (fried sweet plantains) arrive with our entrees, each is topped with a tiny Puerto Rican flag. De Jesús, 37, approves.

The actor's family is from rural Puerto Rico, and he grew up in a ***working-class*** community in Norwalk, Conn. Known for larger-than-life roles like a gay teenager who dabbles in drag in the movie ''Camp,'' a spirited maid in the Broadway revival of ''La Cage aux Folles'' and a boisterous interior decorator in both the play and film versions of ''The Boys in the Band,'' he wanted to diversify his work.

Then along came ''Tick, Tick ... Boom!.'' De Jesús was deeply intentional in auditioning for the role of Michael, an actor turned advertiser, in the film, directed by Lin-Manuel Miranda.

''What kept coming up for me was, 'I want a quiet performance.' I want a quiet, subtle, nuance,'' de Jesús said at lunch. ''And I know that, if I do that, I can showcase maturity.''

The movie (in theaters and on Netflix) is an adaptation of a musical about the writing of a musical. The original ''Tick, Tick ... Boom!'' was written by Jonathan Larson -- who would later go on to write the rock musical ''Rent'' -- and first performed in 1990. The film tells the tale of an aspiring composer (also named Jonathan and played by Andrew Garfield) pouring himself into yet another musical, this one called ''Superbia.'' It takes place in the early '90s, against the stark backdrop of the AIDS epidemic.

As his 30th birthday looms, Jonathan's anxiety manifests as a persistent ticking. He worries about the upcoming workshop of ''Superbia,'' upon which everything seemingly hinges -- and about whether he can succeed in the performing arts at all.

Michael, his former roommate and best friend since childhood, has tapped out of the threadbare artist lifestyle, opting instead for a plush career in advertising and a glittering high-rise apartment. He was tired of waiting for hours in line for an audition, just to be cut off after six measures of a song and called the wrong name: ''Juan, Pedro, Carlos, lo que sea.''

That's not to say that Michael has hardened into a formal shell; he stays playful and supportive of Jonathan's dreams. We first meet him visiting Jonathan at work in the Moondance Diner, where he drops off copies he made of the ''Superbia'' script.

''Boo-boo, you need to ask yourself,'' Michael tells Jonathan, ''In this moment, are you letting yourself be led by fear? Or love?''

De Jesús said, ''I knew that Michael did not have to be pulled and buttoned up, that he was someone who navigated being an artist, a creative, someone who was down and hip, and cool with also doing advertising.''

''It didn't have to just be one thing,'' he continued.

Although de Jesús has appeared in many major movies, he assumed some other, bigger film star might snag the role of Michael. So he took a risk in his audition. Miranda was impressed.

''I've seen a lot of productions of 'Tick, Tick ... Boom!' and a lot of the time the guy that gets cast as Michael is someone who looks very at home being a business guy, very dapper, very smooth,'' Miranda said in a phone call. ''What's fun about Robin as a choice is that you 100 percent believe this is an artist who thrives in this world. It's an artist with a business suit on.''

Miranda and de Jesús go way back. (So far, in fact, that de Jesús sang at Miranda's wedding.) In 2005, de Jesús made his Broadway debut in ''Rent'' as a member of the ensemble and an understudy for Angel, a young drag queen. That same year, he joined the original cast of ''In the Heights,'' Miranda's first musical, with a book by Quiara Alegría Hudes.

''Quiara and I realized every time he had the ball, he just put a crazy spin on it and knocked it out of the park,'' Miranda said of de Jesús. ''I am mixing my tennis and baseball metaphors, but so would Robin.''

De Jesús earned a Tony nomination for his role as Sonny in ''In the Heights.'' He received subsequent nominations for ''La Cage aux Folles'' in 2010 and ''The Boys in the Band'' in 2019. This year, he presented at the Tony Awards with Andrew Garfield.

But so many of his roles came across as youthful or outsize. De Jesús was ready for something fresh.

''My other characters are like two-liter soda bottles that you shake up and you open,'' he said. ''Michael, you shake, but you leave closed. And I don't get to play that often. I've always known I'm capable of it.''

He was just waiting for someone to give him the opportunity -- like many Black and brown artists, he points out.

''The fact that I've been in New York since 2002, and my first month in New York, I repeatedly heard, 'It's a good time to be a person of color in theater,''' he said. ''And here we are 20 years later.''

And yet, to be Black and brown in New York's arts and entertainment industry is a thing of beauty, he said, in ''the way we've created our own cultures, and the way we uplift and promote joy for one another.''

De Jesús's best friend, his ''nonsexual lifetime partner,'' Dominic Colón, is part of that group of artists, too. Both men are gay and queer Latinos who live in the Bronx, so close they can see each others apartments (intentionally). After ''Tick, Tick ... Boom!,'' de Jesús hopes to act in Colón's play, ''The War I Know,'' a ***working-class***, Puerto Rican story that mirrors their own.

''I think he is a teacher,'' Colón said. ''I think he is a valuable lesson for artists of any age to trust in the journey. And it may not look exactly how you thought it was going to look when you were 18, but it works out in the way that it needs to, and it will continue to.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/19/movies/tick-tick-boom-robin-de-jesus.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/19/movies/tick-tick-boom-robin-de-jesus.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Robin de Jesús, left, with Andrew Garfield in the film version of ''Tick, Tick . . . Boom!'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY MACALL POLAY/NETFLIX)

''It didn't have to just be one thing,'' said de Jesús on playing an actor turned advertiser in ''Tick, Tick . . . Boom!,'' Jonathan Larson's musical adapted to the big screen by Lin-Manuel Miranda. (PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVEN MOLINA CONTRERAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 22, 2021

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[***From the Left, a Historian’s Plea for Democratic Party Unity***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YC-T621-DXY4-X2VP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 8, 2022 Tuesday 19:00 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1492 words

**Byline:** Blake Hounshell and Leah Askarinam

**Highlight:** Michael Kazin’s new book offers a pointed warning to his fellow progressives, and a surprising defense of President Biden.

**Body**

Michael Kazin’s new book offers a pointed warning to his fellow progressives, and a surprising defense of President Biden.

The Democratic Party is going through one of its periodic convulsions, with an insurgent left battling for pre-eminence over a centrist establishment led by President Biden.

Biden struggled to balance these two wings in his first year in office, often having to shuttle between one faction of lawmakers and another to forge compromise.

There is no better example than his [*ill-fated promise*](https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/560103-biden-says-he-wont-sign-bipartisan-bill-without-reconciliation-bill) to bind together two major pieces of legislation, Build Back Better and the infrastructure bill, in a kind of pinkie promise between progressives and moderates.

Now, as Biden confronts the daunting challenge of holding his party together through a difficult midterm campaign season, his big-tent approach is getting support from one of the left’s most influential public intellectuals: the Georgetown University historian Michael Kazin.

Kazin’s book, “[*What It Took to Win: A History of the Democratic Party*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374200237/whatittooktowin),” traces the party’s evolution from its roots in the 1800s and argues that Democrats have been most successful when their wings have been united.

But for a younger generation of progressive politicians, like Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Cori Bush of Missouri, who came of age at a time of growing disillusion with the syrupy pace of electoral politics, unity hasn’t always been the path. Ocasio-Cortez was one of few Democrats who voted against the president’s infrastructure bill, and she has aggressively backed primary challengers to Democratic incumbents.

Kazin concludes his book with a warning to his own side, that the party “can taste victory consistently only if its activists, candidates, and officeholders debate their differences without one side denouncing or seeking to purge one another.”

What is the Democratic Party, anyway?

The book tries to link the party’s origins in Andrew Jackson’s fiery Southern populism to today’s cosmopolitan coalition of “college-educated people of all races in major metropolitan areas and Black and Hispanic working people,” as Kazin defines it.

It’s a difficult throughline to draw. The distance between those two Democratic parties is vast, and Kazin must constantly temper his admiration for an institution founded on the idea “that the economy should benefit the ordinary working person” with his disgust for its past sins of supporting slavery and Jim Crow.

The book’s very title hints at the moral compromises Kazin implies were necessary for the party to win power over its 194 years of existence, but it’s also a nod to “What It Takes,” Richard Ben Cramer’s acclaimed account of the 1988 presidential race.

The exercise of trying to connect the party’s distant past with its fractious present raises a fascinating question: What, exactly, is the Democratic Party? Is it a set of ideas? An institution? A coalition of certain types of voters?

“It’s all those things,” Kazin said in an interview. “But the real question is: What does it stand for?”

A socialist’s answer

Kazin, who has edited the left-wing magazine Dissent for many years, comes to the project as a longtime activist and a proud member of the Democratic Socialists of America. “My commitment to the Democrats is an ambivalent one, alloyed with regret and caution,” he confesses.

So the book is not just a straightforward recounting of events — it doubles as a gentle manifesto in favor of what he calls “moral capitalism.”

“Throughout their history,” Kazin argues, “Democrats won national elections and were competitive in most states when they articulated an egalitarian economic vision and advocated laws intended to fulfill it.”

He wrestles with what Democrats must do to win back the white ***working-class*** voters who have been abandoning the party for decades and culminating in the election of Donald Trump in 2016. The debate often boils down to: Culture or economics? Identity or policy?

In Kazin’s view, Democrats should embrace the kind of populism that has worked for Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio, a lonely blue survivor in a state that has grown ruby red over the last decade.

“Democrats have to stand for economic programs that help people who would never think of voting for them,” even if the political payoffs are only incremental, he elaborated in our interview.

It’s a discussion that inevitably runs into fraught territory. The cultural divide in the Democratic Party — between the well-educated elites who run it and the ***working-class*** base — has only deepened in recent years, and Republicans have been adept at exploiting that gap.

Intellectuals like [*Ruy Teixeira*](mailto:ruyteixeira11@gmail.com) argue that [*Democrats should forcefully rebuke*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/us/politics/ruy-teixeira-democrats.html) progressive activists who have embraced politically unpopular slogans like “defund the police” — even if it means provoking a clash within the party.

Kazin, an old friend of Teixeira’s, politely disagrees.

“You can’t have a unified party by alienating young progressive activists,” he told us. “You have to say, ‘Look, we hear you, but we also have to decide which issues are primary right now.’”

Kazin to Democrats: Remember that you’re allies

Kazin is disdainful of the “professional Democrats” who run the party and its various committees, and he credits the efforts of grassroots groups like Indivisible and Fair Fight with defeating former President Donald Trump.

Yet for all his criticism of the Democratic elites, whom he dismisses as venal and ineffective, Kazin represents a pragmatic strain along the party’s left flank, more aligned with progressive insiders like Pramila Jayapal than with rabble-rousers like Cori Bush.

He’s also willing to forgive the president’s occasional departures from left-wing orthodoxy because, fundamentally, they’re allies in the same cause.

“He’s survived in this long career by making sure he’s always in the center,” Kazin said of Biden. “Like any good politician, he has to think about how to mediate.”

This, he added, is the ultimate lesson of his book: “Without a united party, you can’t do very much at all. And if you don’t win elections, you don’t change things in a serious way.”

What to read

* President Biden signed an executive order banning imports of oil, gas and coal from Russia — and he [*warned Americans that gas prices would increase at home*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/world/europe/biden-bans-russian-oil.html). U.S. gas prices reached an average of $4.173, [*a record high*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/business/us-gas-prices-record.html).

1. Federal prosecutors indicted the former leader of the Proud Boys as [*part of the Justice Department’s investigation of the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/us/politics/enrique-tarrio-proud-boys-jan-6.html).
2. On [*today’s episode of The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/podcasts/the-daily/zelensky-putin-ukraine-war.html), Anton Troianovski, the Moscow bureau chief for The Times, explains the evolution of President Volodymyr Zelensky from a comedian to a global symbol of resistance. (Also: The Times [*removed its reporting staff from Russia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/business/media/new-york-times-russia-press-freedom.html) because of the Kremlin’s crackdown on independent journalism.)

The song that never ends

President Biden’s advanced age — he’ll be turning 82 in 2024 — has been a constant source of mischief and speculation. No matter how many times he insists that he plans on running for re-election, the stories about who might replace him atop the ticket keep coming.

Hillary Clinton can relate. Whenever the former secretary of state pops up in the public eye, she is greeted with the same question: Are you running?

It’s often the same pundits who stoke the narrative. The latest example was an opinion essay in The Wall Street Journal titled “[*Hillary Clinton’s 2024 Election Comeback*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/hillary-clinton-2024-comeback-president-biden-harris-democrat-nominee-race-2022-midterm-loss-11641914951),” by Douglas Schoen and Andrew Stein.

“Given the likelihood that Democrats will lose control of Congress in 2022, we can anticipate that Mrs. Clinton will begin shortly after the midterms to position herself as an experienced candidate capable of leading Democrats on a new and more successful path,” they wrote.

Schoen, a former pollster for Bill Clinton, was a co-author of a [*strikingly similar opinion essay*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052970203611404577041950781477944) published by The Wall Street Journal in 2011. Back then, he urged President Barack Obama to step aside for her.

That didn’t happen, but for the “Hillary’s running” camp, there’s always fresh grist for the mill. When Bill Clinton [*announced*](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/bill-clinton-global-foundation-pandemic-ukraine-russia-war) last week that he was reviving his dormant foundation, the Clinton Global Initiative, Peter Schweizer, a right-wing researcher close to Steve Bannon, [*called it*](https://twitter.com/peterschweizer/status/1499797285705760773) “further evidence that Hillary Clinton may very well run for POTUS in 2024.”

Today, Clinton fended off another are-you-running question from NBC’s Mika Brzezinski. She replied:

“No, but I am certainly going to be active in supporting women running for office and other candidates who I think should be re-elected or elected, both women and men.”

Thanks for reading. We’ll see you tomorrow.

— Blake &amp; Leah

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: President Biden’s big-tent approach garnered support from one of the left’s most influential public intellectuals. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tom Brenner for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

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[***Dishes for the Weary Diner***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6644-N7V1-JBG3-613C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 12, 2022 Friday 18:36 EST

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**Section:** DINING

**Length:** 869 words

**Byline:** Nikita Richardson

**Highlight:** In New York City, it’s easy to take great meals for granted. These three restaurants know how to delight and surprise.

**Body**

In New York City, it’s easy to take great meals for granted. These three restaurants know how to delight and surprise.

Without fail, the first thing I notice when I’m not in New York or other major cities is how difficult it can be to find a fantastic, write-home-about-it meal. This isn’t a knock on suburbs — which are in the midst of [*their own dining revolution*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/18/dining/best-restaurants-suburbs.html) — but rather an acknowledgment: Finding a great meal in New York can be as effortless as breathing. And it can be easy to take that access for granted.

I’m as guilty of this as anyone; uni, caviar and truffles barely provoke a response in me anymore. But every once in a while a meal shakes me out of my haze, and so far this year, three dishes have left me breathless.

Fried Buhsut at Little Mad

The times I’ve wondered aloud whether I was being Punk’d during a meal are few and far between, and that connotation is usually a negative one. But in the case of [*Little Mad*](https://www.littlemadnyc.com/), the year-old Korean American restaurant in NoMad from the chef Sol Han, that feeling of disbelief quickly gave way to utter delight.

The restaurant does a lot to obfuscate what its fried buhsut actually is. The menu describes it as “maitake, sour cream, onion.” And if you’re versed in Korean dining, you know that buhsut is a type of banchan that features stir-fried mushrooms. But none of that prepared me for the presentation — a waiter carrying a yellow onion in a bowl, papery skin and all. Where is Ashton Kutcher (or, rather, Chance the Rapper)? Then the waiter removed the top half of the onion, and inside was sour cream and onion dip dotted with flowers, and a fried maitake mushrooms on the side. Unadulterated, childlike joy!

Fried Tangyuan With Ice Cream at Wenwen

If you’ve followed this newsletter long enough, then you know how I feel about [*desserts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/29/dining/desserts-that-rival-the-main-menu.html). I want options. I want variety. But there’s also something to be said about a restaurant putting all its energy into just one dessert offering. Quality over quantity!

[*Wenwen*](https://wenwenbrooklyn.com/), in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, has adopted that position with [*only one dessert*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/18/dining/wenwen-restaurant-review-pete-wells.html): a platter of tangyuan, balls of glutinous rice flour, which have been deep-fried, and vanilla ice cream served in a pool of inky black-sesame condensed milk and showered with dehydrated peanut butter. This is my favorite kind of dessert, a marriage of textures (chewy and crunchy), temperatures (warm and creamy-cold) and smells (nutty and sugary) that boldly announces itself. Don’t let the cilantro sprinkled on top shock you; according to Wenwen’s owners, cilantro on desserts is “everywhere in Taiwan.”

The Sope de Costilla at Aldama

The menu can be hit-or-miss at this Mexican restaurant in Williamsburg, but the sopes — they don’t miss. In the case of [*Aldama’s*](https://aldamarestaurantbk.com/) sope de costilla, long-cooked short rib (“costilla” is “rib” in Spanish) and lush pinto beans arrive on the finest sope I’ve had. Chalk it up to the gently yielding heirloom corn masa or the brightness of the red onions, but this was so spot on that my friend [*Tembe Denton-Hurst*](https://www.instagram.com/tembae/) and I had no choice but to order another.

Sadly, it’s no longer on the dinner menu, but it lives on at brunch, where it’s now the sope de chistorra with fast-cured sausage, egg yolk, refried beans and cheese. And, yes, it’s just as good.

I’d love to hear about the dishes that have surprised and delighted you this year, and what you find most special about going out to eat these days. Send me an email at [*wheretoeat@nytimes.com*](mailto:wheretoeat@nytimes.com) and you may see your response here. See you next week!

In Other News …

* In his latest review, Pete Wells praised [*Daniel Boulud’s new restaurant*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/09/dining/le-gratin-restaurant-review-pete-wells.html) [*Le Gratin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/09/dining/le-gratin-restaurant-review-pete-wells.html) for its well-executed French dishes while wishing that the acclaimed chef had leaned more into the restaurant’s supposed inspiration: the ***working-class*** bouchons of Lyon.

1. [*Openings and closings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/09/dining/nyc-restaurant-news.html): Little Frog on the Upper East Side has been replaced by the Italian restaurant Sandro’s; Jean-Georges Vongerichten’s Mercer Kitchen will close at the Mercer Hotel in January; and the Beijing-based chain Ju Qi has landed in Flushing, Queens, bringing braised pork tendon soup with scallions, fried tofu and more.
2. Priya Krishna and Umi Syam [*dug into the financial records*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/08/09/dining/dinner-bill-restaurant-costs-inflation.html) of Good Food on Montford in Charlotte, N.C., to illustrate how inflation has directly impacted the cost of running a restaurant and, by extension, dining out.
3. For many Americans, the term “Mexican pizza” evokes visions of Taco Bell. Regan Stephens wrote about [*the rise of pizza featuring Mexican ingredients*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/dining/mexican-pizza.html) — made by Mexican immigrants — across the United States.
4. The sudden popularity of the TV show “The Bear,” released in June, has been [*a boon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/09/dining/hulu-the-bear-italian-beef-sandwich.html) for restaurants that sell Italian beef sandwiches, Rachel Sherman reports.
5. Georges Briguet, the owner of the storied Manhattan restaurant Le Périgord, which counted Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, the Nixons and Truman Capote among its regulars, [*died late last month*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/04/dining/georges-briguet-dead.html) at age 85.

Email us at [*wheretoeat@nytimes.com*](mailto:wheretoeat@nytimes.com). Newsletters will be archived [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/where-to-eat-new-york-city). Follow [*NYT Food on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/nytfood) and [*NYT Cooking on Instagram*](https://www.instagram.com/nytcooking/), [*Facebook*](https://www.facebook.com/nytcooking/), [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/nytcooking) and [*Pinterest*](https://www.pinterest.com/nytcooking/).

PHOTOS: Left, the fried buhsut at Little Mad in Manhattan. Below, the fried tangyuan with ice cream at Wenwen in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LITTLE MAD; SARAH KOBOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 12, 2022

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[***In ‘Tick, Tick … Boom!,’ Robin de Jesús Knew He Could Do It***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6442-NF11-DXY4-X43X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 19, 2021 Friday 09:14 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1035 words

**Byline:** Laura Zornosa

**Highlight:** In the film, this queer Puerto Rican actor gets to showcase his range, stepping into a more mature role as Michael.

**Body**

In the film, this queer Puerto Rican actor gets to showcase his range, stepping into a more mature role as Michael.

The T-shirt says it all: “This body was built on arroz con gandules.”

Arroz con gandules, or rice with pigeon peas, is a Puerto Rican classic, and Robin de Jesús wears the shirt with pride under a burnt orange jacket. When mounds of maduros (fried sweet plantains) arrive with our entrees, each is topped with a tiny Puerto Rican flag. De Jesús, 37, approves.

The actor’s family is from rural Puerto Rico, and he grew up in a ***working-class*** community in Norwalk, Conn. Known for larger-than-life roles like a gay teenager who dabbles in drag in the movie “Camp,” a spirited maid in the Broadway revival of “La Cage aux Folles” and a boisterous interior decorator in both the play and film versions of “The Boys in the Band,” he wanted to diversify his work.

Then along came “Tick, Tick … Boom!.” De Jesús was deeply intentional in auditioning for the role of Michael, an actor turned advertiser, in the film, directed by Lin-Manuel Miranda.

“What kept coming up for me was, ‘I want a quiet performance.’ I want a quiet, subtle, nuance,” de Jesús said at lunch. “And I know that, if I do that, I can showcase maturity.”

The movie (in theaters and on Netflix) is [*an adaptation of a musical about the writing of a musical*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/movies/tick-tick-boom-lin-manuel-netflix.html). The original “Tick, Tick … Boom!” was written by Jonathan Larson — who would later go on to write the rock musical “[*Rent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/theater/rent-anniversary.html)” — and first performed in 1990. The film tells the tale of an aspiring composer (also named Jonathan and [*played by Andrew Garfield*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/16/movies/andrew-garfield-tick-tick-boom.html)) pouring himself into yet another musical, this one called “Superbia.” It takes place in the early ’90s, against the stark backdrop of the AIDS epidemic.

As his 30th birthday looms, Jonathan’s anxiety manifests as a persistent ticking. He worries about the upcoming workshop of “Superbia,” upon which everything seemingly hinges — and about whether he can succeed in the performing arts at all.

Michael, his former roommate and best friend since childhood, has tapped out of the threadbare artist lifestyle, opting instead for a plush career in advertising and a glittering high-rise apartment. He was tired of waiting for hours in line for an audition, just to be cut off after six measures of a song and called the wrong name: “Juan, Pedro, Carlos, lo que sea.”

That’s not to say that Michael has hardened into a formal shell; he stays playful and supportive of Jonathan’s dreams. We first meet him visiting Jonathan at work in the Moondance Diner, where he drops off copies he made of the “Superbia” script.

“Boo-boo, you need to ask yourself,” Michael tells Jonathan, “In this moment, are you letting yourself be led by fear? Or love?”

De Jesús said, “I knew that Michael did not have to be pulled and buttoned up, that he was someone who navigated being an artist, a creative, someone who was down and hip, and cool with also doing advertising.”

“It didn’t have to just be one thing,” he continued.

Although de Jesús has appeared in many major movies, he assumed some other, bigger film star might snag the role of Michael. So he took a risk in his audition. Miranda was impressed.

“I’ve seen a lot of productions of ‘Tick, Tick … Boom!’ and a lot of the time the guy that gets cast as Michael is someone who looks very at home being a business guy, very dapper, very smooth,” Miranda said in a phone call. “What’s fun about Robin as a choice is that you 100 percent believe this is an artist who thrives in this world. It’s an artist with a business suit on.”

Miranda and de Jesús go way back. (So far, in fact, that de Jesús sang at Miranda’s wedding.) In 2005, de Jesús made his Broadway debut in “Rent” as a member of the ensemble and an understudy for Angel, a young drag queen. That same year, he joined the original cast of “In the Heights,” Miranda’s first musical, with a book by Quiara Alegría Hudes.

“Quiara and I realized every time he had the ball, he just put a crazy spin on it and knocked it out of the park,” Miranda said of de Jesús. “I am mixing my tennis and baseball metaphors, but so would Robin.”

De Jesús earned a Tony nomination for his role as Sonny in “[*In the Heights*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/10/theater/reviews/10heig.html).” He received subsequent nominations for “La Cage aux Folles” in 2010 and “The Boys in the Band” in 2019. This year, he presented at the Tony Awards with Andrew Garfield.

But so many of his roles came across as youthful or outsize. De Jesús was ready for something fresh.

“My other characters are like two-liter soda bottles that you shake up and you open,” he said. “Michael, you shake, but you leave closed. And I don’t get to play that often. I’ve always known I’m capable of it.”

He was just waiting for someone to give him the opportunity — like many Black and brown artists, he points out.

“The fact that I’ve been in New York since 2002, and my first month in New York, I repeatedly heard, ‘It’s a good time to be a person of color in theater,’” he said. “And here we are 20 years later.”

And yet, to be Black and brown in New York’s arts and entertainment industry is a thing of beauty, he said, in “the way we’ve created our own cultures, and the way we uplift and promote joy for one another.”

De Jesús’s best friend, his “nonsexual lifetime partner,” [*Dominic Colón*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4WxSvYZR4w), is part of that group of artists, too. Both men are gay and queer Latinos who live in the Bronx, so close they can see each others apartments (intentionally). After “Tick, Tick … Boom!,” de Jesús hopes to act in Colón’s play, “The War I Know,” a ***working-class***, Puerto Rican story that mirrors their own.

“I think he is a teacher,” Colón said. “I think he is a valuable lesson for artists of any age to trust in the journey. And it may not look exactly how you thought it was going to look when you were 18, but it works out in the way that it needs to, and it will continue to.”

PHOTOS: Robin de Jesús, left, with Andrew Garfield in the film version of “Tick, Tick . . . Boom!” (PHOTOGRAPH BY MACALL POLAY/NETFLIX); “It didn’t have to just be one thing,” said de Jesús on playing an actor turned advertiser in “Tick, Tick . . . Boom!,” Jonathan Larson’s musical adapted to the big screen by Lin-Manuel Miranda. (PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVEN MOLINA CONTRERAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 22, 2021

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[***A Question of Power***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65D8-3991-JBG3-62BH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 14; FICTION

**Length:** 701 words

**Byline:** By Aaron Shulman

**Body**

THE WONDERSBy Elena MedelTranslated by Lizzie Davis and Thomas Bunstead

For decades, Spain has excelled at what the travel industry calls ''destination marketing.'' The product on offer is the country itself, a photogenic fantasy of art and history, beaches and bullfights, Flamenco dancers and musicians, wine and tapas. The exotic sizzle reel of advertising clichés offered by la Marca España -- the Spain Brand, an official promotional initiative the Spanish government launched amid the depths of the Great Recession -- has obscured for much of the world what life is really like for millions of Spaniards.

Elena Medel's debut novel, ''The Wonders,'' stands as a corrective to this asymmetry. Spanning from 1969 to 2018, the novel immerses readers in the daily indignities of a country that has often struggled agonizingly with stagnant wages and widespread paro (unemployment), not to mention the legacy of the Franco dictatorship. The story follows two women related by blood but separated by circumstance: María, who gives birth to a daughter out of wedlock in the late 1960s and must leave behind her baby and her hometown, Córdoba, to seek work in Madrid; and Alicia, María's granddaughter, whose life is no less precarious or tainted by loss than that of the maternal grandmother she has never met. As these fragmented narratives elegantly graze each other without ever clicking into a fully formed picture, the two women's lives are marked by suicide, foreclosures, menial labor, social immobility and overarching sadness. This is no sunny jaunt to Ibiza, nor does it have the mythic halo of la Alhambra.

A prominent literary voice in Spain, Medel made a name for herself in the early aughts as a prodigy of sorts. She published her first book of poetry to acclaim when she was still in her teens, then went on to write several more collections and founded the small press La Bella Varsovia. Her poetic sensibility is evident in rhythmic, incantatory prose ably translated by Lizzie Davis and Thomas Bunstead, yet she also looks at the world through a good novelist's magnifying glass. For example, at the Atocha train station in Madrid, where Alicia works, she notes how ''the people in the bathroom that costs 60 céntimos try hard to aim their urine stream so it stays inside the bowl: a little solidarity among the ***working class***.''

This observation, like so many in ''The Wonders,'' derives its sense of wonder (a very wry, often downcast sense of wonder) not from lofty transcendence, but from the way the tiniest details of our lives are shaped by the realities of money. Yet as we are taken into María's and Alicia's histories -- María hiding her intelligence so as not to outshine a man, Alicia cheating on a boyfriend who can't accept that she won't have children -- Medel probes deeper than mere economics. As an older María thinks while resisting her partner's plea to move in with him: ''It's a question of money ... and a question of power.'' And the fact that women in Spain have historically enjoyed neither.

It's no coincidence that the book's understated climax, if you can call it that, occurs during the 2018 Women's Strike, when Spanish women skipped work and took to the streets to protest gender inequality. In an article she published reflecting on the march, Medel lamented that there wasn't a greater mix of generations and social classes present. By way of a brief scene involving María and Alicia near the novel's end, it is as if she rights her disappointment with reality, if fleetingly, through the infinite possibilities of fiction.

''The Wonders'' is not a loud, fizzy debut, and this is one of its strengths. It is a vivid and painfully intimate account of two easily overlooked lives. Medel paints a gray world of drudgery and solitude, yet she also makes room for her characters to grow into their power as women, a power they discover does not in fact lie in money.Aaron Shulman is the author of ''The Age of Disenchantments: The Epic Story of Spain's Most Notorious Literary Family and the Long Shadow of the Spanish Civil War.'' He lives in Barcelona.THE WONDERSBy Elena MedelTranslated by Lizzie Davis and Thomas Bunstead240 pp. Algonquin Books. $26.95.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/books/review/elena-medel-wonders.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/books/review/elena-medel-wonders.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Elena Medel (PHOTOGRAPH BY LAURA C. VELA)

**Load-Date:** May 8, 2022

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[***Sounding an Alarm Over America's Values***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67K7-1HF1-JBG3-60N6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Jennifer Szalai

**Body**

Never easy, the relationship between the vaunted political system and economic order appears to be in crisis. New books by historians and economists sound the alarm.

The documentary series ''Free to Choose,'' which aired on public television in 1980 and was hosted by the libertarian economist Milton Friedman, makes for surreal watching nowadays. Even if Ronald Reagan would go on to win the presidential election later that year, it was still a time when capitalism's most enthusiastic supporters evidently felt the need to win the public over to a vision of free markets and minimal government. Today's billionaire donors may be able to funnel money to their favored candidates without even bothering to pay lip service to American democracy, but the corporate funders of ''Free to Choose'' set out to make their case.

They had an enormous audience: The 15 million viewers who watched the first episode saw an avuncular Friedman (diminutive and smiling), leaning casually against a chair in a Chinatown sweatshop (noisy and crowded), surrounded by women pushing fabric through clattering sewing machines. ''They are like my mother,'' Friedman said, gesturing at the Asian women in the room. She had worked in a factory too, after immigrating as a 14-year-old from Austria-Hungary in the late 19th century. Friedman explained that these low-wage garment workers weren't being exploited; they were gaining a foothold in the American land of plenty. The camera then cut to a tray of juicy steaks.

Friedman may have been happy to do his part to try to persuade the masses, but he didn't put too much stock in democracy. He notoriously offered economic advice to the Chilean military dictator Augusto Pinochet that amounted to a brutal program of austerity. In 1967, at the height of the civil rights movement, Friedman argued that any progress made by Black Americans had to do with ''the opportunities offered them by a market system'' (instead of ''legislative measures'' that only encouraged ''unrealistic and extravagant expectations''). What Friedman believed in was capitalism, or what he called ''economic freedom.'' Political freedom might come -- but capitalism, he said, could do just fine without it.

Not so, insists Martin Wolf in his new book, ''The Crisis of Democratic Capitalism.'' ''Capitalism cannot survive in the long run without a democratic polity, and democracy cannot survive in the long run without a market economy,'' he writes. Capitalism supplies democracy with resources, while democracy supplies capitalism with legitimacy. Wolf, the chief economics commentator for The Financial Times, worries that after an efflorescence of democratic capitalism, ''that delicate flower'' is beginning to wither. Most of his ire is directed at an unhinged financial system that has encouraged a ''rentier capitalism'' and a ''rigged'' economy.''

Wolf is hardly alone in noticing that the relationship between democracy and capitalism has gone haywire. He and other observers are trying to make sense of what might happen next -- and, befitting our current bewilderment, they offer a range of perspectives. Some, like Wolf, hope the relationship can be repaired; others argue that the pairing has always been fraught, if not impossible.

In Wolf's case, his anguished tone reflects the scale of his own disillusionment. Born in 1946 in postwar England, he recalls in his preface how ''the world seemed solid as I grew up.'' He describes the feelings of ''confidence'' in democracy and capitalism that flourished with the collapse of the Soviet Union. But he has also read his Marx and Engels, looking askance at their solutions while commending them for how ''brilliantly'' they described capitalism's relentlessness and omnivorousness. Left to its own devices, capitalism expands wherever it can, plowing its way through national boundaries and local traditions -- making it marvelously dynamic or utterly ruinous, and not infrequently both.

Yet the ''democratic capitalism'' that Wolf wants to preserve was, even by his own lights, short-lived. Democracy itself -- or ''liberal democracy'' with universal suffrage, which Wolf says is the kind of democracy he means -- is a ''political mayfly.'' Democratic capitalism ended, in his account, with the financial crisis of 2008. The former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich has offered another measure, arguing that democratic capitalism, at least in the United States, began with Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal and ended with Reagan, when ''corporate capitalism'' took over. (There's also an argument to be made that true democracy in the United States began only with the Voting Rights Act of 1965.) Reich and Wolf share a deep sense of crisis, along with the adamant conviction that democratic capitalism can and should be revived.

Capitalism expands wherever it can, plowing its way through national boundaries and local traditions -- making it marvelously dynamic or utterly ruinous, and not infrequently both.

The left-wing German sociologist Wolfgang Streeck stakes out a decidedly different position, suggesting that the tendency to equate ''democratic capitalism'' with a few decades of postwar plenty is to misinterpret a ''historical compromise between a then uniquely powerful ***working class*** and an equally uniquely weakened capitalist class.'' In ''How Will Capitalism End?'' (2016), Streeck argues that it's not compromise but the cascade of crises following the postwar boom -- inflation, unemployment, market crashes -- ''that represents the normal condition of democratic capitalism.'' Where Wolf wistfully invokes a ''delicate flower,'' Streeck writes contemptuously of a ''shotgun marriage.''

Less than a decade ago, Streeck sounded like a fringe Savonarola; in 2014, he published ''Buying Time,'' declaring he was sure that the end of democratic capitalism was nigh. When an idea that once seemed preposterous starts to look prescient, we know that something fundamental has changed.

It's a transformation that the historian Gary Gerstle explores in his fascinating and incisive ''The Rise and Fall of the Neoliberal Order'' (2022). Before the New Deal order started to falter in the late 1960s and '70s, Gerstle writes, a majority of Americans believed that capitalism should be managed by a strong state; in the neoliberal order that followed, a majority of Americans believed that the state should be constrained by free markets. Each order began to break down when its traditional ways of solving problems didn't seem to work. Both the New Deal and its neoliberal successor took for granted that democracy and capitalism were compatible; if these books are any indication, that mainstream assumption -- and even the notion of a mainstream assumption -- is in tatters.

Democracy might be imperiled, but capitalism, according to Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway, has obtained the status of civic religion. In ''The Big Myth: How American Business Taught Us to Loathe Government and Love the Free Market,'' the authors argue that industry groups and wealthy donors have engaged in a concerted campaign to promote ''market fundamentalism'' -- ''a vision of growth and innovation by unfettered markets where government just gets out of the way.''

Oreskes and Conway are perhaps best known for ''Merchants of Doubt'' (2010), which detailed corporate-funded efforts to protect the tobacco industry and promote climate-change denial by depicting settled science as ''unsettled.'' They describe their new book as a sequel of sorts -- an attempt to understand the ideology that animated the figures in ''Merchants,'' whose terror of government regulation was so extreme that they equated environmental protections with communist tyranny.

But instead of sowing doubt, what the figures in this new book are peddling is certainty: the iffy ''science'' of laissez-faire economics dressed up as indisputable fact. Oreskes and Conway are historians of science, and they do an impressive job of uncovering the resources that groups like the National Association of Manufacturers and the Foundation for Economic Education put into spreading the (greed is good) word.

The main implication of ''The Big Myth'' seems to be that ''market fundamentalism'' is so horrifically egregious -- enriching the few and despoiling the planet -- that Americans had to be plied with propaganda to believe in it. But as Gerstle's book shows, neoliberal ideas proved so seductive because they also happened to dovetail with the stories that Americans wanted to tell about themselves, emphasizing individuality and freedom.

Such popular support is crucial in a democracy, of course, but in ''Globalists'' (2018) the historian Quinn Slobodian argues that neoliberals have found ways not just to liberate markets but to ''encase'' them in international institutions, thereby shielding capitalist activities from democratic accountability. He observes that neoliberals were especially alarmed after World War II by decolonization, adopting a condescending ''racialized language'' that pitted ''the rational West,'' with its trade rules and property laws, against a postcolonial South, ''with its 'emotional' commitment to sovereignty.''

Slobodian's excellent if discomfiting new book, ''Crack-Up Capitalism'' (forthcoming in April), explores other neoliberal evasions of the nation-state: tax havens, special economic zones, gated communities -- enclaves that are ''freed from ordinary forms of regulation.'' A new generation of swashbuckling billionaires entertain the prospect of secession, using their money to realize fantasies of escape, whether through seasteading or spaceships. The book quotes one seasteading enthusiast declaring, ''Democracy is not the answer,'' but merely ''the current industry standard.'' That person was Patri Friedman, Milton's grandson.

Still, as much as a rarefied class might try to live in a realm beyond democracy, Slobodian says that even the most fantastical capitalist projects require a demos to function. Tech billionaires might be trying to create a world where the plebes -- with their pesky demands for secure working conditions and a living wage -- will be replaced by indefatigable robots that don't have to eat anything at all (let alone a tray of juicy steaks). But for now essential workers are still humans.

''The waged service class is the easiest for the visionaries to forget and the hardest for them to live without,'' Slobodian writes. ''The cloud floats because the underclass holds it up. Time will tell if they drop their arms one day and make something new.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/15/books/review/books-democracy-capitalism.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/15/books/review/books-democracy-capitalism.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTOS (C1)

The precariousness of democracy symbolized by the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol is the topic of a spate of new books. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HAIYUN JIANG/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C4) This article appeared in print on page C1, C4.

**Load-Date:** February 18, 2023

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[***Peruvians Take Fight To Leaders In Capital***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67DR-MR91-DXY4-X4HJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1524 words

**Byline:** By Mitra Taj and Marco Garro

**Body**

They marched through the streets of Peru's capital, carrying signs that said ''I'm not a terrorist'' and waved rainbow-colored flags associated with Indigenous communities in the Andes. Many chant ''murderer'' at the country's leader and sing hymns about not being afraid anymore. On Thursday, more continued to arrive, with many vowing to stay for the long fight.

In the past week, thousands of rural Peruvians have descended on Lima to join local protests calling on President Dina Boluarte to resign following the ouster in December of the country's former leader after he tried to dissolve Congress and rule by decree.

The growing demonstrations in the capital follow seven weeks of protests around the country that show little sign of abating. Instead, Peru has found itself at an ugly impasse with the government doubling down on portraying demonstrators as pawns for drug-traffickers, illegal miners and terrorist groups who are trying to sow chaos, according to Ms. Boluarte.

Day by day, the protests seem to grow more chaotic.

The ongoing showdown has ratcheted up the polarization of the country, which has been convulsed by what is already its deadliest conflict this century.

Since Ms. Boluarte took office on Dec. 7, violent protests against her government have paralyzed large swaths of southern Peru, shutting down copper and tin mines and choking off highways leading to Lima and towns in the Amazon.

There have been at least 57 deaths related to the unrest, all outside of Lima. Forty-six civilians were killed in clashes between protesters and law enforcement officers, including 17 during a day of violent demonstrations in one southern city in Puno, a heavily Indigenous and rural region bordering Bolivia.

Daily marches in Lima, where roughly a third of the country's population of 33 million lives, have been relatively small but have grown as protesters from outside the city have arrived, many carrying sacks of grains and potatoes.

''Over there, we're killed,'' said Jose Hilaquita, an Indigenous Aymara farmer from Puno, explaining why he had traveled for more than two days to march in Lima. ''Over there, no one listens to us. We have to come here to be seen.''

The protests have been led largely by Indigenous, rural and poorer Peruvians fed up with what they portray the country's dysfunctional political system and entrenched discrimination. Many support the former leftist president, Pedro Castillo, a onetime union activist from a poor Andean town who was arrested and accused of trying to illegally seize control of Congress and the justice system on Dec. 7.

But demonstrators have also found support in Lima from some residents, while others have welcomed them with insults. Many have been invited to camp out on the grassy lawns and the squeaky gym floors of public universities. Others sleep in the offices of leftist groups or in the homes of local residents.

In Lima's ***working-class*** district of Santa Anita, Rosa Zambrano, a 74-year old retired psychologist, opened her half-finished home to 40 protesters.

After she heard they were heading to Lima, Ms. Zambrano got in touch with friends in Moquegua, the Andean region she migrated from 40 years ago, and asked how she could help.

''I couldn't bear the thought of them sleeping outside,'' she said as she prepared a giant pot of carapulcra, pork stewed with chiles, peanuts and potatoes, to serve the group for lunch before a demonstration. ''I'm proud of the struggle of my compatriots. There is too much injustice in this country.''

Food donations from residents of Lima, large and small, have helped feed protesters sheltering in large houses and at two public universities. The rector of one university opened its doors to provide refuge, while the other, San Marcos, the oldest university in the Americas, was occupied by students.

Yet, the protests have fiercely divided public opinion in Peru -- while 60 percent of rural Peruvians support them, that figure drops to less than 40 percent among Lima residents, according to a recent poll.

Some believe Ms. Boluarte has abused her executive power to quell the demonstrations, and that Peru's entrenched corruption and inequality can only be addressed with new elections and a new constitution.

But others say her resignation would only usher in more chaos and erode the already weak rule of law. ''Castillo tried to do a coup and failed. Now his people are upset and want to use violence to remove the person the constitution says should replace him,'' said Eduardo Rivera, a business administrator in Lima. ''That's not how it works.''

While most protesters march peacefully, many demonstrations in southern Peru have ended in clashes with security forces and crowds vandalizing government offices. Road blockades have disrupted deliveries of food, fuel and medical oxygen.

Machu Picchu, one of the most popular destinations in Peru, has closed its doors, dealing a heavy blow to the tourism industry. The conflict has led to more than $500 million in losses so far, according to the government, with small businesses and some of the poorest regions hit hardest.

The authorities said that in recent days, protesters have staged simultaneous attacks on airports in southern Peru and set fire to two dozen police stations and courthouses. In the southern region of Arequipa last weekend, a crowd captured a police officer, doused him with gasoline and threatened to burn him alive unless authorities released prisoners.

In some regions, large groups of men carrying sticks dressed as civilians have appeared to help the police force protesters off roads, sparking fears of clashes between groups of civilians.

As she has struggled to gain control, Ms. Boluarte has staked out an increasingly hawkish stance, treating the crisis not as a political challenge, but mainly as a security threat.

On several occasions, she has compared the protests to one of the country's darkest chapters, a two-decade period when leftist insurgents terrorized the country and military death squads massacred civilians.

She has suggested that protesters are paid to promote the agendas of drug traffickers, illegal miners, smugglers and Bolivian leftists, and this week she claimed that protesters, not police officers, had killed other civilians during clashes. As proof, the president cited a video that she claimed showed a protester with a gun.

The government has yet to provide clear evidence to back up that claim, or claims of high-level coordination by a terrorist organization or illicit funding behind the violent attacks.

Ms. Boluarte said that violent radicals in Puno had ''practically paralyzed'' the entire region.

''What should we do in the face of these threats?'' Ms. Boluarte said during a news conference. ''Let them burn us alive? We have to protect the lives and tranquillity of 33 millions of Peruvians. Puno isn't Peru.''

Within minutes, video clips of Ms. Boluarte saying ''Puno isn't Peru'' circulated on social media. Ms. Boluarte tweeted an apology.

On Saturday, in an extraordinary show of force, the police used a tank to tear down a gate at San Marcos University and then lined up Indigenous protesters and students face down on the concrete. Nearly 200 people were detained, and all but one were released the next day because of a lack of evidence of any wrongdoing.

''They're trying to deactivate our movement,'' said Brich Huanca, a university student from the city of Cusco. ''She's trying to install the idea that Peru is fighting against a common enemy, against a menace to society.''

Ms. Boluarte insists she will not resign but has proposed to move up elections to April 2024, a date that must be ratified by Congress with a supermajority, which many analysts say looks unlikely.

She has the support of centrist and right-wing lawmakers and most Lima-based media outlets, as well as Peruvians who blame protesters for the violence.

''Supposedly we have a democracy to avoid all of this,'' said Rosa Trelles, a newspaper vendor in the capital. She said relatives in a southern coastal region had been unable to work for weeks because of road blockades, and she's been struggling to afford rising food prices.

''This has gotten out of control,'' she said. ''They want to affect businessmen, but this is affecting the people, too. They want more deaths to keep their movement alive.''

Peruvians sympathetic with the now-defunct Shining Path insurgency have been spotted at protests, as they often are at demonstrations for leftist causes.

Peru is also home to large drug trafficking and illegal mining trades that employ hundreds of thousands of laborers, many of whom were sympathetic to Mr. Castillo, the ousted president, and have joined protests.

''Things aren't black and white. Peru is a country very burdened by gray areas,'' said Eduardo Dargent, a Peruvian political analyst.

''It's true that there are groups that want to push the situation to the limits,'' he added. ''But none of that negates the fact that first there was discontent. That discontent is what's driving the protests, and it has a lot to do with how the government behaves.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/27/world/americas/peru-protests-lima.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/27/world/americas/peru-protests-lima.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Protests in Lima, Peru, are growing as more Indigenous people arrive in the capital. ''We have to come here to be seen,'' one demonstrator from the countryside said.

ROSA ZAMBRANO, left, a 74-year-old retired psychologist, as she prepared a giant pot of carapulcra, pork stewed with chiles, peanuts and potatoes, to serve a group of protesters for lunch before a demonstration last week.

Protesters in Lima. They want President Dina Boluarte to resign, but she is supported by centrist and right-wing lawmakers. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARCO GARRO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A6.

**Load-Date:** January 28, 2023

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[***What’s ‘Woke’ and Why It Matters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67VG-68N1-JBG3-63BG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 1967 words

**Highlight:** A marker of just how much American politics has changed over the last eight years.

**Body**

A marker of just how much American politics has changed over the last eight years.

Believe it or not, the term woke wasn’t uttered even once in the Republican debates back in 2015 and 2016.

Now, I’d be surprised if we make it out of the opening statements of the first primary debate without hearing it.

Whatever you think of the word, the rise of “woke” to ubiquity is a helpful marker of just how much American politics has changed over the last eight years.

There’s a new set of issues poised to loom over the coming campaign, from critical race theory and nonbinary pronouns to “cancel culture” and the fate of university courses. Fifteen years ago, I would have said these topics could divide a small liberal arts campus, not American politics. I would have been wrong.

This change in American politics is hard to analyze. It’s hard to craft clear and incisive questions on these complex and emerging topics for survey research, especially since “woke” is notoriously ill-defined. Last week, the conservative writer Bethany Mandel became the subject of considerable [*ridicule*](https://www.newsweek.com/define-woke-bethany-mandel-conservative-book-1788538) on social media after she was unable to concisely define the term in an interview. She’s not the only one. Apparently, there’s a “woke” part of the [*federal budget*](https://www.newsweek.com/define-woke-bethany-mandel-conservative-book-1788538). “Wokeness” was even faulted for the [*Silicon Valley Bank collapse*](https://www.newsweek.com/define-woke-bethany-mandel-conservative-book-1788538).

But while the definition of “woke” may be up for debate, there’s no doubt that the term is trying to describe something about the politics of today’s highly educated, young “new” left, especially on cultural and social issues like race, sex and gender.

As with [*the original New Left*](https://www.newsweek.com/define-woke-bethany-mandel-conservative-book-1788538) in the 1960s, the emergence of this new left has helped spark a reactionary moment on the right. It has split many liberals from their usual progressive allies. And it has helped power the rise of Gov. Ron DeSantis, who has done more to associate himself with fighting “woke” than any other politician. Like it or not, “woke” will shape this year’s Republican primary.

What’s woke?

The new left emerged in the aftermath of Barack Obama’s re-election in 2012. At the time, liberalism seemed utterly triumphant. Yet for young progressives, “hope” and “change” had given way to the realization that Mr. Obama’s presidency hadn’t cured income inequality, racial inequality or climate change. These dynamics opened a space for a new left, as young progressives started to reach for more ambitious politics, just as the triumph of the Obama coalition gave progressives the confidence to embrace ideas that would have been unimaginable in the Bush era.

A decade later, this new left is everywhere. On economic issues, there has been the Bernie Sanders campaign and calls for Medicare for all; democratic socialism; and the Green New Deal. On race, there has been the Black Lives Matter movement; kneeling in protest during the national anthem; and defund the police. On gender and sex, there has been the Me Too movement and the sharing of preferred pronouns and more.

On class and economics, it’s easy to delineate the new left. Mr. Sanders helpfully embraced the democratic socialism label to distinguish himself from those who would incrementally smooth out the rough edges of capitalism. It’s harder to distinguish the new left from Obama-era liberals on race, gender and sexuality. There is no widely shared ideological term like democratic socialism to make it easy.

And yet the differences between Obama-era liberals and the new left on race, sexuality and gender are extremely significant, with big consequences for American politics.

Here are just a few of those differences:

* The new left speaks with righteousness, urgency and moral clarity. While liberals always held strong beliefs, their righteousness was tempered by the need to accommodate a more conservative electorate. Mr. Obama generally emphasized compromise, commonality and respect for conservatives, [*“even when he disagreed.”*](https://www.newsweek.com/define-woke-bethany-mandel-conservative-book-1788538)As Obama-era liberalism became dominant, a more righteous progressive discourse emerged — one that didn’t accommodate and even “called out” its opposition. This was partly a reflection of what played well on social media, but it also reflected that progressive values had become uncontested in many communities with a high percentage of college graduates.

1. The new left is very conscious of identity. Obama-era liberals tended to emphasize the commonalities between groups and downplayed longstanding racial, religious and partisan divisions. Mr. Obama was even characterized as [*“post-racial.”*](https://www.newsweek.com/define-woke-bethany-mandel-conservative-book-1788538)Today’s new left consciously strives to include, protect and promote marginalized groups. In everyday life, this means prioritizing, trusting and affirming the voices and experiences of marginalized groups, encouraging people to share their pronouns, listing identities on social media profiles, and more. This extension of politics to everyday life is a difference from Obama-era liberalism in its own right. While the Obama-era liberals mostly focused on policy, the new left emphasizes the personal as political.Today’s new left is conscious of identity in policymaking as well, whether it’s arguing against race-neutral policies that entrench racial disparities or advocating race-conscious remedies. Obama-era liberals rarely implemented race-conscious policies or mentioned the racial consequences of racially neutral policies.
2. The new left sees society as a web of overlapping power structures or systems of oppression, constituted by language and norms as much as law and policy. This view is substantially informed by modern academic scholarship that explains how power, domination and oppression persist in liberal societies.Indeed, almost everything debated recently — critical race theory, the distinction between sex and gender, we can go on — originated in academia over the last half-century. Academic jargon like “intersectional” has become commonplace. It can be hard to understand what’s going on if you didn’t read Judith Butler, Paulo Freire or Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in college.Academic scholarship is also the source of the expanded, academic meanings of “trauma,” “violence,” “safety” and “erasure,” which implicitly equate the psychological harm experienced by marginalized groups with the physical harms of traditional illiberal oppression.This does not readily lend itself to a “politics of hope,” as virtually everything about America might have to change to end systemic racism. No law will do it. No candidate can promise it. But it does imbue individual actions that subvert oppressive hierarchies with liberatory and emancipatory implications, helping explain the urgency of activists to critique language and challenge norms in everyday life.
3. The new left view that racism, sexism and other oppressive hierarchies are deeply embedded in American society all but ensures a pessimistic view of America. This is quite different from Obama-era liberalism. Indeed, Mr. Obama himself was cast as a redeeming figure whose ascent proved American greatness.
4. When in conflict, the new left prioritizes the pursuit of a more equitable society over enlightenment-era liberal values. Many of the academic theories, including critical race theory, critique liberalism as an obstacle to progressive change.In this view, equal rights are a veneer that conceal and justify structural inequality, while some liberal beliefs impede efforts to challenge oppression. The liberal value of equal treatment prevents identity-conscious remedies to injustice; the liberal goal of equal opportunity accepts unequal outcomes; even freedom of speech allows voices that would offend and thus could exclude marginalized communities.

Is this a definition of woke? No. But it covers much of what woke is grasping toward: a word to describe a new brand of righteous, identity-conscious, new left activists eager to tackle oppression, including in everyday life and even at the expense of some liberal values.

Why woke matters for Republicans

The rise of the new left on race and gender is already reshuffling conservative politics.

For this year’s Republican primary, one of the most important things about this rise is that it has helped bridge the usual divide between the conservative base and the establishment.

At least for now, the establishment and the base share the fight against “woke,” for two reasons:

* The new left is far enough left that there’s room to side with the right while keeping one or both feet in the center. Whether it’s a MAGA fan or a Reaganite, there’s a path for an enterprising politician to bash “woke” and get on Fox News without alienating donors. Anyone can be a conservative hero, even a private equity magnate who would have been seen as an establishment squish in 2015, like Gov. Glenn Youngkin.Anti-woke politics seems to animate elite conservatives as much as the activist, populist base. After all, the new left is most prevalent in liberal bastions like New York or Washington, and among the young in highly educated industries like the news media and higher education. Its rise has probably been felt most acutely by highly educated conservatives as well.

Whether this dynamic changes is an important question as the primary heats up.

Over the last few months, Donald J. Trump and Mr. DeSantis have staked out farther-right positions that might put this question to the test. Mr. Trump, for instance, [*said*](https://www.newsweek.com/define-woke-bethany-mandel-conservative-book-1788538) he would pass a federal law recognizing only two genders and would punish doctors who provide gender-affirming care for minors. Mr. DeSantis, for example, would [*ban gender studies*](https://www.newsweek.com/define-woke-bethany-mandel-conservative-book-1788538). As the campaign gets underway, they may go further. We will learn whether other candidates match their positions, and whether there’s a cost if they do not.

Another big question is whether anti-woke politics can supplant older culture war fights, like abortion or immigration. Most anti-new-left conservatives still vigorously oppose the old liberals on immigration, secularism, feminism and more. It remains to be seen whether attacking [*D.E.I*](https://www.newsweek.com/define-woke-bethany-mandel-conservative-book-1788538)., Disney and university professors, as Mr. DeSantis did in a recent trip to Iowa, is the red meat for rank-and-file conservatives that it is for conservatives in urban centers like Manhattan who feel under siege by an increasingly assertive left.

Unfortunately, there is almost no survey data that helps answer these questions at this stage. The behavior of Fox News producers and the rise of DeSantis suggest that there’s some kind of mass constituency for this politics, but whether it amounts to 30 percent or 60 percent of the Republican base and whether it’s compelling enough to carry a primary bid is entirely unclear.

In the most extreme case for Democrats, the backlash against the new left could end in a repeat of how New Left politics in the 1960s facilitated the marriage of neoconservatives and the religious right in the 1970s. Back then, opposition to the counterculture helped unify Republicans against a new class of highly educated liberals, allowing Southern opponents of civil rights to join old-school liberal intellectuals who opposed Communism and grew skeptical of the Great Society. The parallels are imperfect, but striking.

On the other end of the spectrum, there’s the possibility that a populist, ***working-class*** conservative base perceives little distinction between “woke” and “liberal,” and would rather hear the old classics on illegal immigration, crime and coarse language about women and Mexicans than fight new battles against “[*woke capital,*](https://www.newsweek.com/define-woke-bethany-mandel-conservative-book-1788538)” critical race theorists and transgender teenagers.

The range of possibilities for the general election are similarly wide. We’ll save the general election for another time.

PHOTO: Gov. Ron DeSantis after signing HB7, dubbed the “stop woke” bill, during a news conference in Hialeah Gardens, Fla., last April. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Daniel A. Varela/Miami Herald, via Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 11, 2024

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[***Strip-Searches of Children by the London Police Are Called 'Deeply Concerning'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6642-GF41-DXY4-X225-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 931 words

**Byline:** By Isabella Kwai

**Body**

A report from England's children's commissioner on Monday found that 650 children, including a disproportionate number of young Black boys, were subjected to the practice.

LONDON -- Hundreds of children were strip-searched in London by the police over a three-year period, according to a report released on Monday by Britain's top official for children, who said she was ''unconvinced'' that the authorities were sufficiently judicious in employing the invasive practice in light of the potential harm.

The report, which found that about 650 children had been strip-searched between 2018 and 2020, was commissioned by Rachel de Souza, Britain's commissioner for children, after a young Black schoolgirl, identified in the report as ''Child Q,'' had been strip-searched in 2020 by police officers on school grounds without her mother being notified and another adult present.

Ms. de Souza suggested that what happened to Child Q was not an isolated episode, after the report warned that protocols to protect children were not always followed, including ensuring the presence of a parent, guardian, social worker or caregiver during such searches.

''A police power that is as intrusive and traumatic for children as a strip-search must be treated with the utmost care and responsibility,'' she said, calling the report's findings ''deeply concerning.''

The requirement that an adult be present during strip-searches of minors was not followed in 23 percent of the 650 cases, according to the report. It also found that police officers found nothing to suggest further action was needed in slightly more than half the total number of strip-searches.

Ninety-five percent of those who were strip-searched were boys, according to the report, nearly 60 percent of whom were Black, adding to concerns about racial profiling in the ''stop and search'' approach used by the London police.

As protests over the police killing of George Floyd in the United States swept Britain in 2020, critics pointed to data that showed Black people were four times more likely than white people to be stopped and searched, and London's mayor promised that the city would hire more new recruits from minority backgrounds.

The Metropolitan Police said in a statement that it was working to balance policing needs for strip-searches with ''the considerable impact it can have on young people.'' The force has already made changes, including more oversight in the authorization of such searches, the statement said, and it has reviewed its policy for searches of people under the age of 18.

The disproportionate numbers of Black boys being searched was worrying, Ms. de Souza said, adding that several other cases of strip-searches of children were being investigated by England's police misconduct watchdog.

The strip-search of Child Q, which was done by female police officers, was touched off when teachers said they smelled cannabis on her, but the officers did not report uncovering cannabis or any other illegal substance. Nevertheless, the experience was so distressing for Child Q, who had been menstruating at the time, that she was referred for psychological support.

A review of the case by a local commissioner charged with safeguarding children that was published in March found that the decision to strip-search the girl ''was insufficiently attuned to her best interests or right to privacy,'' and concluded that racism had influenced the decision. The repercussions on Child Q's emotional health, it said, were profound and ongoing.

Local officials at the time called the findings appalling, said they were committed to working on antiracism policies and called for policing authorities to improve guidance about the proper ways to search children.

Since then, police officers in the east London borough where Child Q was searched have undergone training to combat racial bias in an effort to prevent them from treating Black children as adults.

Given that the London police carry out a total of about 200,000 ''stop and searches'' a year, the 650 children who were strip-searched in those three years was comparatively small, said Matt Ashby, a lecturer in crime science at University College London.

Still, given that such searches are traumatic for children, even if done according to protocol, it is imperative that the police perform them only when necessary, Mr. Ashby said.

''If they're stop and searching people for weapons,'' he said, ''it's quite different to stop and searching people for cannabis.''

The issue adds to the larger mistrust that many young people, especially those of color, feel toward people in authority, said Kevin Blowe, campaigns coordinator for Netpol, an organization that monitors policing for signs that it is excessive, discriminatory or threatens civil rights.

''The horrifying use of strip-searches on children reflects a much deeper problem with the Metropolitan Police's perception of young people out on London's streets as an inherent threat,'' he said.

Young people in London's most diverse, poorest or ***working-class*** communities were ''likely to say the police simply cannot -- will not -- protect them,'' he said.

Further data on the number of children being strip-searched nationally in Britain will be published later this year, Ms. de Souza said, calling for nationwide oversight, though she did not offer specifics.

While the police had committed to learning from the case of Child Q, she said, that lesson meant that it could not be repeated. ''That's what sorry means,'' she added. ''It means it won't happen again.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/world/europe/london-police-strip-search-minors.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/world/europe/london-police-strip-search-minors.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The headquarters of the Metropolitan Police in London. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Andy Rain/EPA, via Shutterstock FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***In ‘White Lotus,’ Beauty and Truth Are All Mixed Up; Screenland***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:671N-HF51-JBG3-62TW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 7, 2022 Wednesday 15:22 EST

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 1230 words

**Byline:** Carina Chocano

**Highlight:** This season focuses on the willful delusion of the wealthy — and how easily preyed upon people who evade reality can be.

**Body**

This season focuses on the willful delusion of the wealthy — and how easily preyed upon people who evade reality can be.

Early in the [*second season of “The White Lotus”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Baflc_0XVfY&amp;ab_channel=HBO) — Mike White’s HBO satire of the leisure class, currently set in a five-star Sicilian resort — there’s a sequence that offers an overt, shot-for-shot homage to a scene in “L’Avventura,” from 1960, the first film in Michelangelo Antonioni’s “Trilogy of Decadence.” Coolly removed and virtually plotless, Antonioni’s three films were intended as an indictment of the entropic passivity of wealth. All starred Monica Vitti, the glamorous Italian actress with whom Antonioni was romantically involved. In “L’Avventura,” she plays Claudia, a young woman whose best friend, Anna, disappears during a yacht trip off the coast of Sicily. As Claudia and Anna’s boyfriend, Sandro, search for the missing girl, they drift into an unconvincing relationship. When they arrive at the lone hotel in the town of Noto, Claudia, suddenly worried about facing her friend, tells Sandro to search inside without her.

The scene “The White Lotus” recreates takes place outside, in the piazza, where Claudia is accosted by a horde of leering men. The aesthetics are disconcerting: Antonioni uses the town’s baroque architecture to pile men around and atop Claudia. She looks afraid, for a moment, but then has a sort of detachment from reality. Walking slowly through the crowd, she seems to give herself over to the experience, allowing herself to become a spectacle, subject to the men’s (and the audience’s) scrutinizing, consuming gaze.

Even before “The White Lotus” fully replicates this image, though, we see one character — a batty gazillionaire named Tanya McQuoid, [*played by Jennifer Coolidge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/12/arts/television/jennifer-coolidge-emmy-the-white-lotus.html) — explicitly name-check Vitti. Describing her fantasy of a day in Italy to her husband, Greg, she stays resolutely on the surface: “First, I want to look just like Monica Vitti,” she says. “And then this man in a very slim-fitting suit, he comes over and he lights my cigarette. And it tastes really good. And then he takes me for a drive on his Vespa. Then, at sunset, we go down really close to the sea, to one of those really romantic spots. And then we drink lots of aperitivos and we eat big plates of pasta with giant clams. And we’re just really chic and happy. And we’re beautiful.” Greg obligingly rents a Vespa. But Tanya is not the character who will feature in the Antonioni homage.

“L’Avventura” is not the only film referenced in “The White Lotus,” which is positively haunted by movies and the fantasies they engender. As Tanya casts herself in her superficial version of an Italian film, Bert Di Grasso — a grandfather whose family trip to Sicily has been upended by the women in the family’s refusing to come — is exalting the ethos of “The Godfather,” in which he sees men who are free to do as they like. After her ill-fated Vitti cosplay leaves her alone and betrayed, Tanya takes up with Quentin, part of a group of “high-end gays,” as she calls them, who recast her as a tragic heroine. Quentin tells her about his own lost love, but it sounds like the plot of “Brokeback Mountain,” and he takes her to the opera to see “Madama Butterfly,” which, in this context, can’t help but call to mind “M. Butterfly,” and a very specific form of romantic deception. As the line blurs between stories and lies, the vibe shifts closer to “The Talented Mr. Ripley.” If the first season of “The White Lotus” was about the casual destructiveness of wealth, this one seems to be about its willful delusion — and how easily preyed upon people who evade reality can be.

In Antonioni’s film, Vitti’s wealth and beauty grant her character access to a world of glamour, but they also trap her in a lie, concealing a real world of rot and corruption. “L’Avventura” means “the adventure” — ironic, since nothing much happens in the movie, and its central mystery is never solved — but an “avventura” is also a term for an illicit affair, often one entered out of boredom, for kicks. This is precisely how everyone in this season of “The White Lotus” gets into trouble. For both show and film, “love” is a dance of deception and self-delusion, in which it’s hard to tell who’s the mark.

The only character who still clings to purity — the only innocent left to corrupt — is Harper Spiller, played by Aubrey Plaza. And she is the one who ends up in Noto, recreating the Monica Vitti scene in the piazza. Like Claudia, Harper has drifted here by accident — by virtue, another character observes, of being pretty. The newly rich wife of a tech founder, she has come on a luxury vacation at the invitation of his college roommate. Harper is suspicious of the whole endeavor: of getting rich quickly, of old friends who materialize suddenly after you get rich, of rich people who spend their lives disengaging from the world and drifting from one fantasy locale to the next. In Noto, she finds herself alone and surrounded by men, exactly like Vitti. Just as in the film, the scene feels over the top and surreal — part paranoid fantasy, part dissociative experience, and even stranger now that it’s 2022, not 1960, and Aubrey Plaza doesn’t cut quite so otherworldly and surprising (for Noto) a figure as the statuesque blonde Vitti did.

As we watch Harper drift through the crowd, what we are looking at is the experience of being looked at. Along with Tanya — who aims to imitate Vitti but is instead brutally compared, by a tactless hotel manager, to Peppa Pig — she offers a metaphor for how thoroughly we can give ourselves over to imposture.

Antonioni started working during the Italian neorealism movement, when films were shot on location, making use of nonactors, telling stories about ***working-class*** people and poverty and despair. But it was “L’Avventura,” with its focus on the alienation of the moneyed, that made him internationally famous. I know this because I took an Italian-neorealism class during a junior year abroad in Paris, and — not surprisingly, I suppose, for the kind of person who takes an Italian-neorealism class during a junior year in Paris — I, too, preferred Antonioni’s trilogy about disaffected rich people to the stuff that had come before: children stealing bicycles, Anna Magnani worrying about unpaid bills, that sort of thing. Struggle is hard to watch; it is much more pleasant to have our moral judgments projected into a world of aestheticized, escapist pleasure.

We carry a desire to inhabit images we’ve seen, reified symbols of love, glamour, happiness, success. The “White Lotus” scene in Noto is a perfect representation of this recursive fakery and its nightmarish endpoint. Like so many travelers in the Instagram age, the show’s characters drift through their adventures without any real purpose other than to reproduce the pretty scenes and special moments they’ve seen elsewhere, trying to locate themselves in endless reflections. Among them, it is only Harper who remains unaffected by visual culture. Her scene in Noto feels like an inflection point. It is easier than ever to mistake beauty for truth — or pretend to. Which, the show asks, will Harper choose?

Source photographs: HBO; Cino del Duca/PCE, Lyre.

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY HBO) (MM11); PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY CELINA PEREIRA; HBO; CINO DEL DUCA/PCE, LYRE.) (MM12-MM13) This article appeared in print on page MM11, MM12, MM13, MM14.

**Load-Date:** December 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Strip-Searches of Children by London Police Are Called ‘Deeply Concerning’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:663X-MXD1-JBG3-655X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 8, 2022 Monday 10:46 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 941 words

**Byline:** Isabella Kwai

**Highlight:** A report from England’s children’s commissioner on Monday found that 650 children, including a disproportionate number of young Black boys, were subjected to the practice.

**Body**

A report from England’s children’s commissioner on Monday found that 650 children, including a disproportionate number of young Black boys, were subjected to the practice.

LONDON — Hundreds of children were strip-searched in London by the police over a three-year period, according to a report released on Monday by Britain’s top official for children, who said she was “unconvinced” that the authorities were sufficiently judicious in employing the invasive practice in light of the potential harm.

[*The report*](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/cc-strip-search-of-children-by-the-metropolitan-police-service-new-analysis-by-the-childrens-commissioner-for-england.pdf), which found that about 650 children had been strip-searched between 2018 and 2020, was commissioned by Rachel de Souza, Britain’s commissioner for children, after a young Black schoolgirl, identified in the report as “Child Q,” had been strip-searched in 2020 by police officers on school grounds without her mother being notified and another adult present.

Ms. de Souza suggested that what happened to Child Q was not an isolated episode, after the report warned that protocols to protect children were not always followed, including ensuring the presence of a parent, guardian, social worker or caregiver during such searches.

“A police power that is as intrusive and traumatic for children as a strip-search must be treated with the utmost care and responsibility,” she said, calling the report’s findings “deeply concerning.”

The requirement that an adult be present during strip-searches of minors was not followed in 23 percent of the 650 cases, according to the report. It also found that police officers found nothing to suggest further action was needed in slightly more than half the total number of strip-searches.

Ninety-five percent of those who were strip-searched were boys, according to the report, nearly 60 percent of whom were Black, adding to [*concerns about racial profiling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/07/world/europe/uk-police-bianca-williams-racial-profiling.html) in the “stop and search” approach used by the London police.

As protests over the police killing of George Floyd in the United States swept Britain in 2020, critics pointed to data that showed Black people were four times more likely than white people to be stopped and searched, and London’s mayor[*promised that*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/13/world/europe/london-police-discrimination.html) the city would hire more new recruits from minority backgrounds.

The Metropolitan Police said in a statement that it was working to balance policing needs for strip-searches with “the considerable impact it can have on young people.” The force has already made changes, including more oversight in the authorization of such searches, the statement said, and it has reviewed its policy for searches of people under the age of 18.

The disproportionate numbers of Black boys being searched was worrying, Ms. de Souza said, adding that several other cases of strip-searches of children were being investigated by England’s police misconduct watchdog.

The strip-search of Child Q, which was done by female police officers, was touched off when teachers said they smelled cannabis on her, but the officers did not report uncovering cannabis or any other illegal substance. Nevertheless, the experience was so distressing for Child Q, who had been menstruating at the time, that she was referred for psychological support.

A [*review of the case*](https://chscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Child-Q-PUBLISHED-14-March-22.pdf) by a local commissioner charged with safeguarding children that was published in March found that the decision to strip-search the girl “was insufficiently attuned to her best interests or right to privacy,” and concluded that racism had influenced the decision. The repercussions on Child Q’s emotional health, it said, were profound and ongoing.

Local officials at the time called the findings [*appalling*](https://news.hackney.gov.uk/we-are-absolutely-focused-on-making-sure-the-legacy-of-child-qs-experience-results-in-change-hackney-council-responds-to-serious-case-review/#:~:text=The%20review%20concluded%20that%20Child,fourteen%20recommendations%20for%20practice%20improvement), said they were committed to working on antiracism policies and called for policing authorities to improve guidance about the proper ways to search children.

Since then, police officers in the east London borough where Child Q was searched have undergone training to combat racial bias in an effort to prevent them from treating Black children as adults.

Given that the London police carry out a total of about 200,000 “stop and searches” a year, the 650 children who were strip-searched in those three years was comparatively small, said Matt Ashby, a lecturer in crime science at University College London.

Still, given that such searches are traumatic for children, even if done according to protocol, it is imperative that the police perform them only when necessary, Mr. Ashby said.

“If they’re stop and searching people for weapons,” he said, “it’s quite different to stop and searching people for cannabis.”

The issue adds to the larger mistrust that many young people, especially those of color, feel toward people in authority, said Kevin Blowe, campaigns coordinator for Netpol, an organization that monitors policing for signs that it is excessive, discriminatory or threatens civil rights.

“The horrifying use of strip-searches on children reflects a much deeper problem with the Metropolitan Police’s perception of young people out on London’s streets as an inherent threat,” he said.

Young people in London’s most diverse, poorest or ***working-class*** communities were “likely to say the police simply cannot — will not — protect them,” he said.

Further data on the number of children being strip-searched nationally in Britain will be published later this year, Ms. de Souza said, calling for nationwide oversight, though she did not offer specifics.

While the police had committed to learning from the case of Child Q, she said, that lesson meant that it could not be repeated. “That’s what sorry means,” she added. “It means it won’t happen again.”

PHOTO: The headquarters of the Metropolitan Police in London. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Andy Rain/EPA, via Shutterstock FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***At a Floyd Protest in Brooklyn, 2 Lawyers Destroyed a Police Car and Their Careers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67DH-NDS1-JBG3-621B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 27, 2023 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 18

**Length:** 1509 words

**Byline:** By Hurubie Meko and Rebecca Davis O'Brien

**Body**

Colinford Mattis, who was sentenced Thursday, and Urooj Rahman burned a police car. They lost their licenses to practice law. He may lose his foster children.

Colinford Mattis's trajectory from a ***working-class*** upbringing in East New York to the Ivy League and corporate law abruptly ended at about 1 a.m. on May 30, 2020, when a Molotov cocktail ignited the center console of an empty police car during a Black Lives Matter protest.

On Thursday afternoon, Judge Brian M. Cogan of U.S. District Court in Brooklyn sentenced Mr. Mattis, one of two young lawyers who burned the vehicle during the protests days after the murder of George Floyd, to 12 months and a day in prison and a year of post-release supervision.

Mr. Mattis, 35, has lost his law license, having pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit arson and acknowledged that he had broken the law he had sworn to uphold. Now, he may lose much more: the guardianship and planned adoption of three foster children. The oldest is 14.

On Thursday evening, the Brooklyn courtroom was crowded with Mr. Mattis's friends and family.

''I'm deeply sorry and embarrassed about the things I did and said in May 2020,'' Mr. Mattis told the judge. He said he recently reread his text messages from that day. ''I am more than horrified at the words I used,'' he said.

''I am sorry that I hurt my three children that my mother had entrusted to me,'' he added.

The judge told Mr. Mattis that the country needed attorneys to bolster faith in the rule of law and to reassure Americans that the legal system would hold Mr. Floyd's killers to account. He told Mr. Mattis that his hard work had changed his station in life.

''You're not one of the oppressed,'' Judge Cogan said. ''You're one of the privileged.''

Spectators in the gallery gasped at the judge's words. ''To make that comment, you're not seeing the same things that I'm seeing,'' said Taaj Reeves, a friend of Mr. Mattis's, after the hearing.

In November, the judge had sentenced Urooj Rahman, Mattis's friend and a fellow lawyer, to 15 months in prison and two years of supervised release for the same crime. She was the primary caretaker of her aging mother. Judge Cogan called the sentence one of the most difficult he ever had to impose. After a lifetime of hard work and conscientiousness, he said, Ms. Rahman's conduct was a violent aberration.

''You are a remarkable person who did a terrible thing on one night,'' the judge told her.

Judge Cogan said Thursday that Mr. Mattis got a lighter punishment because he had not been the main instigator of the attack.

The sentences close a case that stunned the city, devastated two families and exposed deep fissures between the police and the community. They reflect a long negotiation with the U.S. attorney's office in Brooklyn, which at first sought steep charges and had pushed to deny bail to Mr. Rahman and Ms. Mattis, both first-time offenders.

They had been high achievers, children of immigrant families who were raised in New York. Ms. Rahman pursued public interest law, co-authoring a paper on police reform in 2014 and working at Bronx Legal Services. Mr. Mattis followed a more lucrative corporate path. But he was already teetering in his career and personal life when the protests occurred.

The events that led to their downfall began in an unsettled spring.

Mr. Mattis had been furloughed in March from his job as an associate at the law firm Pryor Cashman, and the pandemic had cut him off from outside support as he took care of the children, his lawyer wrote.

Then, on May 25, video of Mr. Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man who died in Minneapolis after his neck was pinned to the ground by Derek Chauvin, a white police officer, ignited protests. There were demonstrations in at least 140 cities across the United States.

In New York, peaceful protests turned into confrontations with police. Throughout the weekend, demonstrators clashed with officers in Union Square in Manhattan and outside the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, resulting in injuries and hundreds of arrests.

On May 29, according to court documents, Mr. Mattis had been drinking throughout the day as he exchanged despairing messages over the murder of Mr. Floyd with friends, including Ms. Rahman, who were mobilizing to join a protest. That evening, Ms. Rahman, who was 31 at the time, met Mr. Mattis after he made stops to buy supplies, including gasoline, and joined a swell of protesters in Brooklyn.

Shortly after midnight, with Mr. Mattis at the wheel, according to court filings, they drove in a tan minivan to a police precinct in Clinton Hill. After trying to persuade a bystander to throw a bottle that she was holding, Ms. Rahman got out of the van herself, walked toward an empty police patrol car that had already been damaged by protesters and threw the Molotov cocktail through its broken window before fleeing.

She and Mr. Mattis were arrested shortly afterward and held in jail for several days before they were released to home confinement.

It was a politically fraught moment after New York police officers had arrested hundreds of people during the protests, many on charges of disorderly conduct, resisting arrest and unlawful assembly. District attorneys said they would not prosecute many of the nonviolent cases.

Brooklyn federal prosecutors, then part of the Trump Justice Department, appealed twice to keep them behind bars, saying that the two lawyers had tried to incite others to similar attacks. But more than 50 former federal prosecutors signed a public letter urging the appeals court to reject the U.S. attorney's office's argument for detention, saying it contradicted settled bail law.

In June 2020, a grand jury returned an indictment against Mr. Mattis and Ms. Rahman that included seven counts, including arson, use of explosives and civil disorder.

In November 2021, after President Biden had taken office and new leadership had taken over in the Department of Justice, Ms. Rahman and Mr. Mattis each pleaded guilty to one count of possessing and making an incendiary device. Last June, those charges were dismissed as part of a deal with prosecutors, and both pleaded guilty to a count of conspiracy to commit arson.

At Ms. Rahman's sentencing, she faced up to five years under federal guidelines, and the government had asked for 18 months to two years. Her lawyer, Peter Baldwin, asked the court to impose only supervised release, saying his client had experienced ''a dangerous and reprehensible lapse of judgment.''

''Urooj's emotions, her anger, her despair, her rage, got the better of her,'' he told the judge. Since the incident, Ms. Rahman had been in therapy and Alcoholics Anonymous, Mr. Baldwin said.

Ms. Rahman was born in Pakistan and grew up in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn; she graduated from Fordham Law School and had always been drawn to public interest work, a commitment for which Judge Cogan praised her.

When she addressed the court, Ms. Rahman cried as she spoke about her mother's grief. ''I don't think there are enough words to express my sorrow and regret,'' she told the court. ''My sole intention was to lend my voice to other New Yorkers in the pursuit of justice. I completely lost my way in the emotions of the night.''

She is to report to federal prison in Connecticut on Tuesday.

Mr. Mattis has already spent nearly a month in jail, has taken a leadership role in his Alcoholics Anonymous chapter and is at no risk of reoffending, his lawyers said in the memorandum to the judge.

Sabrina P. Shroff, his defense attorney, told Judge Cogan in a presentencing letter how Mr. Mattis, the son of immigrants from Jamaica and St. Vincent, grew up in a chaotic home. Though early on he struggled academically, he went on to graduate from boarding school, then attended Princeton University and New York University's law school.

When he was in his second year of law school, his father, Kingcolinford Mattis, was stabbed to death during a robbery in St. Vincent. His son used alcohol to dull his pain, Ms. Shroff wrote.

After law school, when he took a job at a law firm in 2016, he was often late or absent, court documents said. His yearslong dependency on alcohol worsened. He was asked to leave the firm just as his mother was diagnosed with uterine cancer and became her primary caregiver until her death in 2019, even as he worked at another firm.

After she died, Mr. Mattis took over her role as the foster parent for the three children he is now in the process of trying to adopt. He is also the primary caretaker for his 15-year-old nephew.

Shortly after the pandemic hit in March 2020 and Mr. Mattis was furloughed, his drinking increased, according to court filings.

On May 29, 2020, hours before he joined the protests, Mr. Mattis watched the video of Mr. Floyd's murder for the first time and began to cry.

Within hours, court records said, Mr. Mattis was driving the minivan quickly away from the burning police sedan with open bottles of Bud Light, a funnel, a half-full red gas can and rolls of toilet paper.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/26/nyregion/lawyers-sentenced-molotov-police-car.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/26/nyregion/lawyers-sentenced-molotov-police-car.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Colinford Mattis, far left, and Urooj Rahman lost their law licenses and were sentenced to prison over a Molotov cocktail that burned a car in May 2020. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS) This article appeared in print on page A18.

**Load-Date:** January 27, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Novels in Translation***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66G8-8CX1-JBG3-61B1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 25, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 22; THE SHORTLIST

**Length:** 1134 words

**Byline:** By Anderson Tepper

**Body**

The title of Estelle-Sarah Bulle's novel, WHERE DOGS BARK WITH THEIR TAILS (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 288 pp., $27), refers to a Créole saying about Morne-Galant, a small village on the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, where the journey of the contentious Ezechiel clan begins. The mixed-race children of Hilaire, who is Black, and Eulalie, a descendant of poor white settlers, will each have their chance to speak: There are the sisters Antoine and Lucinde and their younger brother, ''Petite-Frère.''

But it is Antoine's telling that truly animates Bulle's novel, faithfully translated by Julia Grawemeyer, which moves from late-1940s Morne-Galant to Pointe-à-Pitre, the country's capital, and the banlieues of Paris. ''She was the link from the past to present, from Guadeloupe to Paris, like an underground root, full of life,'' thinks Antoine's French-born niece, who is seeking to make sense of her own identity ''between two worlds.''

Antoine's tale doesn't disappoint: Her life reflects the changes that have gripped Guadeloupe and, especially, Pointe-à-Pitre over the past decades. She remembers her years as a young businesswoman, ''brimming,'' like the city itself, ''with energy and quiet optimism for a new era.'' And yet as the 1960s wear on, violent protests against French control engulf the streets in chaos, prompting Antoine and her siblings to seek opportunities abroad.

But what will be left of their Caribbeanness when they emigrate to France? Antoine, naturally, has the last word on her roots: ''More than anything, I considered myself a woman, and also a Guadeloupean, that is to say, someone of mixed-blood, like all of us here on the island, this tiny piece of confetti in the vast ocean.''

The stray dogs wandering around the ***working-class*** neighborhood of northern Tenerife, Canary Islands, bear some resemblance to the townsfolk: They're itchy, horny and prone to trouble. Or at least that's how it seems to the potty-mouthed, 10-year-old narrator of Andrea Abreu's firecracker of a debut, DOGS OF SUMMER (Astra House, 180 pp. $23). The narrator's colorful, unprintable nickname, we soon learn, was given to her by her best friend, Isora -- a sign, she believes, of Isora's ''small, shy, quiet affection.''

Actually, their friendship is something much more combustible, a mix of worshipful emulation and simmering desire. Isora is ''pure guts and grit,'' and she's bursting into puberty as summer vacations begin. There's nothing the narrator wouldn't do for her: ''I'd have followed her to the toilet or to the mouth of a volcano.''

The volcano, in fact, looms over their ''vertical'' neighborhood, its low-hanging clouds filling the girls with bouts of melancholy. It's a drab, oppressive existence, but the two are determined to make it out and down to the tourist beaches at the bottom of the hill. Meanwhile, they idle away their days playing with their ''Gamebois,'' watching sultry telenovelas, and trying to avoid the menacing teenage boys.

''When we were sad, we ate unripe berries and hot pears until they gave us'' the runs, the narrator explains. ''We pulled spider webs off our faces with the tips of our tongues. ... We grinded.'' The whole neighborhood, it seems, is in heat. Abreu's novel, in Julia Sanches's sparkling translation, is a revelation, perfectly capturing a festering summer of meltdowns and shrinking horizons.

''Every story begins with a family story,'' observes the Tahitian writer Titaua Peu. ''Some families, though, their fates go every which way. ... Which means mishaps, missed chances, misunderstandings.''

Peu's newly translated novel, PINA (Restless Books, 313 pp., paper, $18), like ''Where Dogs Bark With Their Tales,'' is the story of a nation told in the guise of family tales. Yet ''mishaps'' is an understatement of the tragedy in this novel. Pina, the 9-year-old protagonist, is doomed from the start: She's the next-to-last child of nine and her mother's least favorite; her father is an abusive boozer. They live in a ''hovel'' in the rundown quarter of Tenaho, near Papeete, the capital of French Polynesia.

Pina, like the girls of ''Dogs of Summer,'' is desperate to escape her surroundings: ''So Pina dreamed up a world she'd survive in, dreamed up voices she could listen to, so as not to have to think about the world she was in.'' But things only get darker when her father has a drunk-driving accident, setting off a chain of events that draws the whole family into a vortex of violence.

Clearly, Pina's Tahiti is not the paradise of brochures. It's a land still haunted by colonization and crippled by poverty and crime. But even as things bottom out, a groundswell of Tahitian self-awareness builds toward the 2016 referendum on independence from France. The question is: Can the country, and Pina, ever truly break free? This is a clamorous, at times unwieldy take on modern Tahiti, yet Peu's ''rough-hewn, oral, humane prose'' (in the words of the translator, Jeffrey Zuckerman) rings fiercely true.

Bernardo Atxaga's rich, immersive novel WATER OVER STONES (381 pp., Graywolf, paper, $18), begins in the early 1970s: It's summertime in the small Basque village of Ugarte. A cast of characters gradually emerges, related by blood or tightly bonded by friendship. Elías, on the brink of adolescence, is visiting his uncle, the owner of a local bakery. Ever since an incident at his French boarding school, Elías has refused to speak.

Nevertheless, a sense of calm permeates the land. ''This was summer: children out in the open air, swifts hunting for mosquitoes, the serene murmur of the men outside the bars, and the southerly wind, the stars, the half-moon,'' Atxaga writes. ''Life seemed easier, less fraught with danger, as though the year had come into equilibrium and a thin piece of cloth rested over the village like the blanket with which a mother covers her baby.''

Of course, things aren't as peaceful as they appear. There is talk of an upcoming hunting trip in the area by Franco; a wounded boar is trapped in the canal; marriages are unraveling. And as Atxaga ''zigzags'' through the coming decades, following different strands and characters, death is a constant, ''always on the prowl.''

Atxaga, like Bulle, has an expansive view of his material. His voice, fluidly translated by Margaret Jull Costa and Thomas Bunstead, runs like a river, meandering across lives. As he writes in an epilogue, his focus includes ''animals, family life ... empty landscapes, mines, engineers, political struggles, torture by police, mental labyrinths.'' The result is a portrait of an entire Basque universe, in flux yet eternal.

Anderson Tepper is a chair of the international committee of the Brooklyn Book Festival.Anderson Tepper is a chair of the international committee of the Brooklyn Book Festival.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/books/review/estelle-sarah-bulle-andrea-abreu-titaua-peu-bernardo-atxaga.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/books/review/estelle-sarah-bulle-andrea-abreu-titaua-peu-bernardo-atxaga.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** September 25, 2022

**End of Document**



[***‘We Have to Come Here to Be Seen’: Protesters Descend on Lima***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67DJ-R8S1-DXY4-X454-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 27, 2023 Friday 11:46 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1607 words

**Byline:** Mitra Taj and Marco Garro

**Highlight:** Peru’s unrest continues unabated as the demonstrations move to the country’s capital and the government doubles down on portraying demonstrators as pawns for nefarious interests.

**Body**

They marched through the streets of Peru’s capital, carrying signs that said “I’m not a terrorist” and waved rainbow-colored flags associated with Indigenous communities in the Andes. Many chant “murderer” at the country’s leader and sing hymns about not being afraid anymore. On Thursday, more continued to arrive, with many vowing to stay for the long fight.

In the past week, thousands of rural Peruvians have descended on Lima to join local protests calling on President Dina Boluarte to resign following the ouster in December of the country’s former leader after he tried to dissolve Congress and rule by decree.

The growing demonstrations in the capital follow seven weeks of protests around the country that show little sign of abating. Instead, Peru has found itself at an ugly impasse with the government doubling down on portraying demonstrators as pawns for drug-traffickers, illegal miners and terrorist groups who are trying to sow chaos, according to Ms. Boluarte.

Day by day, the protests seem to grow more chaotic.

The ongoing showdown has ratcheted up the polarization of the country, which has been convulsed by what is already its deadliest conflict this century.

Since Ms. Boluarte took office on Dec. 7, violent protests against her government have paralyzed large swaths of southern Peru, shutting down copper and tin mines and choking off highways leading to Lima and towns in the Amazon.

There have been at least 57 deaths related to the unrest, all outside of Lima. Forty-six civilians were killed in clashes between protesters and law enforcement officers, including 17 during a day of violent demonstrations in one southern city in Puno, a heavily Indigenous and rural region bordering Bolivia.

Daily marches in Lima, where roughly a third of the country’s population of 33 million lives, have been relatively small but have grown as protesters from outside the city have arrived, many carrying sacks of grains and potatoes.

“Over there, we’re killed,” said Jose Hilaquita, an Indigenous Aymara farmer from Puno, explaining why he had traveled for more than two days to march in Lima. “Over there, no one listens to us. We have to come here to be seen.”

The protests have been led largely by Indigenous, rural and poorer Peruvians fed up with what they portray the country’s dysfunctional political system and entrenched discrimination. Many support the former leftist president, Pedro Castillo, a onetime union activist from a poor Andean town who was arrested and accused of trying to illegally seize control of Congress and the justice system on Dec. 7.

But demonstrators have also found support in Lima from some residents, while others have welcomed them with insults. Many have been invited to camp out on the grassy lawns and the squeaky gym floors of public universities. Others sleep in the offices of leftist groups or in the homes of local residents.

In Lima’s ***working-class*** district of Santa Anita, Rosa Zambrano, a 74-year old retired psychologist, opened her half-finished home to 40 protesters.

After she heard they were heading to Lima, Ms. Zambrano got in touch with friends in Moquegua, the Andean region she migrated from 40 years ago, and asked how she could help.

“I couldn’t bear the thought of them sleeping outside,” she said as she prepared a giant pot of carapulcra, pork stewed with chiles, peanuts and potatoes, to serve the group for lunch before a demonstration. “I’m proud of the struggle of my compatriots. There is too much injustice in this country.”

Food donations from residents of Lima, large and small, have helped feed protesters sheltering in large houses and at two public universities. The rector of one university opened its doors to provide refuge, while the other, San Marcos, the oldest university in the Americas, was occupied by students.

Yet, the protests have fiercely divided public opinion in Peru — while 60 percent of rural Peruvians support them, that figure drops to less than 40 percent among Lima residents, according to a recent poll.

Some believe[*Ms. Boluarte*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/08/world/americas/dina-boluarte-peru-president.html) has abused her executive power to quell the demonstrations, and that Peru’s entrenched corruption and inequality can only be addressed with new elections and a new constitution.

But others say her resignation would only usher in more chaos and erode the already weak rule of law. “Castillo tried to do a coup and failed. Now his people are upset and want to use violence to remove the person the constitution says should replace him,” said Eduardo Rivera, a business administrator in Lima. “That’s not how it works.”

While most protesters march peacefully, many demonstrations in southern Peru have ended in clashes with security forces and crowds vandalizing government offices. Road blockades have disrupted deliveries of food, fuel and medical oxygen.

Machu Picchu, one of the most popular destinations in Peru, has closed its doors, dealing a heavy blow to the tourism industry. The conflict has led to more than $500 million in losses so far, according to the government, with small businesses and some of the poorest regions hit hardest.

The authorities said that in recent days, protesters have staged simultaneous attacks on airports in southern Peru and set fire to two dozen police stations and courthouses. In the southern region of Arequipa last weekend, a crowd captured a police officer, doused him with gasoline and threatened to burn him alive unless authorities released prisoners.

In some regions, large groups of men carrying sticks dressed as civilians have appeared to help the police force protesters off roads, sparking fears of clashes between groups of civilians.

As she has struggled to gain control, Ms. Boluarte has staked out an increasingly hawkish stance, treating the crisis not as a political challenge, but mainly as a security threat.

On several occasions, she has compared the protests to one of the country’s darkest chapters, a two-decade period when leftist insurgents terrorized the country and military death squads massacred civilians.

She has suggested that protesters are paid to promote the agendas of drug traffickers, illegal miners, smugglers and Bolivian leftists, and this week she claimed that protesters, not police officers, had killed other civilians during clashes. As proof, the president cited a video that she claimed showed a protester with a gun.

The government has yet to provide clear evidence to back up that claim, or claims of high-level coordination by a terrorist organization or illicit funding behind the violent attacks.

Ms. Boluarte said that violent radicals in Puno had “practically paralyzed” the entire region.

“What should we do in the face of these threats?” Ms. Boluarte said during a news conference. “Let them burn us alive? We have to protect the lives and tranquillity of 33 millions of Peruvians. Puno isn’t Peru.”

Within minutes, video clips of Ms. Boluarte saying “Puno isn’t Peru” circulated on social media. Ms. Boluarte tweeted an apology.

On Saturday, in an extraordinary show of force, the police used a tank to tear down a gate at San Marcos University and then lined up Indigenous protesters and students face down on the concrete. Nearly 200 people were detained, and all but one were released the next day because of a lack of evidence of any wrongdoing.

“They’re trying to deactivate our movement,” said Brich Huanca, a university student from the city of Cusco. “She’s trying to install the idea that Peru is fighting against a common enemy, against a menace to society.”

Ms. Boluarte insists she will not resign but has proposed to move up elections to April 2024, a date that must be ratified by Congress with a supermajority, which many analysts say looks unlikely.

She has the support of centrist and right-wing lawmakers and most Lima-based media outlets, as well as Peruvians who blame protesters for the violence.

“Supposedly we have a democracy to avoid all of this,” said Rosa Trelles, a newspaper vendor in the capital. She said relatives in a southern coastal region had been unable to work for weeks because of road blockades, and she’s been struggling to afford rising food prices.

“This has gotten out of control,” she said. “They want to affect businessmen, but this is affecting the people, too. They want more deaths to keep their movement alive.”

Peruvians sympathetic with the now-defunct Shining Path insurgency have been spotted at protests, as they often are at demonstrations for leftist causes.

Peru is also home to large drug trafficking and illegal mining trades that employ hundreds of thousands of laborers, many of whom were sympathetic to Mr. Castillo, the ousted president, and have joined protests.

“Things aren’t black and white. Peru is a country very burdened by gray areas,” said Eduardo Dargent, a Peruvian political analyst.

“It’s true that there are groups that want to push the situation to the limits,’’ he added. “But none of that negates the fact that first there was discontent. That discontent is what’s driving the protests, and it has a lot to do with how the government behaves.”

PHOTOS: Protests in Lima, Peru, are growing as more Indigenous people arrive in the capital. “We have to come here to be seen,” one demonstrator from the countryside said.; ROSA ZAMBRANO, left, a 74-year-old retired psychologist, as she prepared a giant pot of carapulcra, pork stewed with chiles, peanuts and potatoes, to serve a group of protesters for lunch before a demonstration last week.; Protesters in Lima. They want President Dina Boluarte to resign, but she is supported by centrist and right-wing lawmakers. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARCO GARRO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A6.

**Load-Date:** January 28, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Schumer Is Open to Taking Insults, if It Helps to Keep The Democrats in Power***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66S6-1121-JBG3-610M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 2, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 18

**Length:** 1150 words

**Byline:** By Jesse McKinley

**Body**

Senator Chuck Schumer, heavily favored to defeat his Republican challenger, Joseph Pinion, argued in a debate as much for his party as for his re-election.

For an hour on Sunday night, Senator Chuck Schumer endured insult after insult. He was called a liar and a failure. He was blamed for inflation, the decline of the shipbuilding industry, and death threats to Supreme Court justices. He was referred to as a modern-day Goliath, a ''blind biblical giant,'' a surprising description of a senator famed for both his spectacles and his slouch.

Mr. Schumer took it all, seemingly treating the excoriation from his Republican opponent, Joseph Pinion, as an extended opportunity to remind voters of a series of Democratic accomplishments over the last two years during his tenure as Senate majority leader, a role he is clinging to even as his party faces serious headwinds in midterm elections next week.

Democrats across New York and the nation are playing defense in the closing week of the campaign cycle as they try to protect their party's control of the Senate and especially the House of Representatives, where Republicans are feeling bullish. That includes in New York, where the map includes competitive congressional races from Long Island to central New York, and where Gov. Kathy Hochul is trying fend off a challenge from Representative Lee Zeldin, a conservative Republican with deep ties to former president Donald J. Trump.

Mr. Schumer does not seem in any danger: He is heavily favored to win a fifth term in the Senate, with a recent Quinnipiac poll showing him holding a 12-point lead. But it is a measure of where things stand for Democrats that Mr. Schumer was willing to trade time on Sunday night to trumpet his party in exchange for absorbing Mr. Pinion's brickbats, which included a near-constant assertion that the senator has been in office too long.

''Chuck Schumer has spent 42 years making promises about what he will do tomorrow,'' said Mr. Pinion, 39, a former host and conservative commentator on the Newsmax network. ''It's always a day away. And you never trust a man who promises to do tomorrow what he had power to do yesterday.''

For Mr. Pinion, the debate at Union College in Schenectady, hosted by Spectrum News, was perhaps his best chance at introducing himself to voters, a challenge considering the Quinnipiac poll found nearly 60 percent of those polled didn't know enough about Mr. Pinion to form an opinion. (That cohort seemingly included Mr. Schumer himself, who opened the debate by saying, ''Hi, Joe. Very nice to meet you.'')

Mr. Schumer has long prided himself on an aggressive media strategy -- reporters can set their watches by his 11:30 a.m. news conferences -- and his frequent trips around the state, including visiting all of the state's 62 counties every year, a pace he has continued even as Democrats seek to shore up support for Ms. Hochul and other candidates.

That included a visit last week to Onondaga County, alongside President Biden, to bring attention to a $100 billion plan by Micron to build new computer chip manufacturing facilities near Syracuse.

''This guy gets things done,'' the president said of Mr. Schumer, during the event.

Such was the argument the senator himself made on Sunday night, returning again and again to legislation passed by Democrats while he has served as majority leader, including measures to reduce the price of prescription drugs, tighten gun control laws, and pour money into manufacturing like that in Onondaga County.

''Under my leadership, the Senate has had the most productive session in decades,'' he said.

Mr. Pinion has also stumped for months, roaming from motorcycle-and-morning coffee events in Western New York to rooftop fund-raisers in Manhattan to help fuel an underfunded campaign: Mr. Pinion's latest filing, for example, with the Federal Election Commission shows his campaign committee with a little less than $12,000 cash on hand.

Mr. Pinion has seemingly tried to augment that lack of resources with a surfeit of fiery rhetoric and CGI-heavy broadsides: One of Mr. Pinion's online ads shows him in an apocalyptic landscape, amid the burning ruins of skyscrapers and the Statue of Liberty.

''America is burning,'' Mr. Pinion says, criticizing the federal outlay of dollars to Ukraine, high inflation and the baby-formula crisis. ''And the politicians that started the fire want to blame someone else.''

In another ad, he likened Mr. Schumer to a dinosaur presiding over ''the Jurassic States of America,'' a visual conceit complete with Mr. Pinion flanked by a pair of raptors. ''Like my friends here, the American dream is about to go extinct,'' he says, before turning to his prehistoric friends. ''Sorry, guys, it's true. You're dead!''

But his most recurring campaign theme has been that Mr. Schumer has been in Washington too long -- nearly 42 years, between nearly two decades in the House of Representatives and his four terms in the U.S. Senate -- with too little to show for it. A recent email blast noted that Mr. Schumer ''has been in office longer than I have been alive.''

''He says the job's not done,'' Mr. Pinion told a crowd in Amsterdam, N.Y., in September, alongside Representative Elise Stefanik and Michael Henry, the party's candidate for attorney general. ''If you haven't got the job done in 42 years, perhaps it's time to step aside and let someone else take a crack at it.''

Mr. Schumer's ads have showcased ***working-class*** supporters, as well as mailers linking Mr. Pinion to anti-abortion efforts by Republicans, including Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the Senate minority leader.

Like Mr. Pinion and his dinosaurs, Mr. Schumer has also shown a sense of humor, with an ad billed as ''Yiddish Lessons with the Majority Leader.'' In it, Mr. Schumer, who is Jewish, identifies Mr. McConnell, Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, and Mr. Trump as ''schmos''; the riots of Jan. 6, 2021, as a ''shande,'' or shame; and mentions the words ''kvell'' and ''naches'' for his pride and joy at his legislative accomplishments.

''Because fighting for New York is no schtick for me,'' he concludes.

On Sunday, Mr. Pinion was on the attack from the very beginning, calling out ''the legend of Charles Ellis Schumer'' before saying he wanted to do ''some myth busting.''

''He is, in fact, an exceptional politician, one of the best that has ever lived,'' Mr. Pinion said. ''But he's a failed senator. He has failed the people of this state on multiple occasions.''

Mr. Schumer rarely returned fire, sticking to promoting the raft of accomplishments that he hopes voters remember next week. But toward the end of the debate, he scolded Mr. Pinion, saying the race wasn't about how long he had served, but whether he had delivered for New York.

''I produce results, I am productive,'' he said. ''I'm not just shooting verbiage, and calling names.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/01/nyregion/chuck-schumer-opponent-pinion.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/01/nyregion/chuck-schumer-opponent-pinion.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Senator Chuck Schumer, right, defended his record and that of other Democrats in a debate against Joseph Pinion on Sunday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HANS PENNINK/ASSOCIATED PRESS) This article appeared in print on page A18.

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2022

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[***The New Politics of Abortion***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:663N-F4M1-JBG3-631Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 7, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 3; ROSS DOUTHAT

**Length:** 915 words

**Byline:** By Ross Douthat

**Body**

Some liberals seemed genuinely surprised by the results of the Kansas referendum on abortion. A reliably Republican state, a sweeping pro-choice victory. Who could have foreseen it?

Others suggested that only the pro-life side should be shocked. ''The anti-abortion movement has long claimed that voters would reward Republicans for overturning Roe,'' wrote Slate's Mark Joseph Stern. ''They are now discovering how delusional that conviction has always been.''

It's true that activists often tend toward unrealistic optimism. But nobody who favored overturning Roe ought to be particularly surprised by the Kansas result. By the margin, maybe -- but a Republican state voting to preserve a right to abortion emphasizes what's always been apparent: With the end of Roe, the pro-life movement now has to adapt to the democratic contest that it sought.

Right now, majorities of Americans favor abortion restrictions that were ruled out under Roe, but only slightly over a third of the country takes the position that abortion should be largely illegal, a number that shrinks if you remove various exceptions.

That means that millions of Americans who voted for Donald Trump favor a right to a first-trimester abortion -- some of them old-fashioned country-club Republicans, others secular ***working-class*** voters or anti-woke ''Barstool conservatives'' who dislike elite progressivism but find religious conservatism alienating as well.

In many red as well as purple states, those constituencies hold the balance of power. Even with exceptions, a state probably needs to be either very Republican or very religious for a first-trimester abortion ban to be popular, which basically means the Deep South and Mountain (and especially Mormon) West. That was clear before Roe fell -- that outright bans would be the exceptions, and the contest in many states would be over how far restrictions can go.

The Kansas result confirms that assumption. The state already has a late-term ban, and the prolix ballot measure didn't specify an alternative, it just promised the legislature a general power to write new abortion laws. Would the result have been different if the referendum had proposed restrictions around 12 weeks? I suspect so. Can the pro-life movement settle for that kind of goal? Well, that's the question, with different states supplying different answers.

In purple-ish Georgia, Gov. Brian Kemp signed a law in 2019, which is now taking effect, banning abortion after around six weeks with various exceptions; he looks like he's on his way to re-election. In reddish Florida, the popular governor, Ron DeSantis, is making his stand for now on a ban after 15 weeks.

On the other hand, Republican gubernatorial nominees in Pennsylvania and Michigan have a record of taking few-exceptions stances that seem ill-suited to their states.

I suspect that liberals are deceiving themselves if they imagine abortion becoming a dominant issue in an environment as economically and geopolitically fraught as this one. But at the margins there are clear opportunities: If Republicans run on no-exceptions platforms in moderately conservative states or back first-trimester bans in swing states, they will lose some winnable elections.

But again, serious pro-lifers have always known that if you bring abortion back to the democratic process, you have to deal with public opinion as it actually exists. And the way you change opinion is by proving the incremental version of your ideas workable, so that voters trust you more and more.

That requires addressing immediate anxieties head-on. It is not enough, for instance, for abortion opponents to react to stories about delayed care for miscarriages or ectopic pregnancies in pro-life states by pointing out that the laws are being misinterpreted. All officialdom in those states should be mobilized to make hospitals fear malpractice suits more than hypothetical pro-life prosecution.

And it requires longer-term creativity, so that every new protection for the unborn is combined with reassurances that mothers and children alike will be better supported than they are today.

When I make the latter point I get a reliable liberal retort, to the effect that Republicans could have done more for families already, and didn't, so why would that ever change?

But this is the point of bringing democratic pressure to bear. Religious conservatives have pushed Republicans away from libertarian economics in the past -- ''compassionate conservatism'' emerged from evangelicals and Catholics -- but so long as abortion was essentially a judicial battle, the link to family policy was indirect.

Now that Republicans have to legislate on abortion, though, there are incentives to make the link explicit -- especially in states where socially conservative Democrats, especially Hispanic voters, might join a pro-life coalition.

That doesn't mean it will happen, just that the incentives of democratic politics are how it would happen. The end of Roe opens the door wide to a pro-life movement that's incrementalist and creative; it doesn't ensure that such a movement will emerge. But the results in Kansas show what will happen if it doesn't.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Marco Bello/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 7, 2022

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[***During George Floyd Protests, 2 Lawyers’ Futures Went Up in Flames***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67DB-2TT1-DXY4-X1PX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 26, 2023 Thursday 11:54 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1544 words

**Byline:** Hurubie Meko and Rebecca Davis O’Brien

**Highlight:** Colinford Mattis, who was sentenced Thursday, and Urooj Rahman burned a police car. They lost their licenses to practice law. He may lose his foster children.

**Body**

Colinford Mattis, who was sentenced Thursday, and Urooj Rahman burned a police car. They lost their licenses to practice law. He may lose his foster children.

Colinford Mattis’s trajectory from a ***working-class*** upbringing in East New York to the Ivy League and corporate law abruptly ended at about 1 a.m. on May 30, 2020, when a Molotov cocktail ignited the center console of an empty police car during a Black Lives Matter protest.

On Thursday afternoon, Judge Brian M. Cogan of U.S. District Court in Brooklyn sentenced Mr. Mattis, one of two young lawyers who burned the vehicle during the protests days after the murder of George Floyd, to 12 months and a day in prison and a year of post-release supervision.

Mr. Mattis, 35, has lost his law license, having pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit arson and acknowledged that he had broken the law he had sworn to uphold. Now, he may lose much more: the guardianship and planned adoption of three foster children. The oldest is 14.

On Thursday evening, the Brooklyn courtroom was crowded with Mr. Mattis’s friends and family.

“I’m deeply sorry and embarrassed about the things I did and said in May 2020,” Mr. Mattis told the judge. He said he recently reread his text messages from that day. “I am more than horrified at the words I used,” he said.

“I am sorry that I hurt my three children that my mother had entrusted to me,” he added.

The judge told Mr. Mattis that the country needed attorneys to bolster faith in the rule of law and to reassure Americans that the legal system would hold Mr. Floyd’s killers to account. He told Mr. Mattis that his hard work had changed his station in life.

“You’re not one of the oppressed,” Judge Cogan said. “You’re one of the privileged.”

Spectators in the gallery gasped at the judge’s words. “To make that comment, you’re not seeing the same things that I’m seeing,” said Taaj Reeves, a friend of Mr. Mattis’s, after the hearing.

In November, the judge had sentenced Urooj Rahman, Mattis’s friend and a fellow lawyer, to 15 months in prison and two years of supervised release for the same crime. She was the primary caretaker of her aging mother. Judge Cogan called the sentence one of the most difficult he ever had to impose. After a lifetime of hard work and conscientiousness, he said, Ms. Rahman’s conduct was a violent aberration.

“You are a remarkable person who did a terrible thing on one night,” the judge told her.

Judge Cogan said Thursday that Mr. Mattis got a lighter punishment because he had not been the main instigator of the attack.

The sentences close a case that stunned the city, devastated two families and exposed deep fissures between the police and the community. They reflect a long negotiation with the U.S. attorney’s office in Brooklyn, which at first sought steep charges and had pushed to deny bail to Mr. Rahman and Ms. Mattis, both first-time offenders.

[*They had been high achievers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/07/nyregion/molotov-cocktail-lawyers-nyc.html), children of immigrant families who were raised in New York. Ms. Rahman pursued public interest law, co-authoring a [*paper on police reform*](http://www.policereformorganizingproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/A-Blueprint-for-NYPD-Reform.pdf) in 2014 and working at Bronx Legal Services. Mr. Mattis followed a more lucrative corporate path. But he was already teetering in his career and personal life when the protests occurred.

The events that led to their downfall began in an unsettled spring.

Mr. Mattis had been furloughed in March from his job as an associate at the law firm Pryor Cashman, and the pandemic had cut him off from outside support as he took care of the children, his lawyer wrote.

Then, on May 25, video of Mr. Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man who died in Minneapolis after his neck was pinned to the ground by Derek Chauvin, a white police officer, [*ignited protests*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/george-floyd-protests-timeline.html). There were demonstrations in at least 140 cities across the United States.

In New York, peaceful protests turned into [*confrontations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/nyregion/nyc-protests-george-floyd.html) with police. Throughout the weekend, demonstrators clashed with officers in Union Square in Manhattan and outside the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, resulting in injuries and hundreds of arrests.

On May 29, according to court documents, Mr. Mattis had been drinking throughout the day as he exchanged despairing messages over the murder of Mr. Floyd with friends, including Ms. Rahman, who were mobilizing to join a protest. That evening, Ms. Rahman, who was 31 at the time,  met Mr. Mattis after he made stops to buy supplies, including gasoline, and joined a swell of protesters in Brooklyn.

Shortly after midnight, with Mr. Mattis at the wheel, according to court filings, they drove in a tan minivan to a police precinct in Clinton Hill. After trying to persuade a bystander to throw a bottle that she was holding, Ms. Rahman got out of the van herself, walked toward an empty police patrol car that had already been damaged by protesters and threw the Molotov cocktail through its broken window before fleeing.

She and Mr. Mattis were arrested shortly afterward and held in jail for several days before they were released to home confinement.

It was a politically fraught moment after New York police officers had arrested hundreds of people during the protests, many on charges of disorderly conduct, resisting arrest and unlawful assembly. District attorneys said they would not prosecute many of the nonviolent cases.

Brooklyn federal prosecutors, then part of the Trump Justice Department, appealed twice to keep them behind bars, saying that the two lawyers had tried to incite others to similar attacks. But more than 50 former federal prosecutors signed a public letter urging the appeals court to reject the U.S. attorney’s office’s argument for detention, saying it contradicted settled bail law.

In June 2020, a grand jury returned an indictment against Mr. Mattis and Ms. Rahman that included seven counts, including arson, use of explosives and civil disorder.

In November 2021, after President Biden had taken office and new leadership had taken over in the Department of Justice, Ms. Rahman and Mr. Mattis each pleaded guilty to one count of possessing and making an incendiary device. Last June, those charges were dismissed as part of a deal with prosecutors, and both pleaded guilty to a count of conspiracy to commit arson.

At Ms. Rahman’s sentencing, she faced up to five years under federal guidelines, and the government had asked for 18 months to two years. Her lawyer, Peter Baldwin, asked the court to impose only supervised release, saying his client had experienced “a dangerous and reprehensible lapse of judgment.”

“Urooj’s emotions, her anger, her despair, her rage, got the better of her,” he told the judge. Since the incident, Ms. Rahman had been in therapy and Alcoholics Anonymous, Mr. Baldwin said.

Ms. Rahman was born in Pakistan and grew up in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn; she graduated from Fordham Law School and had always been drawn to public interest work, a commitment for which Judge Cogan praised her.

When she addressed the court, Ms. Rahman cried as she spoke about her mother’s grief. “I don’t think there are enough words to express my sorrow and regret,” she told the court. “My sole intention was to lend my voice to other New Yorkers in the pursuit of justice. I completely lost my way in the emotions of the night.”

She is to report to federal prison in Connecticut on Tuesday.

Mr. Mattis has already spent nearly a month in jail, has taken a leadership role in his Alcoholics Anonymous chapter and is at no risk of reoffending, his lawyers said in the memorandum to the judge.

Sabrina P. Shroff, his defense attorney, told Judge Cogan in a presentencing letter how Mr. Mattis, the son of immigrants from Jamaica and St. Vincent, grew up in a chaotic home. Though early on he struggled academically, he went on to graduate from boarding school, then attended Princeton University and New York University’s law school.

When he was in his second year of law school, his father, Kingcolinford Mattis, was stabbed to death during a robbery in St. Vincent. His son used alcohol to dull his pain, Ms. Shroff wrote.

After law school, when he took a job at a law firm in 2016, he was often late or absent, court documents said. His yearslong dependency on alcohol worsened. He was asked to leave the firm just as his mother was diagnosed with uterine cancer and became her primary caregiver until her death in 2019, even as he worked at another firm.

After she died, Mr. Mattis took over her role as the foster parent for the three children he is now in the process of trying to adopt. He is also the primary caretaker for his 15-year-old nephew.

Shortly after the pandemic hit in March 2020 and Mr. Mattis was furloughed, his drinking increased, according to court filings.

On May 29, 2020, hours before he joined the protests, Mr. Mattis watched the video of Mr. Floyd’s murder for the first time and began to cry.

Within hours, court records said, Mr. Mattis was driving the minivan quickly away from the burning police sedan with open bottles of Bud Light, a funnel, a half-full red gas can and rolls of toilet paper.

PHOTOS: Colinford Mattis, far left, and Urooj Rahman lost their law licenses and were sentenced to prison over a Molotov cocktail that burned a car in May 2020. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY U.S. ATTORNEY&#39;S OFFICE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS) This article appeared in print on page A18.

**Load-Date:** January 27, 2023

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[***The New Politics of Abortion; Ross Douthat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:663G-K4X1-JBG3-62RY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 6, 2022 Saturday 19:13 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 917 words

**Byline:** Ross Douthat

**Highlight:** The pro-life movement needs to learn the art of the possible.

**Body**

Some liberals seemed genuinely surprised by the results of the Kansas referendum on abortion. A reliably Republican state, a sweeping pro-choice victory. Who could have foreseen it?

Others suggested that only the pro-life side should be shocked. “The anti-abortion movement has long claimed that voters would reward Republicans for overturning Roe,” wrote Slate’s Mark Joseph Stern. “They are now discovering how delusional that conviction has always been.”

It’s true that activists often tend toward unrealistic optimism. But nobody who favored overturning Roe ought to be particularly surprised by the Kansas result. By the margin, maybe — but a Republican state voting to preserve a right to abortion emphasizes what’s always been apparent: With the end of Roe, the pro-life movement now has to adapt to the democratic contest that it sought.

Right now, majorities of Americans [*favor*](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/americans-support-abortion-bans-prohibited-roe-v-wade-claim-support-roe-media-bias) abortion restrictions that were ruled out under Roe, but only [*slightly over a third*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/06/13/about-six-in-ten-americans-say-abortion-should-be-legal-in-all-or-most-cases-2/) of the country takes the position that abortion should be largely illegal, a number that [*shrinks*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/07/15/abortion-exceptions-republicans/) if you remove various exceptions.

That means that millions of Americans who voted for Donald Trump favor a right to a first-trimester abortion — some of them old-fashioned country-club Republicans, others secular ***working-class*** voters or anti-woke “[*Barstool conservatives*](https://theweek.com/articles/964006/rise-barstool-conservatives)” who dislike elite progressivism but find religious conservatism alienating as well.

In many red as well as purple states, those constituencies hold the balance of power. Even with exceptions, a state probably needs to be either very Republican or very religious for a first-trimester abortion ban to be popular, which basically means the Deep South and Mountain (and especially Mormon) West. That was clear before Roe fell — that outright bans would be the exceptions, and the contest in many states would be over how far restrictions can go.

The Kansas result confirms that assumption. The state already has a late-term ban, and the prolix ballot measure didn’t specify an alternative, it just promised the legislature a general power to write new abortion laws. Would the result have been different if the referendum had proposed restrictions around 12 weeks? I suspect so. Can the pro-life movement settle for that kind of goal? Well, that’s the question, with different states supplying different answers.

In purple-ish Georgia, Gov. Brian Kemp signed a law in 2019, which is now taking effect, banning abortion after around six weeks with various exceptions; he [*looks like*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/governor/2022/georgia/) he’s on his way to re-election. In reddish Florida, the popular governor, Ron DeSantis, is making his stand for now on a ban after 15 weeks.

On the other hand, Republican gubernatorial nominees in Pennsylvania and Michigan have a record of taking few-exceptions stances that seem ill-suited to their states.

I suspect that liberals are deceiving themselves if they imagine abortion becoming a dominant issue in an environment as economically and geopolitically fraught as this one. But at the margins there are clear opportunities: If Republicans run on no-exceptions platforms in moderately conservative states or back first-trimester bans in swing states, they will lose some winnable elections.

But again, serious pro-lifers have always known that if you bring abortion back to the democratic process, you have to deal with public opinion as it actually exists. And the [*way you change opinion*](https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/the-pro-life-movement-isnt-in-kansas-anymore/) is by proving the incremental version of your ideas workable, so that voters trust you more and more.

That requires addressing immediate anxieties head-on. It is not enough, for instance, for abortion opponents to react to stories about delayed care for miscarriages or ectopic pregnancies in pro-life states by pointing out that the [*laws are being misinterpreted*](https://www.nationalreview.com/2022/08/american-abortion-laws-do-not-require-delaying-treatment-for-a-mothers-life-threatening-condition/). All officialdom in those states should be mobilized to make hospitals fear malpractice suits more than hypothetical pro-life prosecution.

And it requires longer-term creativity, so that every new protection for the unborn is combined with reassurances that mothers and children alike will be better supported than they are today.

When I [*make the latter point*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/25/opinion/roe-abortion-politics.html) I get a reliable liberal retort, to the effect that Republicans could have done more for families already, and didn’t, so why would that ever change?

But this is the point of bringing democratic pressure to bear. Religious conservatives have pushed Republicans away from libertarian economics in the past — “compassionate conservatism” emerged from evangelicals and Catholics — but so long as abortion was essentially a judicial battle, the link to family policy was indirect.

Now that Republicans have to legislate on abortion, though, there are incentives to make the link explicit — especially in states where socially conservative Democrats, especially Hispanic voters, might join a pro-life coalition.

That doesn’t mean it will happen, just that the incentives of democratic politics are how it would happen. The end of Roe opens the door wide to a pro-life movement that’s incrementalist and creative; it doesn’t ensure that such a movement will emerge. But the results in Kansas show what will happen if it doesn’t.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Marco Bello/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Schumer Can Take the Insults, if It Helps Keep Democrats in Power***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66S0-D5S1-JBG3-60GK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 1, 2022 Tuesday 11:14 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1169 words

**Byline:** Jesse McKinley

**Highlight:** Senator Chuck Schumer, heavily favored to defeat his Republican challenger, Joseph Pinion, argued in a debate as much for his party as for his re-election.

**Body**

Senator Chuck Schumer, heavily favored to defeat his Republican challenger, Joseph Pinion, argued in a debate as much for his party as for his re-election.

For an hour on Sunday night, Senator Chuck Schumer endured insult after insult. He was called a liar and a failure. He was blamed for inflation, the decline of the shipbuilding industry, and death threats to Supreme Court justices. He was referred to as a modern-day Goliath, a “blind biblical giant,” a surprising description of a senator famed for both his spectacles and his slouch.

Mr. Schumer took it all, seemingly treating the excoriation from his Republican opponent, Joseph Pinion, as an extended opportunity to remind voters of a series of Democratic accomplishments over the last two years during his tenure as Senate majority leader, a role he is clinging to even as his party faces serious headwinds in midterm elections next week.

Democrats across New York and the nation are playing defense in the closing week of the campaign cycle as they try to protect their party’s control of the Senate and especially the House of Representatives, where Republicans are feeling bullish. That includes in New York, where the map includes competitive congressional races from Long Island to central New York, and where Gov. Kathy Hochul is trying fend off a challenge from Representative Lee Zeldin, a conservative Republican with deep ties to former president Donald J. Trump.

Mr. Schumer does not seem in any danger: He is heavily favored to win a fifth term in the Senate, with a recent Quinnipiac poll showing him holding [*a 12-point lead*](https://poll.qu.edu/images/polling/ny/ny10182022_ndjt17.pdf). But it is a measure of where things stand for Democrats that Mr. Schumer was willing to trade time on Sunday night to trumpet his party in exchange for absorbing Mr. Pinion’s brickbats, which included a near-constant assertion that the senator has been in office too long.

“Chuck Schumer has spent 42 years making promises about what he will do tomorrow,” said Mr. Pinion, 39, a former host and conservative commentator on the Newsmax network. “It’s always a day away. And you never trust a man who promises to do tomorrow what he had power to do yesterday.”

For Mr. Pinion, the [*debate*](https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/politics/2022/10/30/watch-the-full-spectrum-news-u-s--senate-debate) at Union College in Schenectady, hosted by Spectrum News, was perhaps his best chance at introducing himself to voters, a challenge considering the Quinnipiac poll found nearly 60 percent of those polled didn’t know enough about Mr. Pinion to form an opinion. (That cohort seemingly included Mr. Schumer himself, who opened the debate by saying, “Hi, Joe. Very nice to meet you.”)

Mr. Schumer has long prided himself on an aggressive media strategy — reporters can set their watches by his 11:30 a.m. news conferences — and his frequent trips around the state, including visiting all of the state’s 62 counties every year, a pace he has continued even as Democrats seek to shore up support for Ms. Hochul and other candidates.

That included a visit last week to Onondaga County, alongside President Biden, [*to bring attention to a $100 billion plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/27/us/politics/biden-inflation-syracuse.html) by Micron to build new computer chip manufacturing facilities near Syracuse.

“This guy gets things done,” the president [*said of Mr. Schumer*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/10/27/remarks-by-president-biden-on-microns-plan-to-invest-in-chips-manufacturing/), during the event.

Such was the argument the senator himself made on Sunday night, returning again and again to legislation passed by Democrats while he has served as majority leader, including measures to reduce the price of prescription drugs, tighten gun control laws, and pour money into manufacturing like that in Onondaga County.

“Under my leadership, the Senate has had the most productive session in decades,” he said.

Mr. Pinion has also stumped for months, roaming from motorcycle-and-morning coffee events in Western New York to rooftop fund-raisers in Manhattan to help fuel an underfunded campaign: Mr. Pinion’s latest filing, for example, with the Federal Election Commission shows his campaign committee with [*a little less than $12,000 cash on hand*](https://www.fec.gov/data/committee/C00800268/).

Mr. Pinion has seemingly tried to augment that lack of resources with a surfeit of fiery rhetoric and CGI-heavy broadsides: One of Mr. Pinion’s online ads shows him in [*an apocalyptic landscape*](https://twitter.com/JosephPinion/status/1582036629539422208), amid the burning ruins of skyscrapers and the Statue of Liberty.

“America is burning,” Mr. Pinion says, criticizing the federal outlay of dollars to Ukraine, high inflation and the baby-formula crisis. “And the politicians that started the fire want to blame someone else.”

In another ad, he likened [*Mr. Schumer to a dinosaur*](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1464316690717806) presiding over “the Jurassic States of America,” a visual conceit complete with Mr. Pinion flanked by a pair of raptors. “Like my friends here, the American dream is about to go extinct,” he says, before turning to his prehistoric friends. “Sorry, guys, it’s true. You’re dead!”

But his most recurring campaign theme has been that Mr. Schumer has been in Washington too long — nearly 42 years, between nearly two decades in the House of Representatives and his four terms in the U.S. Senate — with too little to show for it. A recent email blast noted that Mr. Schumer “has been in office longer than I have been alive.”

“He says the job’s not done,” Mr. Pinion told a crowd in Amsterdam, N.Y., in September, [*alongside Representative Elise Stefanik*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/28/nyregion/ny-elise-stefanik-castelli-republicans.html) and Michael Henry, the party’s candidate for attorney general. “If you haven’t got the job done in 42 years, perhaps it’s time to step aside and let someone else take a crack at it.”

Mr. Schumer’s ads have showcased ***working-class*** supporters, as well as mailers linking Mr. Pinion to anti-abortion efforts by Republicans, including Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the Senate minority leader.

Like Mr. Pinion and his dinosaurs, Mr. Schumer has also shown a sense of humor, with an ad billed as [*“Yiddish Lessons with the Majority Leader.”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZhyBEzOl0w) In it, Mr. Schumer, who is Jewish, identifies Mr. McConnell, Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, and Mr. Trump as “schmos”; the riots of Jan. 6, 2021, as a “shande,” or shame; and mentions the words “kvell” and “naches” for his pride and joy at his legislative accomplishments.

“Because fighting for New York is no schtick for me,” he concludes.

On Sunday, Mr. Pinion was on the attack from the very beginning, calling out “the legend of Charles Ellis Schumer” before saying he wanted to do “some myth busting.”

“He is, in fact, an exceptional politician, one of the best that has ever lived,” Mr. Pinion said. “But he’s a failed senator. He has failed the people of this state on multiple occasions.”

Mr. Schumer rarely returned fire, sticking to promoting the raft of accomplishments that he hopes voters remember next week. But toward the end of the debate, he scolded Mr. Pinion, saying the race wasn’t about how long he had served, but whether he had delivered for New York.

“I produce results, I am productive,” he said. “I’m not just shooting verbiage, and calling names.”

PHOTO: Senator Chuck Schumer, right, defended his record and that of other Democrats in a debate against Joseph Pinion on Sunday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HANS PENNINK/ASSOCIATED PRESS) This article appeared in print on page A18.

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2022

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[***Is the Marriage Between Democracy and Capitalism on the Rocks?; Critic’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67JK-G8W1-DXY4-X2NG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1781 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Szalai

**Highlight:** Never easy, the relationship between the vaunted political system and economic order appears to be in crisis. New books by historians and economists sound the alarm.

**Body**

Never easy, the relationship between the vaunted political system and economic order appears to be in crisis. New books by historians and economists sound the alarm.

The documentary series “Free to Choose,” which aired on public television in 1980 and was hosted by the libertarian economist Milton Friedman, makes for surreal watching nowadays. Even if Ronald Reagan would go on to win the presidential election later that year, it was still a time when capitalism’s most enthusiastic supporters evidently felt the need to win the public over to a vision of free markets and minimal government. [*Today’s billionaire donors*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/us/politics/megadonors-political-spending.html) may be able to funnel money to their favored candidates without [*even bothering to pay lip service to American democracy,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/14/technology/republican-trump-peter-thiel.html) but the corporate funders of “Free to Choose” set out to make their case.

They had an enormous audience: The 15 million viewers who watched the first episode saw an avuncular Friedman (diminutive and smiling), leaning casually against a chair in a Chinatown sweatshop (noisy and crowded), surrounded by women pushing fabric through clattering sewing machines. “They are like my mother,” Friedman said, [*gesturing at the Asian women in the room.*](https://www.freetochoosenetwork.org/programs/free_to_choose/index_80.php?id=the_power_of_the_market) She had worked in a factory too, after immigrating as a 14-year-old from Austria-Hungary in the late 19th century. Friedman explained that these low-wage garment workers weren’t being exploited; they were gaining a foothold in the American land of plenty. The camera then cut to a tray of juicy steaks.

Friedman may have been happy to do his part to try to persuade the masses, but he didn’t put too much stock in democracy. He notoriously [*offered economic advice to the Chilean military dictator Augusto Pinochet*](https://www.nytimes.com/1975/09/22/archives/two-years-of-pinochet.html) that amounted to a brutal program of austerity. In 1967, at the height of the civil rights movement, Friedman argued that any progress made by Black Americans had to do with “the opportunities offered them by a market system” (instead of “legislative measures” that only encouraged “unrealistic and extravagant expectations”). What Friedman believed in was capitalism, or what he called “economic freedom.” Political freedom might come — but capitalism, he said, could do just fine without it.

Not so, insists Martin Wolf in his new book, “[*The Crisis of Democratic Capitalism*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/554951/the-crisis-of-democratic-capitalism-by-martin-wolf/).” “Capitalism cannot survive in the long run without a democratic polity, and democracy cannot survive in the long run without a market economy,” he writes. Capitalism supplies democracy with resources, while democracy supplies capitalism with legitimacy. Wolf, the chief economics commentator for The Financial Times, worries that after an efflorescence of democratic capitalism, “that delicate flower” is beginning to wither. Most of his ire is directed at an unhinged financial system that has encouraged a “rentier capitalism” and a “rigged” economy.”

Wolf is hardly alone in noticing that the relationship between democracy and capitalism has gone haywire. He and other observers are trying to make sense of what might happen next — and, befitting our current bewilderment, they offer a range of perspectives. Some, like Wolf, hope the relationship can be repaired; others argue that the pairing has always been fraught, if not impossible.

In Wolf’s case, his anguished tone reflects the scale of his own disillusionment. Born in 1946 in postwar England, he recalls in his preface how “the world seemed solid as I grew up.” He describes the feelings of “confidence” in democracy and capitalism that flourished with the collapse of the Soviet Union. But he has also read his Marx and Engels, looking askance at their solutions while commending them for how “brilliantly” they described capitalism’s relentlessness and omnivorousness. Left to its own devices, capitalism expands wherever it can, plowing its way through national boundaries and local traditions — making it marvelously dynamic or utterly ruinous, and not infrequently both.

Yet the “democratic capitalism” that Wolf wants to preserve was, even by his own lights, short-lived. Democracy itself — or “liberal democracy” with universal suffrage, which Wolf says is the kind of democracy he means — is a “political mayfly.” Democratic capitalism ended, in his account, with the financial crisis of 2008. The former Secretary of Labor [*Robert Reich has offered another measure,*](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/feb/06/joe-biden-democratic-capitalism-changed-economic-paradigm-reagan-free-market) arguing that democratic capitalism, at least in the United States, began with Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal and ended with Reagan, when “corporate capitalism” took over. (There’s also an argument to be made that true democracy in the United States began only with [*the Voting Rights Act of 1965*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/29/magazine/voting-rights-act-dream-undone.html).) Reich and Wolf share a deep sense of crisis, along with the adamant conviction that democratic capitalism can and should be revived.

Capitalism expands wherever it can, plowing its way through national boundaries and local traditions — making it marvelously dynamic or utterly ruinous, and not infrequently both.

The left-wing German sociologist Wolfgang Streeck stakes out a decidedly different position, suggesting that the tendency to equate “democratic capitalism” with a few decades of postwar plenty is to misinterpret a “historical compromise between a then uniquely powerful ***working class*** and an equally uniquely weakened capitalist class.” In [*“How Will Capitalism End?”*](https://www.versobooks.com/books/2519-how-will-capitalism-end) (2016), Streeck argues that it’s not compromise but the cascade of crises following the postwar boom — inflation, unemployment, market crashes — “that represents the normal condition of democratic capitalism.” Where Wolf wistfully invokes a “delicate flower,” Streeck writes contemptuously of a “shotgun marriage.”

Less than a decade ago, Streeck sounded like a fringe Savonarola; in 2014, he published [*“Buying Time,”*](https://www.versobooks.com/books/2390-buying-time) declaring he was sure that the end of democratic capitalism was nigh. When an idea that once seemed preposterous starts to look prescient, we know that something fundamental has changed.

It’s a transformation that the historian Gary Gerstle explores in his fascinating and incisive [*“The Rise and Fall of the Neoliberal Order”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/05/books/review/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-neoliberal-order-gary-gerstle.html) (2022). Before the New Deal order started to falter in the late 1960s and ’70s, Gerstle writes, a majority of Americans believed that capitalism should be managed by a strong state; in the neoliberal order that followed, a majority of Americans believed that the state should be constrained by free markets. Each order began to break down when its traditional ways of solving problems didn’t seem to work. Both the New Deal and its neoliberal successor took for granted that democracy and capitalism were compatible; if these books are any indication, that mainstream assumption — and even the notion of a mainstream assumption — is in tatters.

Democracy might be imperiled, but capitalism, according to Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway, has obtained the status of civic religion. In “[*The Big Myth: How American Business Taught Us to Loathe Government and Love the Free Market*](https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/big-myth-9781635573572/),” the authors argue that industry groups and wealthy donors have engaged in a concerted campaign to promote “market fundamentalism” — “a vision of growth and innovation by unfettered markets where government just gets out of the way.”

Oreskes and Conway are perhaps best known for “[*Merchants of Doubt*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/01/books/review/newsbook-climate-change-debate-global-warming.html?searchResultPosition=3)” (2010), which detailed corporate-funded efforts to protect the tobacco industry and promote climate-change denial by depicting settled science as “unsettled.” They describe their new book as a sequel of sorts — an attempt to understand the ideology that animated the figures in “Merchants,” whose terror of government regulation was so extreme that they equated environmental protections with communist tyranny.

But instead of sowing doubt, what the figures in this new book are peddling is certainty: the iffy “science” of laissez-faire economics dressed up as indisputable fact. Oreskes and Conway are historians of science, and they do an impressive job of uncovering the resources that groups like the National Association of Manufacturers and the Foundation for Economic Education put into spreading the (greed is good) word.

The main implication of “The Big Myth” seems to be that “market fundamentalism” is so horrifically egregious — enriching the few and despoiling the planet — that Americans had to be plied with propaganda to believe in it. But as Gerstle’s book shows, neoliberal ideas proved so seductive because they also happened to dovetail with the stories that Americans wanted to tell about themselves, emphasizing individuality and freedom.

Such popular support is crucial in a democracy, of course, but in [*“Globalists”*](https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674979529) (2018) the historian Quinn Slobodian argues that neoliberals have found ways not just to liberate markets but to “encase” them in international institutions, thereby shielding capitalist activities from democratic accountability. He observes that neoliberals were especially alarmed after World War II by decolonization, adopting a condescending “racialized language” that pitted “the rational West,” with its trade rules and property laws, against a postcolonial South, “with its ‘emotional’ commitment to sovereignty.”

Slobodian’s excellent if discomfiting new book, “[*Crack-Up Capitalism*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9781250753892/crack-up-capitalism)” (forthcoming in April), explores other neoliberal evasions of the nation-state: tax havens, special economic zones, gated communities — enclaves that are “freed from ordinary forms of regulation.” A new generation of swashbuckling billionaires entertain the prospect of secession, using their money to realize fantasies of escape, whether through [*seasteading*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/13/business/dealbook/seasteading-floating-cities.html) or [*spaceships*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/24/books/review/space-barons-christian-davenport-rocket-billionaires-tim-fernholz.html). The book quotes one seasteading enthusiast declaring, “Democracy is not the answer,” but merely “the current industry standard.” That person was [*Patri Friedman*](https://www.seasteading.org/staff/patri-friedman/), Milton’s grandson.

Still, as much as a rarefied class might try to live in a realm beyond democracy, Slobodian says that even the most fantastical capitalist projects require a demos to function. Tech billionaires might be trying to create a world where the plebes — with their pesky demands for secure working conditions and a living wage — will be replaced by indefatigable robots that don’t have to eat anything at all (let alone a tray of juicy steaks). But for now essential workers are still humans.

“The waged service class is the easiest for the visionaries to forget and the hardest for them to live without,” Slobodian writes. “The cloud floats because the underclass holds it up. Time will tell if they drop their arms one day and make something new.”

PHOTOS: PHOTOS (C1); The precariousness of democracy symbolized by the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol is the topic of a spate of new books. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HAIYUN JIANG/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C4) This article appeared in print on page C1, C4.

**Load-Date:** February 17, 2023

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[***This 'Tiny Little Village' Has a Lot Going On***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67PF-G8C1-DXY4-X0H1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 5, 2023 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section RE; Column 0; Real Estate Desk; Pg. 9; LIVING IN

**Length:** 1756 words

**Byline:** By Lisa Prevost

**Body**

With more than 2,800 new housing units approved in the last three years, 'Port Chester is certainly on the move.' Not everyone is happy about it.

Hai Yang, 37, lives in a one-bedroom apartment overlooking the Byram River in downtown Port Chester, a 2.4-square-mile village in the town of Rye, in Westchester County. Since moving to the $2,700-a-month apartment a year ago, Mr. Yang has found he can walk to most everything he needs.

The Metro-North train station is a three-minute walk, which makes it easy to head into New York City to visit friends. Happy hour deals and live jazz are right next door, at the Saltaire Oyster Bar. And he doesn't need a car to hit the local gym.

But Mr. Yang does have a car, so he can commute to his job in Danbury, Conn., where he is an engineering manager in the medical device industry. Finding a place to park in Port Chester is not an issue -- particularly compared to his experience in downtown White Plains, N.Y., where he used to live. And the village, in general, is ''much less congested,'' he said.

Deirdre Curran, 57, moved into a townhouse across from the village's 20-acre Lyon Park last June. A retired pet sitter and dog walker, Ms. Curran had rented in the village off and on over the years, and appreciates its diversity. ''There are a lot of different cultures, and you can get any kind of food you want from Central and South America,'' she said.

She paid $515,000 for her two-bedroom home, which is convenient to downtown businesses, major highways and the Westchester County Airport. But while Ms. Curran loves her home's location, she is increasingly alarmed by the scale and pace of residential development planned for the compact downtown area.

Three large, mixed-use apartment projects are currently under construction. The six-story Tarry Lighthouse, on North Main, will have 209 apartments as well as commercial space. The Magellan, on South Main, will add another 95 apartments in a nine-story, 100-percent electrified building. And 30 Broad, across from the train station, will have 36 apartments above a microbrewery.

These follow the recent completion of Port & Main, a five-story, 80-unit building a block from the train station.

''They want to do all this major development in this tiny little village that does not have the infrastructure to handle it,'' Ms. Curran said. ''It seems to me like an awful lot of major development in a very short period of time.''

The village has granted conditional site plan approval to projects with a total of more than 2,800 units over the past three years, said Stuart L. Rabin, the village manager. This flurry of development proposals is largely the result of a change in village zoning three years ago designed to encourage the redevelopment and revitalization of Port Chester's downtown, waterfront and transit-adjacent parcels, he said.

''The village of Port Chester is certainly on the move,'' Mr. Rabin said.

But the scale of the proposals has generated considerable public pushback, with some residents expressing concern that towering apartment buildings threaten to overwhelm the historic downtown and price out the many mom-and-pop businesses.

John Allen, an elected member of Port Chester's board of trustees, said that while the village was ''ripe for redevelopment,'' given the number of buildings in disrepair, there is a growing sense that the board allowed for ''these extraordinary increases for density and asked for very little in return from developers,'' including having to meet more of the community's affordable housing needs.

The board has recently begun to discuss a ''narrowly tailored'' moratorium on development in order to study whether further changes are needed to the zoning code, he said. A moratorium would not affect projects already under construction.

What You'll Find

Port Chester is a densely developed village of 31,000 that ''sprang to life at the crossroads of various transportation options,'' including a small harbor on Long Island Sound and rail lines into New York City, said Gregg Hamilton, a retired Manhattan transplant who runs the Sustainable Port Chester Alliance.

Some remnants of its 19th- and early 20th-century industrial heyday remain. The Simons Manufacturing Company building, which once housed a major textile maker, is now a loft-style office complex. And the former headquarters of the Life Savers Candy Company now houses condominiums.

In the walkable downtown area, beauty salons, restaurants and grocery stores catering to the village's majority-Hispanic population line the main thoroughfares of Westchester Avenue and North and South Main. (According to census data, the village population is 64 percent Hispanic, 28 percent white, 5 percent Black and 1 percent Asian.) Two large commercial bakeries -- Neri's and J.J. Cassone -- are major employers.

Modest single-family and multifamily homes set close to the hilly streets surround the downtown. To the north, the streets are wider, and homes are set farther apart in suburban-style neighborhoods.

A 15-acre abandoned hospital campus on the edge of downtown, once a target for development by Starwood Capitol Group, is now set for redevelopment by Rose Associates and BedRock Real Estate Partners. The companies have received site plan approval for nearly 1,000 housing units, including 200 age-restricted units, and expect to begin demolition of the existing buildings by spring, said Richard Shea, a project spokesman.

The nonprofit Carver Center supports the community's lower-income and immigrant populations with a food bank, citizenship classes, after-school programming and a teen center.

What You'll Pay

As in most of Westchester County, housing inventory in Port Chester is very low and it is a seller's market, said Thomas E. Consaga, the broker-owner at Re/Max Ace Realty. Competition is particularly high among first-time buyers because home prices are considerably lower than in surrounding suburbs like Greenwich, Conn., and Rye, N.Y., he said.

The median sale price for a single-family home in Port Chester last year was $645,000, almost 10 percent higher than in 2021. By comparison, the 2022 median sale price in neighboring Greenwich was almost $3 million.

As of last week, there were only about 20 single-family homes on the market, Mr. Consaga said. They ranged from a three-bedroom colonial built in 1955, listed for $475,000, to a six-bedroom colonial built in 1900, listed for $1.34 million.

The median sale price for a condominium last year was $347,500; for a cooperative, it was $118,000, he said.

Almost 60 percent of households in Port Chester are renter-occupied, according to census data. Over the last 12 months, the median rent for a two-bedroom was $2,800, Mr. Consaga said.

That figure factors in the many older, multifamily homes in the village, but rents at the new apartment buildings are considerably higher. At Port & Main, which has a rooftop terrace and a fitness center, a 400-square-foot studio starts at $2,300 a month and an 1,150-square-foot, two-bedroom rents for more than $4,000, said Whitney Okun, who runs a development group at Houlihan Lawrence that is overseeing the project.

The Vibe

The Capitol Theater, on Westchester Avenue, books big-name artists that draw music lovers from throughout the region. Concertgoers swarm the wide array of downtown restaurants, including El Tio, Bartaco, T&J Restaurant and Pizzeria, and Panka Peruvian Bistro.

The parking lot at the Waterfront at Port Chester mall is jammed on weekends with shoppers stocking up at Costco. The mall's other draw is a 14-screen AMC movie theater.

The growing arts scene includes the well-established Clay Art Center, a large complex with numerous pottery studios and classrooms, as well as a public gallery, and Ice Cream Social, a relatively new space where artists working in various media can rent private or shared studios.

''Port Chester is my hometown, so it's kind of a dream to be able to support the artists who are here,'' said Jennifer Cacciola, an artist and a founder of the center, who moved to Connecticut from Brooklyn shortly before the pandemic.

The Schools

The Port Chester-Rye Union Free School District serves students in all of Port Chester and about a third of the neighboring village of Rye Brook. Of the roughly 4,500 students districtwide, about 83 percent identify as Hispanic or Latino, 12 percent as white, 3 percent as Black and 2 percent as Asian, according to state education data.

The district contracts with Corpus Christi Holy Rosary School to provide a prekindergarten program for 4-year-olds. Students in kindergarten through fifth grade attend one of four elementary schools; those in sixth through eighth grade attend Port Chester Middle School.

Port Chester High School is on a 20-acre campus bordering Rye Brook, with about 1,600 students. Academic offerings include Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. The four-year graduation rate for the class of 2022 was 88 percent.

The Commute

Port Chester station, on Metro-North's New Haven line, is in the heart of downtown. The ride to Grand Central during peak commuting times takes just under an hour; the one-way fare is $13.75, and a monthly pass is $270.

Westchester County's Bee-Line bus service offers transportation from Port Chester to Rye, Harrison, Mamaroneck, Larchmont, New Rochelle and the Bronx.

The CT Transit 311 bus, operated by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, runs throughout the day between Liberty Square in Port Chester and Stamford, Conn., with additional stops in Greenwich, Conn.

The History

Port Chester's sizable Hispanic and Latino population has been growing for decades, ever since Cuban refugees fleeing Fidel Castro's rule settled in Port Chester to work in the factories in the 1960s, according to a New York Times account. As the factories closed, more immigrants from throughout Central and South America settled in the ***working-class*** village, opening restaurants and servicing the affluent suburbs as landscapers, day laborers, house cleaners and child-care providers. The population growth hasn't been without tensions: In 2009, a federal judge ordered the village to adopt a new voting system that would give the Hispanic and Latino population a fairer opportunity to elect one of their own to the board of trustees. Luis Marino, a Peruvian immigrant, was elected to the board in 2010 and is now the village's mayor.

For weekly email updates on residential real estate news, sign up here.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/01/realestate/port-chester-ny-housing.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/01/realestate/port-chester-ny-housing.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Shops and restaurants line Westchester Avenue in Port Chester, N.Y. ''The village of Port Chester is certainly on the move,'' said Stuart L. Rabin, the village manager. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page RE9.

**Load-Date:** March 5, 2023

**End of Document**



[***L.I.R.R. Comes to Grand Central. Finally.; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67D3-9M21-DXY4-X4HD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 25, 2023 Wednesday 00:23 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1522 words

**Byline:** James Barron

**Highlight:** East Side Access, a stunningly expensive M.T.A. project, will bring commuters to a new stop called Grand Central Madison.

**Body**

East Side Access, a stunningly expensive M.T.A. project, will bring commuters to a new stop called Grand Central Madison.

Good morning. It’s Wednesday. The first Long Island Rail Road train bound for Grand Central Terminal was set to make the trip this morning. We’ll look at why it’s a mass transit milestone.

The word for the day is “finally.”

As in, the first Long Island Rail Road train to arrive at Grand Central Terminal is finally due this morning.

The link that will make the trip possible cost three times the original estimate and took longer to complete than the Erie Canal or the transcontinental railroad. “This is an idea that’s been around for 50 years,” Janno Lieber, the chairman and chief executive of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, acknowledged on Tuesday. “It’s a project that’s been under construction since before 2010. It is an idea people wouldn’t believe would ever happen, and it’s happening.”

For the first few weeks, the Long Island Rail Road will run with only limited service between Grand Central and its Jamaica station in Queens. Eventually, passengers can change there for trains on 10 of its 11 branches and zones — and the new line will stop at another station for passengers on the other branch.

The transit authority predicts that the new service will change the way Long Island passengers commute, because about 45 percent of them go to Grand Central. That will reduce what Lieber called “the craziness” at overcrowded Pennsylvania Station, until now the only destination for Long Island trains in Manhattan.

The new service is beginning at a time when transit patterns remain a question mark as many workers continue hybrid work arrangements. [*Weekday ridership on the Long Island Rail Road*](https://new.mta.info/coronavirus/ridership) averages about 65 percent of prepandemic levels, roughly the same proportion as on the subways. The transit authority has warned that lower revenue could mean a budget gap of nearly $3 billion by 2025, and it is already considering [*raising the $2.75 base subway and bus fare twice by then*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/19/nyregion/why-subway-and-bus-fares-are-likely-to-rise-next-year.html) — to $2.90 next year and $3.02 in 2025.

Lieber emphasized the time that commuters would save with the Grand Central connection, as did Gov. Kathy Hochul. “Just a 22 minute ride from Jamaica to the East Side of Manhattan!” she tweeted.

But Lieber noted that the time savings would benefit more than Long Islanders, because he said that the Long Island Rail Road has more than 20 stations in Queens. “The goal is to have middle-class and ***working-class*** people in distant boroughs get to jobs more quickly,” he said, even though the project “may not have been planned” with that in mind. “It was probably planned for the convenience of Long Islanders,” he said.

The benefits will also go the other way, said [*Tom Wright, the president and chief executive*](https://rpa.org/about/staff/tom-wright) of the [*Regional Plan Association*](https://rpa.org/), a research and urban-policy advocacy group. Long Island has trailed the rest of the region in economic and population growth “for the last generation,” he said, adding that the Grand Central connection would make reverse commuting to Long Island more convenient than it has been.

Officials had hoped to have trains coming and going at Grand Central Madison, as the new Long Island station is being called, by the end of 2022. There were delays because of “one stupid fan that couldn’t satisfy the air performance requirements because of the weird downdraft from good old Grand Central Station, circa 1912,” Lieber said.

He said the huge station-within-a-station that is the new connection point was the largest rail terminal built in the United States since the mid-1950s. Its runs underground for five blocks, parallel to the street grid above, from East 43rd Street to East 48th Street. The ticket office as at 47th Street.

It is the end point of a project that proved stunningly expensive: [*A New York Times investigation in 2017*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/28/nyregion/new-york-subway-construction-costs.html)found that the estimated cost of the East Side Access project had jumped to $12 billion, or nearly $3.5 billion for each new mile of track — seven times the average elsewhere in the world.

Federal money for the project was engineered in the late 1990s by former Senator Alfonse D’Amato, a Republican from Long Island, who said he worked with Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a Democrat. “Forget that I was a Republican and he was a Democrat,” D’Amato said. “When it came to this state, we worked together. Today, forget it.”

The tracks connect to tunnels under the East River that were started in the 1960s. They were left unfinished in the municipal fiscal crisis of the 1970s, but linking the Long Island Rail Road to the East Side remained a dream of transportation planners, one of those impossible projects like the Second Avenue subway.

But with support from D’Amato and former Gov. George Pataki, the plan was “no longer a transportation planner’s pipe dream but a near-term priority on Capitol Hill,” The New York Times said in 1997.

The first train was scheduled to leave Jamaica at 10:45 a.m. D’Amato said he did not plan to be onboard.

“Nobody has invited me,” he said, before beginning a tirade about the transit authority. “They’re going to celebrate something that took 40 years where it should have taken 10.”

Prepare for a chance of snow, then rain, with temperatures near the mid-40s. At night, rain continues with possible thunderstorms. It will be a breezy evening with temps around the low 40s.

In effect until Feb. 13 (Lincoln’s Birthday).

The latest New York news

* Lining up again: Stressful Covid lines are out, and happy lines are back, with [*New Yorkers and visitors queuing up for Sondheim, croissants and brunch.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/24/nyregion/waiting-in-line-new-york.html)

1. García Luna trial in Brooklyn: Genaro García Luna is accused of helping traffickers move drugs to the United States. [*But his defense says he is being targeted by the men he helped to send to prison.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/23/world/americas/genaro-garcia-luna-corruption-trial-mexico.html)

Coronavirus

* Long Covid: An analysis of workers’ compensation claims in New York found that 71 percent of claimants with [*long Covid needed continuing medical treatment or were unable to work for six months or more.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/24/health/long-covid-work.html)

1. Annual boosters: Americans may be offered a single dose of [*a Covid vaccine each fall, much as they are given flu shots, the F.D.A. announced.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/23/health/covid-boosters-fda.html)

Former gynecologist found guilty of luring women to his office

A former Manhattan gynecologist who was accused of sexual abuse by dozens of women was convicted by a federal jury of inducing patients to cross state lines for what they believed were routine examinations during which he sexually assaulted them.

My colleagues Hurubie Meko and Brittany Kriegstein [*write that the federal charges against the former gynecologist*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/24/nyregion/gynecologist-hadden-convicted-sex-abuse.html) — Robert Hadden, who has not worked as a doctor since 2012 — stemmed from assaults on four patients who traveled from New Jersey, Nevada and Pennsylvania for appointments.

Hadden had previously admitted to touching patients in a state-court plea agreement that did not require him to spend time behind bars. That infuriated scores of women who said he had preyed on them.

The conviction on the four counts he had faced was, for some, a measure of justice delayed but finally delivered. Marissa Hochstetter, a victim who was in court throughout the trial, wrote in an email on Tuesday that the verdict “does not undo the harm that Hadden and his employers caused hundreds of women and girls over decades.”

“It does send a strong message that what happened was wrong and that survivors’ voices do matter,” she said.

As the verdict was read, sobs were heard throughout the courtroom from a row of victims that included [*Evelyn Yang*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/us/andrew-evelyn-yang-dr-robert-hadden.html), the wife of the former presidential candidate Andrew Yang. After the jury was escorted out, Hadden turned to hug his family and supporters in the first row of the gallery. He is scheduled to be sentenced on April 25. Each of the four counts carries a maximum of 20 years in prison.

“Robert Hadden was a predator in a white coat,” Damian Williams, the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, said in a statement.

‘Bells are ringing’

Dear Diary:

On a Saturday in September in 1958, my mother took me to a matinee of “Bells Are Ringing,” starring Judy Holliday, to celebrate my 10th birthday.

I was in heaven: a day alone with my mother, lunch at the Automat and my first Broadway show.

We climbed to our seats in the top row of the balcony, the orchestra started up and Ms. Holliday began to sing. It seemed as if she was looking straight at me.

“Mama,” I said, “you told her it was my birthday!”

Years later I realized that Ms. Holliday was simply looking out into the center of the audience. Still, my belief in my mother’s superpowers was never stronger than it was that day.

— Susan Rutberg

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 and Ed Shanahan 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 Hiroko Masuike/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 25, 2023

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[***A Novel Taps Into a Childhood Spent Amid the Belfast Troubles***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66S0-1WV1-DXY4-X50Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 1, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 1086 words

**Byline:** By Tobias Grey

**Body**

The book, ''Trespasses,'' captures the texture of life in Northern Ireland -- details, objects and images that carry ''incredible emotional weight.''

SLIGO, Ireland -- Louise Kennedy grew up Catholic on the outskirts of Belfast, in Northern Ireland, during the height of the Troubles, and her earliest memories are shot through with violence: Her grandmother was cut by flying glass and needed several hundred stitches after a bomb detonated in front of her during a walk to the bank. The pub that her grandfather ran suffered two bombing attempts.

After the second attempt, Kennedy's family moved to Ireland, where she still lives. But the experiences and images from her time in Northern Ireland are at the core of her debut novel, ''Trespasses,'' which received stellar reviews when it was published by Bloomsbury in the United Kingdom and Ireland in April, and will be published by Riverhead Books in the United States on Nov. 1.

The book's title hints at the love affair between Cushla, a 24-year-old Catholic primary schoolteacher, and Michael, a married Protestant barrister over twice her age, whose secret trysts unravel in a town on the outskirts of Belfast in 1975. Many of the chapters in ''Trespasses'' begin with the children in Cushla's class reciting the news of the previous day.

''Booby trap. Incendiary device. Gelignite. Nitroglycerin. Petrol bomb. Saracen. Internment. The Special Powers Act. Vanguard. The vocabulary of a seven-year-old child now,'' Kennedy writes.

The pub in ''Trespasses'' where Cushla supplements her income by working shifts and meets Michael for the first time is reminiscent of Kennedy's grandfather's pub. The characters who frequent the pub in ''Trespasses'' are drawn from Kennedy's own experience of working as a chef and bar manager for nearly 30 years.

''I have a ridiculously good memory,'' Kennedy said. ''The interior of the bar is completely from my memory of what our pub looked like inside, right down to the color of the tweed banquettes and the teak furniture.''

Kennedy, 55, began writing ''Trespasses'' in early 2019, not long after getting a diagnosis for melanoma, when she realized she couldn't presume she would have a long life. She wrote most of the novel in a shed in her garden, taking breaks when the children from the neighboring school went out to play. And she did it largely for herself, she said in an interview at her home in Sligo.

''I didn't think that anybody would necessarily ever see it,'' said Kennedy, whose melanoma is now in remission. ''I think there was great freedom in that.''

Rebecca Saletan, Kennedy's editor in the United States, thinks that American readers who are less familiar with the Troubles than their Irish and British counterparts will be drawn in by the novel's love story and how it lays bare the taboo represented by a relationship between a Catholic and a Protestant.

Cushla ''is so complex from the beginning,'' Saletan said in a telephone interview. ''She understands what she is getting into.''

The novel contains interesting echoes of the present, she said. It shows the I.R.A. destroying statues of historical figures, and also explores how violence and insecurity can beget conspiracy theories. ''It's why it feels like a classic to me,'' Saletan said. ''It does not date and I do not expect it will date.''

Kennedy's flair for creating authentic ***working-class*** characters -- especially Cushla's mother Gina, who smokes and drinks like it is going out of fashion -- stems from extended family get-togethers round the kitchen table, she said.

''I come from a family of very good mimics,'' she said. ''So we were always expected to be kind of entertaining. My father came from a big family and so did my mother, so you'd sort of have to vie for your place a little bit.''

Until four years ago, she was still working cooking shifts at Shells, a popular cafe on the seafront in Sligo, while also helping to manage a local library and working toward a Ph.D. in creative writing at Queen's University, Belfast.

''I used to get up at five in the morning to write or I used to go out to the shed late at night,'' Kennedy said. ''I was getting loads of work done. I'm not getting any more work done now that I don't have a job or my children have gone to college. What's that saying? 'If you want something done, ask a busy person.'''

Kennedy's first collection of short stories, ''The End of the World Is a Cul de Sac,'' was published last year by Bloomsbury in the United Kingdom and Ireland, to significant acclaim. Riverhead Books is planning to publish ''The End of the World Is a Cul de Sac'' next fall in the United States.

Kennedy's route to becoming a writer was an initially reluctant one. Though she has always been a voracious reader, she said no one in her family engaged in creative practices, and the idea of writing didn't come naturally.

''It wasn't like I was dying to write,'' she said. ''I probably thought that it was something that magical people did and I wasn't magical, so why would I be doing something like that.''

Then, in 2014, a friend of hers, the award-winning short story writer Niamh Mac Cabe, persuaded her to join a creative writing group in Sligo that had been started by another fledgling writer, Una Mannion. At first, Kennedy refused.

''I probably wasn't in great order in my head at the time,'' Kennedy said. ''My husband and I had a restaurant that had been very slowly and kind of agonizingly going down the tubes for seven years. I was on antidepressants. I used to see my kids off to school and get back into bed and watch daytime television.''

When Kennedy eventually relented, joining the writing group, something seemed to click into place. ''I discovered that my voice on the page is more like the voice in my head,'' she said. ''I just think I feel more like myself when I'm writing.''

Mannion, who has known Kennedy for over 30 years, is impressed by her attention to detail, especially in ''Trespasses.''

''You don't really get a character's interiority telling you how they feel,'' she said, ''but there's this incredible emotional weight just carried in gesture or objects around them.''

Mannion also remembers Kennedy telling her that once she wrote her first story, she did not want to do anything else.

Within eight months of joining the writing group, Kennedy had weaned herself off antidepressants. ''My husband says that ever since then I've been holding my laptop and trying to run away from him and the kids to write,'' she said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/books/louise-kennedy-trespasses.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/books/louise-kennedy-trespasses.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Louise Kennedy in Sligo, Ireland. Her family moved to Ireland to escape violence in Northern Ireland, including bombing attempts at her grandfather's pub. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLIUS GRACE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page C5.

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2022

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[***At Inauguration, Hochul Vows to Make New York Safer and More Affordable***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6772-KH91-DXY4-X15W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 1, 2023 Sunday 12:53 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1409 words

**Byline:** Luis Ferré-Sadurní and Jesse McKinley

**Highlight:** Gov. Kathy Hochul, the first woman to be sworn in for a full term as New York State governor, appealed for unity.

**Body**

Gov. Kathy Hochul, the first woman to be sworn in for a full term as New York State governor, appealed for unity.

ALBANY, N.Y. — Kathy Hochul became the first woman to be sworn in to a full term as governor of New York on Sunday, a landmark moment that she said she would seize to lead a state confronting fears over crime and a crisis of affordability.

In her first inaugural address, Ms. Hochul briefly acknowledged other women in New York who had made history before her, name-checking Harriet Tubman and Hillary Clinton, before turning her attention to the “worthy pursuits” and fights she said she would take on in the next four years.

“I didn’t come here to make history,” Ms. Hochul said shortly after being sworn in at a convention center in Albany. “I came here to make a difference.”

Ms. Hochul, a moderate Democrat from the Buffalo area, took the oath of office two months after [*emerging victorious*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/09/nyregion/hochul-governor-new-york.html) in the closest governor’s race that New York has seen in decades. In one of the nation’s most liberal states, Ms. Hochul beat her Republican challenger, Representative Lee Zeldin, [*by only six percentage points*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/08/us/elections/results-new-york-governor.html), with the race largely defined by agitation from voters around spikes in crime and the rising cost of living, issues with which Mr. Zeldin hammered the governor.

On Sunday, Ms. Hochul indicated that she would focus her tenure on addressing many of the same concerns — including safety and affordability — that fueled the wave of discontent in November against Democrats, who control all three levers of power in Albany.

At the same time, Ms. Hochul, 64, used her speech to lean into social issues favored by progressives, who took [*credit for salvaging the governor’s flagging campaign*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/11/11/working-families-party-hochul-midterm-elections-00066601) in its closing weeks. And she emphasized the need to safeguard the right to abortion, an issue that helped galvanize many Democrats after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in June.

Such sentiments were lauded by a swarm of well-wishers and Albany power brokers who packed the Empire State Plaza Convention Center in downtown Albany, adjacent to the state’s ornate Capitol Building.

The event, the first inaugural planned in Albany [*since 2011*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/02/nyregion/02inaugural.html), when Andrew M. Cuomo first became governor, had a festive atmosphere, with attendees snapping 360-degree photographs and selfies in front of the New York State seal and a I ❤\xB8\x8F N.Y. poster.

Before the ceremony, an overmatched string quartet played against a babble of conversation among New York’s movers and shakers, only a smattering of whom wore masks, a sign of the state’s steady, if slow, recovery from Covid-19.

Indeed, Ms. Hochul made reference to “the lingering effects” of the pandemic, suggesting it was partly to blame for educational and economic disruptions in the state, including “mental health challenges and increases in crime.”

The governor, who is expected to unveil a plan later this year to build 800,000 units of new housing over the next decade, said that high housing and energy costs were “making life just too damn hard for New Yorkers.” She pledged to address the state’s years of population loss by creating jobs and in-state economic opportunities.

“New Yorkers are just struggling to pay rent, food and gas to get to their jobs,” she said. “They’re hurting.”

Without offering specifics, she broadly vowed to crack down on hate crimes and tackle gun violence so that “New Yorkers can walk our streets, ride our subways and our kids can go to school, free from fear.”

Ms. Hochul is expected to unveil her policy vision in greater detail during her State of the State address later this month, as well as in her proposal for the state’s budget, which typically serves as a vehicle to pass a host of nonfiscal policy priorities in Albany.

But passing her agenda will mean working in tandem with Democrats in the State Legislature who hold veto-proof supermajorities in both chambers and have influential blocs of members who are to the left of Ms. Hochul on an array of policy issues.

It is unclear, for example, if Ms. Hochul will seek [*additional changes to the state’s contentious bail laws*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/29/nyregion/bail-reform-hochul-ny.html) this year, as Mayor Eric Adams of New York City [*has called for*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/03/nyregion/bail-reform-adams-hochul.html) — a move that would create another clash with Democratic lawmakers. Mr. Adams attended the ceremony on Sunday, as did Senator Chuck Schumer, who administered the oath of office for the state attorney general, Letitia James, who was also sworn in, as were the state comptroller, Thomas B. DiNapoli, and Lt. Gov. Antonio Delgado. All of them are Democrats.

Ms. Hochul will begin the legislative year already at odds with left-leaning Democrats in the State Senate over her nominee [*for the state’s chief judge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/13/nyregion/ny-court-kathy-hochul-nominee.html). At least a dozen state senators, including Michael Gianaris, the deputy majority leader in the upper chamber, have announced in recent days that they would vote against confirming her choice, Hector LaSalle.

The [*intense opposition*](https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/central-ny/politics/2022/12/29/new-york-senate-deputy-majority-leader-opposes-lasalle-nomination-for-chief-judge) has placed Ms. Hochul’s nominee in serious jeopardy, raising the possibility that Ms. Hochul, who has so far stood by her decision, might have to withdraw the nomination and suffer an embarrassing political defeat at the onset of her first full term.

Ms. Hochul’s first inauguration capped her whirlwind ascent to the state’s highest office: In August 2021, she [*unexpectedly replaced*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/24/nyregion/kathy-hochul-governor-ny.html) Mr. Cuomo after he resigned amid a sexual harassment scandal, thrusting Ms. Hochul, then his mostly obscure lieutenant governor, into the limelight.

A former congresswoman, Ms. Hochul made history as the first female governor in the state and first governor from western New York in over a century, and she quickly moved to build her stature in Albany.

She secured a suite of policy priorities in her 500 days in office, including the passage of [*a $220 billion state budget*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/20/nyregion/budget-hochul-ny.html), as well as changes to the state’s bail and gun laws, and moved to develop [*a more cordial relationship*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/13/nyregion/kathy-hochul-budget-agenda.html) with fellow Democrats who control the State Legislature.

Casting herself as an above-the-fray executive and a calming presence after Mr. Cuomo’s combative leadership and sudden downfall, Ms. Hochul immediately announced her bid for a full term and quickly established herself as the de facto leader of the state Democratic Party. She raised record-smashing amounts of campaign contributions and went on to win resoundingly in a three-way primary last summer.

Armed with an overwhelming fund-raising edge in a state where Democratic voters vastly outnumber Republicans, Ms. Hochul appeared poised to easily prevail in the general election. But Mr. Zeldin tapped into fears over crime and mounted a vigorous challenge, fueled by support from independent and suburban voters, and even a sizable chunk of Democrats in New York City, who appeared to be upset over public safety.

Ms. Hochul nonetheless emerged victorious and became the first woman elected governor after scrambling to turn out Democratic voters, and focusing on public safety in the final days of the campaign.

The historic nature of her victory, and her Buffalo-area background, was never far from the forefront on Sunday, with the governor joking at one point that she made “really good chicken wings.”

A brief video early in the ceremony showed girls and young women praising her for breaking a centuries-old glass ceiling. And like other speakers on Sunday, Ms. Hochul offered sympathy to the families of more than three dozen people [*who died in a blizzard in Buffalo last month*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/29/nyregion/western-new-york-storm.html), as well as for victims of a racist massacre there in May.

Ms. Hochul sought to use her inauguration to begin mending divides that emerged during the election, pleading for unity by appealing to a common sense of purpose among ***working-class*** New Yorkers, from nurses and police officers to teachers and hotel workers, saying “this day doesn’t belong to me.”

“As I approach the next four years with the energy and sense of purpose and optimism, I know I am not alone, for I am joined in that arena with others who will fight the good fights and the worthy pursuits that Roosevelt spoke of,” Ms. Hochul said, referring to Theodore Roosevelt, a former New York governor — and a Republican — whom she often quotes. “Let’s use these coming years to truly make a difference for each other, and make this state stronger than it’s ever been.”

PHOTO: GOV. KATHY HOCHUL, shortly before her inauguration Sunday, pictured above, which made her the first woman to be sworn in to a full term as governor of New York. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CINDY SCHULTZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A19.

**Load-Date:** January 2, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Louise Kennedy’s Debut Novel Taps Into Her Childhood Amid the Troubles***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66RS-SBY1-JBG3-64KG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 31, 2022 Monday 23:24 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1109 words

**Byline:** Tobias Grey

**Highlight:** The book, “Trespasses,” captures the texture of life in Northern Ireland — details, objects and images that carry “incredible emotional weight.”

**Body**

The book, “Trespasses,” captures the texture of life in Northern Ireland — details, objects and images that carry “incredible emotional weight.”

SLIGO, Ireland — Louise Kennedy grew up Catholic on the outskirts of Belfast, in Northern Ireland, during the height of the Troubles, and her earliest memories are shot through with violence: Her grandmother was cut by flying glass and needed several hundred stitches after a bomb detonated in front of her during a walk to the bank. The pub that her grandfather ran suffered two bombing attempts.

After the second attempt, Kennedy’s family moved to Ireland, where she still lives. But the experiences and images from her time in Northern Ireland are at the core of her debut novel, “Trespasses,” which received stellar reviews when it was published by Bloomsbury in the United Kingdom and Ireland in April, and will be published by Riverhead Books in the United States on Nov. 1.

The book’s title hints at the love affair between Cushla, a 24-year-old Catholic primary schoolteacher, and Michael, a married Protestant barrister over twice her age, whose secret trysts unravel in a town on the outskirts of Belfast in 1975. Many of the chapters in “Trespasses” begin with the children in Cushla’s class reciting the news of the previous day.

“Booby trap. Incendiary device. Gelignite. Nitroglycerin. Petrol bomb. Saracen. Internment. The Special Powers Act. Vanguard. The vocabulary of a seven-year-old child now,” Kennedy writes.

The pub in “Trespasses” where Cushla supplements her income by working shifts and meets Michael for the first time is reminiscent of Kennedy’s grandfather’s pub. The characters who frequent the pub in “Trespasses” are drawn from Kennedy’s own experience of working as a chef and bar manager for nearly 30 years.

“I have a ridiculously good memory,” Kennedy said. “The interior of the bar is completely from my memory of what our pub looked like inside, right down to the color of the tweed banquettes and the teak furniture.”

Kennedy, 55, began writing “Trespasses” in early 2019, not long after getting a diagnosis for melanoma, when she realized she couldn’t presume she would have a long life. She wrote most of the novel in a shed in her garden, taking breaks when the children from the neighboring school went out to play. And she did it largely for herself, she said in an interview at her home in Sligo.

“I didn’t think that anybody would necessarily ever see it,” said Kennedy, whose melanoma is now in remission. “I think there was great freedom in that.”

Rebecca Saletan, Kennedy’s editor in the United States, thinks that American readers who are less familiar with the Troubles than their Irish and British counterparts will be drawn in by the novel’s love story and how it lays bare the taboo represented by a relationship between a Catholic and a Protestant.

Cushla “is so complex from the beginning,” Saletan said in a telephone interview. “She understands what she is getting into.”

The novel contains interesting echoes of the present, she said. It shows the I.R.A. destroying statues of historical figures, and also explores how violence and insecurity can beget conspiracy theories. “It’s why it feels like a classic to me,” Saletan said. “It does not date and I do not expect it will date.”

Kennedy’s flair for creating authentic ***working-class*** characters — especially Cushla’s mother Gina, who smokes and drinks like it is going out of fashion — stems from extended family get-togethers round the kitchen table, she said.

“I come from a family of very good mimics,” she said. “So we were always expected to be kind of entertaining. My father came from a big family and so did my mother, so you’d sort of have to vie for your place a little bit.”

Until four years ago, she was still working cooking shifts at Shells, a popular cafe on the seafront in Sligo, while also helping to manage a local library and working toward a Ph.D. in creative writing at Queen’s University, Belfast.

“I used to get up at five in the morning to write or I used to go out to the shed late at night,” Kennedy said. “I was getting loads of work done. I’m not getting any more work done now that I don’t have a job or my children have gone to college. What’s that saying? ‘If you want something done, ask a busy person.’”

Kennedy’s first collection of short stories, “The End of the World Is a Cul de Sac,” was published last year by Bloomsbury in the United Kingdom and Ireland, to significant acclaim. Riverhead Books is planning to publish “The End of the World Is a Cul de Sac” next fall in the United States.

Kennedy’s route to becoming a writer was an initially reluctant one. Though she has always been a voracious reader, she said no one in her family engaged in creative practices, and the idea of writing didn’t come naturally.

“It wasn’t like I was dying to write,” she said. “I probably thought that it was something that magical people did and I wasn’t magical, so why would I be doing something like that.”

Then, in 2014, a friend of hers, the award-winning short story writer Niamh Mac Cabe, persuaded her to join a creative writing group in Sligo that had been started by another fledgling writer, Una Mannion. At first, Kennedy refused.

“I probably wasn’t in great order in my head at the time,” Kennedy said. “My husband and I had a restaurant that had been very slowly and kind of agonizingly going down the tubes for seven years. I was on antidepressants. I used to see my kids off to school and get back into bed and watch daytime television.”

When Kennedy eventually relented, joining the writing group, something seemed to click into place. “I discovered that my voice on the page is more like the voice in my head,” she said. “I just think I feel more like myself when I’m writing.”

Mannion, who has known Kennedy for over 30 years, is impressed by her attention to detail, especially in “Trespasses.”

“You don’t really get a character’s interiority telling you how they feel,” she said, “but there’s this incredible emotional weight just carried in gesture or objects around them.”

Mannion also remembers Kennedy telling her that once she wrote her first story, she did not want to do anything else.

Within eight months of joining the writing group, Kennedy had weaned herself off antidepressants. “My husband says that ever since then I’ve been holding my laptop and trying to run away from him and the kids to write,” she said.

PHOTO: Louise Kennedy in Sligo, Ireland. Her family moved to Ireland to escape violence in Northern Ireland, including bombing attempts at her grandfather’s pub. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLIUS GRACE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page C5.

**Load-Date:** October 31, 2022

**End of Document**



[***In County Mayo and Beyond, Characters on the Edge; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65BH-S1X1-DXY4-X1GV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 30, 2022 Saturday 15:04 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 724 words

**Byline:** Stuart Dybek

**Highlight:** Set mostly in western Ireland, Colin Barrett’s second collection is shot through with dark humor.

**Body**

Set mostly in western Ireland, Colin Barrett’s second collection is shot through with dark humor.

HOMESICKNESS: Stories, by Colin Barrett

Maybe you’ve had a similar encounter, up late quietly reading, when before you know it you were swept up into a story whose energy kept building by way of comic invention, your laughter disrupting the night. It’s an experience worth pursuing, especially in trying times.

Trying times are the context for “The Alps,” the story in question, from Colin Barrett’s second book, “Homesickness.” Its comedy stands in balance to the collection’s more tragic tenor. The setting isn’t Switzerland, but County Mayo, Ireland, at the Swinford Gaels football club. The Alps is the local moniker for three brothers: “shortish men with massive arses and brutally capable forearms. They breathed coltishly through their noses and rolled their shoulders with a circumspect flourish whenever women crossed their paths. They billed themselves as tradesmen, though between them had never acquired a qualification in any particular trade.” Their massiveness will figure in the story’s wonderfully unpredictable ending.

The eight stories in “Homesickness” are Barrett’s follow-up to “[*Young Skins*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/13/books/in-colin-barretts-young-skins-a-small-irish-towns-aimless-denizens.html)” (2014), a debut that garnered major prizes including the Frank O’Connor International Short Story Award and the Guardian First Book Award. “Homesickness” expands his range, and though the first took place in the fictional Irish town of Glanbeigh, the books share a fabric shot through with dark humor, pitch-perfect dialogue and a signature freshness that makes life palpable on the page. The language counterpoints the sometimes inarticulate desperation of the ***working-class*** characters, and that dissonance lends an emotional complexity to their stories. The painterly descriptions conflate character and place, as in “Anhedonia, Here I Come,” which follows Bobby Tallis, a poète maudit on a six-mile walk on the weird side that will lead to a striking conclusion. “Bobby was certain he was the only resident under the age of 60” in his building, whose “corridors — the sour-cream walls lit by low-wattage sconces downy with dust; the furred, blue, perpetually damp carpeting in which shoe-print impressions dolefully lingered — evoked for Bobby a budget version of the afterlife.”

Irish writers have excelled at proving the paradox that the local yields the universal. The title of Barrett’s book alludes to that lineage, and specifically to “Home Sickness,” the classic story by George Moore from the early 20th century, in which an Irish American immigrant returns to Ireland to regain his health, but finds he’s lost his connection to village life, and goes back to New York.

In Barrett’s stories, homesickness mostly afflicts those who’ve stayed home, but no longer fit. Their lives orbit physical and mental illness, alienation, substance abuse, wounds, suicide and bad luck that exceeds society’s margin for error. In “The Ways,” three orphaned siblings struggle to stay a family after cancer has taken “the folks.” Home has become an edge, and life on the edge is the theme and variation, the underlying design that gives this book its power. Each story exerts the tension of social connections being tested. Sometimes, depending on who is measuring, the connections appear to hold as they do in the memorable opening story, “A Shooting in Rathreedane.” In other stories, despite good intentions and the intimate bonds of the past, the resilient cannot sustain the vulnerable.

As a writer, Barrett doesn’t legislate from the top down. His unruly characters surge up with their vitality and their mystery intact. Their stories aren’t shaped by familiar resolutions — no realizations, morals or epiphanies. The absence of a conventional resolution does risk leaving an otherwise charming story like “The Silver Coast” with the rambling feel of a slice of life. But in the majority of the stories in this book, to reinvent an ending is to reinvent how a story is told, and overall, “Homesickness” is graced with an original, lingering beauty.

HOMESICKNESS: Stories, by Colin Barrett | 213 pp. | Grove Press | $27

Stuart Dybek is the author, most recently, of “Paper Lantern: Love Stories.”

Stuart Dybek needs a bio. tkt tk tkt tkt kt tkt kt kt tkt kt tkt kt kt kt tk tkt kt kt kt

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ben Thompson FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 13, 2022

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[***Gabriel Byrne Reflects on the End of His Broadway Show, and Tells T a Joke***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:670N-J8Y1-DXY4-X47D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 2, 2022 Friday 12:38 EST

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**Section:** T-MAGAZINE

**Length:** 1198 words

**Byline:** Sarah Bahr

**Highlight:** ‘Walking With Ghosts,’ which closed Nov. 20, allowed the Irish actor to showcase his passion for the humor of everyday life.

**Body**

‘Walking With Ghosts,’ which closed Nov. 20, allowed the Irish actor to showcase his passion for the humor of everyday life.

Gabriel Byrne is well aware he is not a Disney franchise. “I’m just one person, writing about myself,” said Byrne, 72, in a video interview on a recent morning before one of the final performances of his autobiographical one-man Broadway show, “Walking With Ghosts,” which closed more than a month early on Nov. 20. “I understand the reality of the marketplace and at the same time feel profoundly grateful I got here at all.”

Originally slated to run through the end of December at the Music Box Theater, the show closed after just 25 performances and eight previews amid — to put it kindly — ticket sales that were a few zeros away from “Hamilton” or “Lion King” territory. But Byrne, who with his tousled gray hair, serious face and bright blue eyes behind tortoiseshell glasses, cuts a grandfatherly figure — if the grandfather in question were a famous Irish actor with a Golden Globe and a tendency to quote James Joyce — is a good sport about his early eviction notice. “How long a thing lasts isn’t a reflection of its essential worth,” he said. “A relationship that lasts 18 months can contain more within it than relationships that last 10 or 15 years.”

The show, which is based on Byrne’s 2020 memoir of the same name, certainly had its fans, particularly when he performed it to sold-out crowds in Ireland, where he was born and spent the first 11 years of his life, and then in London’s West End earlier this year. While the Broadway run received mixed reviews, the New York Times critic Alexis Soloski [*praised Byrne’s charisma and stage presence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/27/theater/walking-with-ghosts-review.html), calling him “compulsively watchable.” “Who wouldn’t want to spend a clinical hour with this man?” she wrote. “Or two, plus intermission.”

Byrne, who last appeared on Broadway in 2016 in a revival of Eugene O’Neill’s 1956 play “Long Day’s Journey Into Night,” is best known for his roles in the HBO show “In Treatment” and the 1995 film “The Usual Suspects.” Even after the latter became a sleeper hit, [*opening a new chapter in his career as a leading man*](https://www.nytimes.com/1995/09/24/movies/from-cult-hero-to-renaissance-man.html) — during which he starred in “Stigmata” (1999) and “End of Days” (1999) — he maintained the workmanlike ethos of his journeyman days, gaining a reputation as a fiercely private person reluctant to claim the spotlight.

So it was perhaps surprising that he chose to publish a second memoir. (His first, “Pictures in my Head,” was published in 1994 and covered his childhood in Ireland and the start of his acting career.) The second book, which a Washington Post reviewer wrote “[*dazzles with unflinching honesty*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/books/gabriel-byrnes-walking-with-ghosts-is-a-revelation-in-unexpected-ways/2021/01/11/8519c078-4eb0-11eb-b96e-0e54447b23a1_story.html),” similarly focuses on Byrne’s upbringing in a ***working-class*** family on the rural outskirts of Dublin and his subsequent journey to Hollywood. But it also travels to darker places, like the period in the early 1960s when the 11-year-old Byrne was sexually abused by a priest at the Catholic seminary school he attended in England.

The biggest challenge in adapting his latest memoir for the stage, he said, was trimming some of its reflective aspects to make space for moments that would be more compelling for a live audience. “If it doesn’t work dramatically — if it’s not propulsive, emotional — you get rid of it,” he said. “You can’t put big lumps of prose onstage.” He opted to perform the play on a nearly bare stage, wearing the same blue shirt, blue vest, blue blazer, gray slacks and black boots throughout and striding from one end to the other between scenes as the house went dark to indicate changes in time and location. “The anti-razzle dazzle allows you to concentrate on what’s being said,” he said.

Growing up, Byrne wanted to be a priest. But after he was sexually abused, he renounced his faith, cycling through jobs as a dishwasher, a plumber and a toilet attendant before joining an amateur acting troupe in Dublin, where he rediscovered his boyhood love of theater.

That led to his TV debut in 1978 in the soap opera “The Riordans,” then to his film debut in the 1981 retelling of the King Arthur legend “Excalibur,” and finally to Hollywood stardom, which brought him into the same circles as luminaries like Richard Burton and Vanessa Redgrave. But that’s not the part of his life he chose to highlight in either of his memoirs or his stage play, which essentially ignores the latter part of his life and acting career. “What you do is only a very small part of who you are,” he said. “Finding your identity through your work is a limited way of knowing yourself.”

Instead, he said, he wanted to emphasize experiences people could relate to, themes that felt universal — for instance, that of searching for a sense of rootedness as an immigrant living away from his homeland (he moved to New York in the mid-1980s to be with his then partner, the actor Ellen Barkin; they divorced in 1999 but he remained in the States). “Every immigrant has a yearning to be at home,” he said. “But you can never be at home anywhere once you leave. You trade one place for another, but you don’t really belong in either.”

Of course, he said, dredging up his memories of abuse or recounting the death of a boyhood friend every night is hardly enjoyable. But it is a willingness to explore those uncomfortable places, he said, that gives the show its power. “By going there, you’re opening the door for somebody else in the audience to maybe go there, too,” he explained.

That is not to say there weren’t lighthearted moments. Among the dozens of characters from his past that Byrne embodies are friends, teachers, religious figures, family members and even the various actors in the amateur theater troupe he joined (Soloski wrote that the show “allows him to show a playful side and a gift, neglected in Hollywood, for physical comedy”). “You can’t just get up there and start telling serious stories,” Byrne said. “You have to leaven it with a spoonful of sugar.”

Though he is finished with “Walking With Ghosts” — for now — he suggested that a return to the blue blazer and black boots may not be far off. He’s had offers to do the show in other cities — he has his eye on Boston, Chicago and San Francisco, he said — and international plans are in the works. “The producers want it to go to Australia and Canada,” said Byrne, who lives in Rockport, Maine, with his wife, Hannah Beth King, a documentary filmmaker, and their young daughter. (He has two adult children with Barkin.) “We’ll see. I don’t think Sunday night is the end of it.”

In the meantime, he’s working on a new book, his first novel, which will explore themes of immigration and exile. He’s also looking forward to catching up on the movies he hasn’t had time to see and popping in and out of Broadway theaters — now as an audience member. (On his list: The recent revival of “Death of a Salesman.”) “I’ve been living in the world of books and the streets of New York, which is a continuous novel,” he said. “You never stop turning the pages.”

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES (GABRIEL BYRNE); RON GALELLA, VIA GETTY IMAGES (PHOTOGRAPH OF THE DESIGNER HALSTON, SECOND FROM LEFT, AND THE ACTOR PAT AST, CENTER)) This article appeared in print on page ST3.

**Load-Date:** January 1, 2023

**End of Document**



[***As Thousands Fall Behind on Rent, Public Housing Faces ‘Disaster’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67CN-TVW1-JBG3-62WY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 23, 2023 Monday 07:51 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1563 words

**Byline:** Mihir Zaveri

**Highlight:** The New York City Housing Authority collected just 65 percent of the rent it charged in the 12 months leading up to December, the lowest percentage in the agency’s history.

**Body**

The New York City Housing Authority collected just 65 percent of the rent it charged in the 12 months leading up to December, the lowest percentage in the agency’s history.

It has been years since public housing in New York City has received enough money from the government to deal with the aging buildings, spotty heating systems, malfunctioning elevators, rats and more that have made it an emblem of neglect.

Now, plummeting rent payments from residents threaten to escalate the crisis in the nation’s oldest, largest public housing system.

More than 1,600 public housing agencies nationwide — from those in [*Richmond, Va.*](https://richmond.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/6-out-of-10-richmond-public-housing-tenants-behind-with-rent/article_9edfdd94-32a1-53c7-a160-9984cff133cd.html), to San Francisco — have faced a “significant decrease” in collections since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as tenants lost work or spent more on cleaning supplies and other safety measures. When evictions were put on hold, people could miss payments without fear of losing their homes. Aid to help cover the mountain of back rent was sometimes confusing to access or left people in public housing out entirely, leaving local agencies to deal with the consequences.

But nowhere has the phenomenon been as dire as in New York. The New York City Housing Authority collected just 65 percent of the rent it charged in the 12 months leading up to December, the lowest percentage in the agency’s nearly 100-year history and an alarming slide from the annual prepandemic numbers of 90 percent or higher.

“It’s really just a recipe for disaster,” Lisa Bova-Hiatt, who took over as CEO of NYCHA on an interim basis in September, said in an interview.

She added, “Without money, we can’t do anything else. We can’t fund the much needed repairs. We can’t handle emergencies.”

The rent problems are a fresh setback for an institution that, despite its many troubles, is vital to New York, providing some of the few truly affordable homes in one of the nation’s most expensive cities. NYCHA’s more than 270 developments are home to some 340,000 people.

But the shortfall, amounting to almost half a billion dollars, threatens to impede the agency’s ability to repair faulty elevators and leaky roofs, run day-to-day operations and do the huge amount of construction work required to address lead, mold and other dismal conditions in thousands of apartments. That may prompt exasperated residents to withhold rent.

The agency is already feeling the toll. This year, it cut dozens of contracts for legal, financial and administrative work and eliminated about 150 vacant positions. NYCHA has also been pulling from its financial reserves, which are so low that they cannot even cover one month’s worth of expenses.

“I am very, very alarmed about the situation NYCHA is in financially,” said Tim Kaiser, the executive director of the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association, a Washington-based group that works on behalf of about 1,900 housing agencies and has raised the alarm with the federal government about the rent issues.

New York’s public housing system was once [*heralded as a progressive triumph*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/06/25/nyregion/new-york-city-public-housing-history.html), providing solid, stable homes for ***working-class*** people. But dwindling funds, scandal and mismanagement have made it the focus of one of the city’s most urgent crises and a high-profile example of the effects of the federal government’s retreat from housing. NYCHA estimates it needs a staggering $40 billion to return its developments to decent condition.

A monitor, appointed as part of a 2019 agreement with the federal government to push NYCHA to address its problems, delivered a mixed verdict on the agency’s progress. The monitor said, for instance, that 108 elevators needed to be replaced by the end of 2022. NYCHA said it could replace eight.

Mayor Eric Adams is pushing a contentious plan to place the city’s housing developments [*under private management*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/05/arts/design/bronx-public-housing.html), in New York’s version of a program developed by the Obama administration to decrease reliance on inconsistent government funding. The city said earlier this month that between 2015 and the end of last year, it had either completed or started renovations on some 36,000 apartments under the plan.

Another plan calls for some developments to be [*transferred over to a new public benefit corporation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/nyregion/nycha-housing-bill.html), which officials predict could generate more than $5 billion to improve the agency’s housing.

But without adequate rent collection, typically totaling about $1 billion every year before the pandemic, NYCHA may not be able to cover salaries, upfront construction costs and other day-to-day operations needed to carry out the more ambitious solutions.

Making matters worse, NYCHA’s costs appear to be ballooning. The agency spent about $267 million in 2019 to meet the provisions of the agreement with the federal government, according to Annika Lescott-Martinez, NYCHA’s chief financial officer. Last year, it spent $392 million, as its obligations under the agreement ramped up.

“We’re receiving less revenue, but spending more at the very same time,” she said.

According to the Citizens Budget Commission, a nonprofit fiscal watchdog, NYCHA’s operating costs per unit [*have grown about 50 percent*](https://cbcny.org/advocacy/testimony-nycha-and-new-york-citys-fiscal-year-2023-preliminary-budget) since 2013 and exceed those of other types of affordable housing. The federal agreement and the increasing costs of benefits and overtime are the major reasons for the increase, said Sean Campion, the commission’s director of housing and economic development studies.

Rent is generally capped at 30 percent of a resident’s income and adjusted if a household’s income goes up or down. From 2019 through 2021, the agency received more than 500,000 requests for rent adjustments.

Even with many adjustments made, the total sum of rent owed has continued to increase.

“Some folks got misinformed that they didn’t have to pay; there would be emergency funding available and they wouldn’t have to pay,” Mr. Kaiser said. “I think in other instances, the eviction moratorium kind of served as a protection in the minds of some, that they would not be evicted, and therefore they would not pay their rent.”

One of the main problems lies in how New York legislators designed the state’s now-depleted pandemic rent relief program. Public housing tenants were given the lowest priority of those eligible for assistance because legislators figured they had access to other safety nets.

NYCHA residents still applied for at least $130 million worth of aid — but they received none. Leaders in the State Legislature and Gov. Kathy Hochul have not made any commitments to provide more funds, and a replenishment of the federal pot is unlikely now that Republicans, who have frequently [*criticized NYCHA*](https://www.politico.com/news/2021/11/10/schumer-billions-new-york-public-housing-520519), control the House of Representatives.

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Ms. Rollins still owes about $9,000. She applied for rent relief in early 2021, but was told there would be no money coming.

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Agency officials said it was unlikely that filing court cases would have made a huge dent in addressing unpaid rent. They said they were working on better ways to connect residents to aid programs.

In some cases, there are disputes about how much rent is actually owed. Last year, NYCHA paid $190,000 as part of a settlement with a group of residents who accused the agency of miscalculating rents.

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NYCHA, however, said that it had already applied rent abatements and credits totaling almost $9,500, and that there were no other abatements that had been agreed to. The agency said that it had been prevented from entering the apartment to make repairs.

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This article appeared in print on page A13.

**Load-Date:** January 23, 2023

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[***As Thousands Fall Behind on Rent, New York Public Housing Faces Crisis***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67CN-SMH1-DXY4-X205-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 23, 2023 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 13

**Length:** 1571 words

**Byline:** By Mihir Zaveri

**Body**

The New York City Housing Authority collected just 65 percent of the rent it charged in the 12 months leading up to December, the lowest percentage in the agency's history.

It has been years since public housing in New York City has received enough money from the government to deal with the aging buildings, spotty heating systems, malfunctioning elevators, rats and more that have made it an emblem of neglect.

Now, plummeting rent payments from residents threaten to escalate the crisis in the nation's oldest, largest public housing system.

More than 1,600 public housing agencies nationwide -- from those in Richmond, Va., to San Francisco -- have faced a ''significant decrease'' in collections since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as tenants lost work or spent more on cleaning supplies and other safety measures. When evictions were put on hold, people could miss payments without fear of losing their homes. Aid to help cover the mountain of back rent was sometimes confusing to access or left people in public housing out entirely, leaving local agencies to deal with the consequences.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/22/nyregion/rent-crisis-public-housing.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/22/nyregion/rent-crisis-public-housing.html)

**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page A13.

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[***What We Did the Last Time We Broke America; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63YJ-RCF1-JBG3-62DG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 29, 2021 Friday 10:27 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1994 words

**Byline:** Jon Grinspan

**Highlight:** Our current situation isn’t hopeless.

**Body**

What happened to normal politics? I’ve spent the past five years commuting between two centuries, trying to find out.

As a curator of political history at the Smithsonian, I have attended protests and primaries, talked politics at Bernie Sanders rallies and with armed Ohio militiamen. Again and again, 21st-century Americans wonder at a democracy that looks nothing like the one they grew up with.

I’ve asked the 19th century the same question. Heading into the Smithsonian’s secure collections, past recently collected riot shields and tiki torches, I’ve dug into the evidence of a similar crisis in the late 1800s. Ballots from stolen elections. Paramilitary uniforms from midnight rallies. Diaries and letters, stored elsewhere, of senators and saloonkeepers and seamstresses, all asking: Is democracy a failure?

These artifacts suggest that we’re not posing the right question today. If we want to understand what happened to 20th-century politics, we need to stop considering it standard. We need to look deeper into our past and ask how we got normal politics to begin with.

The answer is that we had to fight for them. From the 1860s through 1900, America was embroiled in a generation-long, culturewide war over democracy, fought through the loudest, roughest, closest elections in our history. An age of acrimony when engaged, enraged participation came to seem less like a “perversion of traditional American institutions,” as one memoirist observed, and more like “their normal operation.”

The partisan combat of that era politicized race, class and religion but often came down to a fundamental debate about behavior. How should Americans participate in their democracy? What was out of bounds? Were fraud, violence and voter suppression the result of bad actors, or were there certain dangerous tendencies inherent in the very idea of self-government? Was reform even possible?

Ultimately, Americans decided to simmer down. After 1900, a movement of well-to-do reformers invented a style of politics, a Great Quieting aiming for what The Los Angeles Times called “more thinking and less shouting.” But “less shouting” also meant less turnout, less participation, less of a voice for working people. “Normal” politics was invented to calm our democracy the last time it broke.

Over a century of relative peace, politically speaking, this model came to seem standard, but our embattled norms are really the cease-fire terms of a forgotten war.

This period from the Civil War to World War I is often quickly explained with history textbook abstractions like “industrialization,” “urbanization” and “immigration,” but those big social forces had intimate effects on Americans. Living in a time of incredible disruption, instability and inequality pushed unsteady citizens into partisan combat. Nervous people make nasty politics, and the churn of Gilded Age life left millions feeling cut loose and unprotected. During this era, Americans saw weaker family ties, had fewer communal institutions and spent more time alone. Though we associate the Gilded Age with packed factories and tenements, loneliness and isolation were driving social and political forces in this shaken nation. Americans “had to cling to something,” observed the writer Walter Weyl, and in the absence of their old folk customs or local institutions, “the temptation to cling to party became ruthless.”

The parties were willing to oblige. The only thing Gilded Age life seemed to want from struggling Americans was their hard labor. But the Democratic and Republican Parties wanted their voices at rallies, their boots on the cobblestones, their stomachs at barbecues, their fists at riots and their votes on Election Day. Richard Croker, a Tammany Hall boss — once jailed for an Election Day stabbing — called his machine America’s “great digestive apparatus,” capable of converting lonely immigrants into active citizens.

Likewise, people needed the parties. Some had concrete goals, like the Black politician and Philadelphia barber Isaiah C. Wears, who explained that he did not love the Republican Party — it was merely the most useful tool in his community, the “knife which has the sharpest edge and does my cutting.” Others needed something more emotional. Many sought the community that came from marching together or sharing the party’s lager or guffawing at the same political cartoons. And because participation was so social and so saturating, even the women, young people and minorities denied the right to vote could still feel palpably engaged without ever casting a ballot.

But their efforts resolved little. Voter turnouts climbed higher than in any other period in American history, and the results were closer than ever, too, but neither party won lasting mandates or addressed systemic problems. Every few years, some bold new movement pointed to the issues Americans were not addressing — inequality, immigration, white supremacy, monopoly — only to be laughed off as cranks by swelling multitudes that preferred parties that, as one Tammany operative said, did not “trouble them with political arguments.”

Even those on the front lines of the era’s violent politics wondered what it was all for. One African American reverend pointedly asked Black Republicans fighting to hold on to voting rights, “With all your speaking, organizing, parading in the streets, ballyhooing, voting and sometimes fighting, what do you get?”

The more demands Americans put on their democracy, the less they got. By centering politics on what The Atlantic Monthly called “the theater, the opera, the baseball game, the intellectual gymnasium, almost the church of the people,” by making it the locus for a culture war, a race war and a class war, by asking it to provide public entertainment and small talk and family bonding, progress became impossible. Little changed because so many were participating, not in spite of that.

“Government by party is not a means of settling things,” as the muckraker Henry Demarest Lloyd said. “It is the best of devices for keeping them unsettled.”

Over the years, politics alienated widening circles. On the right, America’s old aristocrats — like the revered Boston historian Francis Parkman — hissed that the very idea of majority rule was a scheme to steal power from “superior to inferior types of men.” On the left, populists and socialists denounced political machines that had hoodwinked ***working-class*** voters. These populations would never agree on what should come next but had a consensus on what had to end.

After 1890 or so, a new alliance began working toward the secret cause of making politics so dry and quiet that fewer of those “inferior types” wanted to participate, often explicitly viewing mass turnout as harmful. Many cities, scarred by the rising labor movement, banned public rallies without permits, hoping to shove public political expressions back into “the private home,” as the Republican National Convention chairman put it. They closed saloons on Election Day, shuttering those key ***working-class*** political hubs. And they replaced public ballot boxes with private voting booths, turning polling places from vibrant, violent gatherings into a confessional box.

Though each change felt small, taken together, they amounted to a revolution in political labor. Campaign work once done in the streets by many ordinary volunteers was now done in private by a few paid professionals.

What came next was predictable. Voter turnout crashed by nearly a third in presidential elections from the 1890s through the 1920s, falling from roughly 80 percent to under 50 percent. Voting decreased most among ***working-class***, young, immigrant and Black citizens (even in Northern states where African Americans maintained the ability to vote). For the first time, wealth and education correlated with turnout. To this day, class remains the largest determiner of participation, above race or age.

There were some benefits to these quieter elections. Political violence became rare and shocking. Between 1859 and 1905, one congressman was murdered every seven years, and three presidents were killed in just 36 years. In the subsequent century, the nation suffered one presidential assassination and the murder of a congressman every 25 years. In this cooler political environment, lawmakers were finally able to pass long-delayed Progressive reforms. Women’s suffrage, federal protections for workers, direct elections of senators, progressive income taxes and regulations on industry, transportation, food and drugs all finally passed — after decades of failure — once electoral politics quieted. American lives improved more in this period than in any other, and yet it all coincided with a crash in participation.

But this early-20th-century democracy was also more distant from ordinary life. These are the years when it became impolite to talk politics at the dinner table, when growing numbers struggled to distinguish between the parties, when incumbent politicians began to hold on to office for decades. The number of seats in the House of Representatives, which had always expanded with the population, permanently froze in 1911 at 435, even though our population has tripled since then.

And this is the same ugly era when Southern states began an onslaught on the million Black voters who participated in many elections during Reconstruction. States from Mississippi to Virginia passed repressive new constitutions between 1890 and 1910, essentially killing democratic participation in much of the South. Though that was far more extreme, all these changes grew from a new climate of restraint that quieted politics nationwide in the new century.

Political objects can tell the story of this change. From 1860 to 1900, parties held torch-lit midnight marches to rally the faithful. In 1900, after a sweltering Republican convention in Philadelphia where participants wore straw hats, the jaunty boater became the new icon of a cooler approach to politics. A glance at political cartoons from 1920 or 1960 or even 2000 finds caricatures still wearing boaters — a style far removed from the torch-lit democracy of the 1800s.

The Smithsonian has steel drawers full of such boaters (made from straw, plastic and Wisconsin cheesehead foam). My colleagues and I have spent the past few years shuttling between these collections and contemporary political events, trying to identify objects that might embody the change we’ve witnessed in our democracy, that might go behind museum glass in a century to help explain 2016 or 2021. And wondering what these eras might say to each other. When it comes to electoral politics, our problems are different from those Americans dealt with 150 years ago, but the 19th century does have a surprisingly hopeful takeaway to offer the 21st.

We’re not the first generation to worry about the death of our democracy. Grappling with this demanding system of government is, well, normal. It’s partly because we’re following the unusually calmed 20th century that we don’t feel up to the task today. Our deep history shows that reform is possible, that previous generations identified flaws in their politics and made deliberate changes to correct them. We’re not just helplessly hurtling toward inevitable civil war; we can be actors in this story. The first step is acknowledging the dangers inherent in democracy. To move forward, we should look backward and see that we’re struggling not with a collapse but with a relapse.

[*Jon Grinspan*](https://americanhistory.si.edu/profile/1214), a curator of political history at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, is the author of “[*The Age of Acrimony*](https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/age-of-acrimony-9781635574623/): How Americans Fought to Fix Their Democracy, 1865-1915.”

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[***These 8 Democrats Want to Be Mayor of New York City. We Have Questions.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62VK-WPN1-DXY4-X30N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 6, 2021 Sunday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; New York

**Length:** 372 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Katie Glueck, Umi Syam, Eden Weingart, Sarah Kerr and Noah Throop

**Body**

We asked leading candidates for mayor questions about everything from police reform and climate change to their favorite bagel order and workout routine.

Brooklyn borough president; former New York City Police Department officer

Mr. Adams is running on a platform to improve public safety. He is a sharp critic of police brutality, but does not support the ''defund the police'' movement.

Former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio; former MSNBC analyst

Ms. Wiley is running as a progressive and focusing on criminal justice issues. She has distanced herself from her former boss, Mr. de Blasio. She wants to cut the Police Department budget and has proposed a ''New Deal'' plan to create 100,000 jobs.

Former presidential candidate; former nonprofit executive

Mr. Yang has proposed some bold, if unorthodox, ideas. He has never worked in New York City government and is running as a political outsider. His signature plan is to give about $2,000 per year to the city's poorest residents.

Former New York City sanitation commissioner

Ms. Garcia is running as an experienced manager who can lead the city during a crisis. She speaks often of her experiences growing up in a diverse family after she was adopted as a baby.

City comptroller; former Manhattan borough president

Mr. Stringer is a government veteran running as a left-leaning candidate with extensive management experience. He has been accused of making unwanted sexual advances by an unpaid worker on a 2001 campaign, allegations he has strongly denied.

Former vice chairman at Citigroup

Mr. McGuire has support from business leaders and Gwen Carr, the mother of Eric Garner. He often mentions his ***working-class*** roots in Dayton, Ohio, where he was raised by a single mother.

Former nonprofit executive

Ms. Morales has called for providing basic income relief, funding social services by cutting the police budget and desegregating public schools. She has emphasized her ''lived experience'' as a native New Yorker.

Former federal housing secretary; former White House budget director

Mr. Donovan is focusing on his experience in government of managing budgets and expanding affordable housing. He speaks often about his time working in the Obama administration.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/nyregion/nyc-mayor-candidates-video.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/nyregion/nyc-mayor-candidates-video.html)

**Load-Date:** June 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Biden, Demoting Iowa and Prizing Diversity, Wants S.C. as First Primary***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:670J-8MG1-DXY4-X336-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 1, 2022 Thursday 09:18 EST

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**Byline:** Katie Glueck and Reid J. Epstein

**Highlight:** Michigan would become the fifth primary. The plan came as the president asked that “voters of color have a voice in choosing our nominee much earlier in the process.”

**Body**

Michigan would become the fifth primary. The plan came as the president asked that “voters of color have a voice in choosing our nominee much earlier in the process.”

WASHINGTON — President Biden and the Democratic National Committee are moving to radically reorder the party’s presidential process by making South Carolina the first primary state in 2024, followed in order by Nevada and New Hampshire, Georgia and then Michigan.

The plan, announced by party officials at a dinner Thursday in Washington, signals the end of Iowa’s long tenure as the Democrats’ first nominating contest, and it represents an effort to elevate the diverse, ***working-class*** constituencies that powered Mr. Biden’s primary victory in 2020.

The move would also be a reward for South Carolina, the state that saved Mr. Biden’s candidacy two years ago after he came in [*fourth in Iowa*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/04/us/elections/results-iowa-caucus.html) and [*fifth in New Hampshire*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/11/us/elections/results-new-hampshire-primary-election.html), both of which are smaller and have a higher percentage of white voters.

“We must ensure that voters of color have a voice in choosing our nominee much earlier in the process and throughout the entire early window,” Mr. Biden wrote in a letter Thursday to members of the D.N.C.’s Rules and Bylaws Committee, a number of whom were stunned by the calendar proposals.

“Black voters in particular have been the backbone of the Democratic Party but have been pushed to the back of the early primary process,” he said. “We rely on these voters in elections but have not recognized their importance in our nominating calendar. It is time to stop taking these voters for granted, and time to give them a louder and earlier voice in the process.”

The letter went on to note bluntly, “Our party should no longer allow caucuses as part of our nominating process.” Iowa is a caucus state and does not hold a primary.

Iowa is still expected to remain the leadoff contest for Republicans, who have agreed to maintain the usual early-state order of Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Nevada.

Both Iowa and New Hampshire, whose famed diners and town commons are routinely overrun by candidates leading up to their nominating contests, have long promoted themselves as providing demanding tests of a candidate’s authenticity, preparedness and ability to connect in small gatherings with highly discerning voters.

The new Democratic plan, by elevating several larger states, could reduce those opportunities and lead candidates instead to emphasize expensive advertising campaigns aimed at the broadest possible audiences.

“Small rural states like Iowa must have a voice in our presidential nominating process,” said Ross Wilburn, the chairman of the Iowa Democratic Party. “Democrats cannot forget about entire groups of voters in the heart of the Midwest without doing significant damage to the party for a generation.”

The proposal, [*reported first*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/12/01/2024-primaries-biden-democrats/?utm_source=twitter&amp;utm_medium=social&amp;utm_campaign=wp_politics&amp;tid=sm_tw_pol) by The Washington Post, is subject to approval by the party’s Rules and Bylaws Committee and then by the full D.N.C. early next year, and there may be technical and legal considerations for some of the states, including Republican-controlled Georgia. Some of those issues may be matters of discussion as the Rules Committee meets in Washington on Friday and Saturday.

The plan was met with furious pushback from New Hampshire, long accustomed to hosting the first primary as a [*matter of state law*](https://constitutioncenter.org/blog/why-iowa-and-new-hampshire-go-first). Statements from several officials suggested a coming clash with the D.N.C., raising questions about how the party will enforce its final order should states try to jump the line.

“I strongly oppose the president’s deeply misguided proposal, but make no mistake, New Hampshire’s law is clear, and our primary will continue to be First in the Nation,” Senator Maggie Hassan, Democrat of New Hampshire, said in a statement.

Ray Buckley, the chairman of the New Hampshire Democratic Party, declared that “we will be holding our primary first.”

And in a joint statement, Senators Catherine Cortez Masto and Jacky Rosen of Nevada raised “serious concerns” about the proposed order, taking implicit swipes at South Carolina’s overall conservative tilt as they argued that the kickoff contest “should be held in a competitive, pro-labor state that supports voting access and reflects all of America’s diversity.”

Nevada legislative leaders said in a statement that “our new presidential primary will be held on Feb. 6 in 2024 and will continue to be held on the first Tuesday in February in future election cycles.”

But the president’s preferences will carry enormous weight with the D.N.C., a group that often functions as the White House political arm. Mr. Biden urged the Rules and Bylaws Committee to review the calendar every four years “to ensure that it continues to reflect the values and diversity of our party and our country.”

After Iowa’s disastrous 2020 Democratic caucuses, in which the state [*struggled for days to deliver results*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/04/us/politics/iowa-democratic-caucus-explained.html), the D.N.C. embarked on a protracted effort to reassess how the party picks its presidential candidates. It [*invited states to apply*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/13/us/politics/democrats-presidential-primary-calendar.html) to host the kickoff primaries amid concerns that Iowa, and to some extent New Hampshire, did not reflect the Democratic Party’s diversity. The initiative led to an intense [*public and private lobbying effort*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/24/us/politics/democratic-primaries-early-states.html) involving high-ranking party and elected officials up and down the ballot.

The current leadoff states are Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and South Carolina, in that order, chosen to represent the four major regions of the country: the Midwest, Northeast, West and South.

Discussions throughout the process have involved several core questions: whether to replace Iowa, and if so, with either Michigan or Minnesota; the order of the early states, as Nevada sought to displace New Hampshire in the first primary; and whether a fifth state should be added to the early cluster.

Earlier this year, the committee [*adopted a framework*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/13/us/politics/democrats-presidential-primary-calendar.html) that emphasized racial, ethnic, geographic and economic diversity and labor representation; raised questions about feasibility; and stressed the importance of general election competitiveness.

In the battle for the Midwest, some D.N.C. members worried — and [*Minnesota Democrats have argued*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/11/30/minnesota-democrats-michigan-presidential-primary-00071551) — that having a large and expensive state like Michigan host a primary early in the nominating process could lead well-funded candidates to essentially camp out there and ignore the other states on the calendar.

That concern is less urgent, though, if Mr. Biden seeks re-election and avoids a contested nomination. He has said that he [*intends*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/13/us/politics/biden-2024-election.html) to run but plans to discuss the race with his family over the holidays and could announce a decision early next year.

Some Democrats have [*long been intrigued*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/27/us/politics/biden-2024-democrats-trump.html) by the idea of promoting Michigan, a critical general election state that is home to diverse voter constituencies and a major labor presence. The [*Democratic sweep*](https://www.mlive.com/politics/2022/11/michigan-sees-democratic-domination-after-party-sweeps-state-legislative-and-federal-contests.html) there in this year’s midterm elections helped bolster that idea.

Earlier this week, the Michigan State Senate [*voted to move*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/politics/michigan/2022/11/29/state-senate-votes-to-hold-michigans-2024-presidential-primary-earlier/69686948007/) the primary from the second Tuesday in March to the second Tuesday in February.

“This president understands that any road to the White House goes through the heartland,” said Representative Debbie Dingell, a Michigan Democrat who was heavily involved in pushing her state’s bid, including by speaking with the White House. But she acknowledged that there were still crucial steps in the process.

“People are going to put up a fight,” she said.

Lisa Lerer, Maggie Astor, Michael D. Shear and Blake Hounshell contributed reporting.

Lisa Lerer, Maggie Astor, Michael D. Shear and Blake Hounshell contributed reporting.

This article appeared in print on page A13.

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[***Remote Workers Push Limits of Mexico City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:676B-H561-DXY4-X12B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 29, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1451 words

**Byline:** By David Shortell and Alejandro Cegarra

**Body**

MEXICO CITY -- Karina Franco's ornate Art Deco building in the historic center of Mexico City has long been the heart of a downtown lifestyle, housing families of artists and activists and supporting an ecosystem of street vendors.

But as the pandemic upended office norms, a wave of remote workers from around the world descended on Mexico City, the country's capital. The flow of foreigners has yet to slow down, causing housing costs to rise, displacing residents and upending the fabric of neighborhoods.

In August, Ms. Franco and the other tenants in her building were told by their landlord that their leases would not be renewed. Some units soon appeared on Airbnb -- at rates more than four times the monthly rent -- and new neighbors, mostly speaking English, now fill the hallways.

''It was very shocking at first,'' said Ms. Franco, 47, a migrant rights worker who found a new apartment in a different part of the city. ''Then I felt angry.''

Since the pandemic, Mexico City has become a leading global hub for foreigners unshackled from their offices by work-from-home policies and drawn to the kind of comfort a salary paid in dollars or euros can afford.

Between January and October, more than 9,500 permits were issued to Americans allowing them to temporarily reside in Mexico City, according to federal immigration statistics, nearly double the 5,400 issued in the same period in 2019. Many more entered on tourist visas, which allow them to work from Mexico for up to six months as long as they are paid abroad.

The influx has been a boon for business owners in areas popular with foreigners and landlords taking advantage of record demand for long-term stays on platforms like Airbnb. It has also helped Mexicans with spare rooms to earn extra income amid soaring inflation.

But the surge has jolted the already tightening housing market, threatening to make large swaths of the city, where the average monthly salary is $220, unaffordable to many locals.

Mexico City's leftist mayor, Claudia Sheinbaum, has sought to navigate the changing market by embracing the transplants and partnering with Airbnb on a campaign that promotes the city as a ''capital for creative tourism'' that encourages foreigners to spend money in less well-off neighborhoods.

But as the jump in American and European visitors fuels a rapid expansion of Airbnb, the mayor's alliance with the rental giant has ignited an argument that's enveloped the platform in other major cities, from London to New York to San Francisco, where critics have accused it of driving up housing costs.

Housing activists, wary of gentrification and a shortage of rental housing in the sprawling capital, have accused city leaders of spurring a modern day ''colonization'' that is pricing out many Mexicans.

Sergio González, a housing activist, said there would be a ''big problem'' if the city government did not regulate the housing market at a time when remote workers are leading to the ''forced displacement of families.''

Amid the backlash, the mayor has acknowledged that American and European remote workers may be putting pressure on housing prices and has directed the city's housing authority to study the effect of Airbnb.

''The digital nomads are arriving,'' Ms. Sheinbaum told reporters in November. ''Obviously, we don't want this to mean gentrification or price increases.''

According to Airbnb, between April and June of this year, the number of stays booked in Mexico City on the platform for longer than a month increased by 30 percent compared with the same period in 2019, making the city one of the more popular destinations worldwide among long-term renters.

In the Condesa and Roma neighborhoods, whose lush streetscapes and dynamic food scenes have long made them attractive to wealthier residents, co-working spaces offering free coffee and cubicles have proliferated.

English speakers pour out of cafes and, on Sundays, cantinas are packed with young people in sports jerseys, the televisions switched from soccer to American football.

The city's campaign with Airbnb, which is scheduled to fully roll out on the platform's website early next year, is meant to spread out the crowds. It will promote guided activities, designed with the help of UNESCO, the United Nations' cultural organization, in neighborhoods that do not typically receive a high number of visitors, according to the company and city officials. Airbnb will also provide information on moving to Mexico, including visa requirements.

Miroslava Miyarath Lazcano Cruz, who has offered tours through Airbnb since 2019, started a new tour on Airbnb in October of Xochimilco, the ***working-class*** neighborhood where she lives, that is serving as a model for the program.

The tour includes preparing tamales from handpicked ingredients and floating along the neighborhood's famous network of ancient canals.

The experience has seen high demand, introducing tourists to the markets and customs of a part of the capital that's not widely explored by outsiders. Ms. Lazcano Cruz said the visitors who have come through Airbnb have ''a vision and a thirst to get to know the space in a different way.''

Suvi Haering, a Finnish creative director who arrived in Mexico City in November after two months working remotely in France, said working and living in Mexico ''pushes you to challenge your own thinking.''

''It's the polar opposite of where I come from, hence it's the most inspiring place I can go to,'' said Ms. Haering, as she ate at a restaurant in the Roma neighborhood with a friend, a project manager from Denmark, who was staying with her in a nearby Airbnb.

The increase in the number of foreigners living in Mexico City has coincided with a rise in rents. Average monthly rents citywide have jumped from $880 in January 2020 to $1,080 in November, according to data from Propiedades.com, a real estate website.

The uptick has been higher in more upscale neighborhoods. In a slice of Condesa that borders Chapultepec Park, one of the city's larger green spaces, monthly rents rose from $1,610 in January 2020 to $2,250 in November, driven mostly by the arrival of remote workers, said Leonardo González, an analyst at Propiedades.com.

Many are finding homes on a short-term basis on Airbnb, which is squeezing the available stock of long-term rentals, housing experts said.

Cities around the world, including Barcelona, London and New York, where housing costs have increased sharply, have targeted Airbnb by imposing stricter rules for short-term rentals.

In Mexico, a spokesman for Airbnb said the company was working with government officials ''to be part of the solution to the challenges faced by communities in Mexico City.''

The company also stressed the financial benefits for people who rent out rooms on the platform: More than half of Airbnb hosts recently surveyed by the company in Mexico City said the extra earnings helped cover an increase in food costs driven by inflation.

For Leonor González, the income from an Airbnb she began renting in 2020 in a state that borders Mexico City allowed her to keep paying her employees during the pandemic when her business setting up convention spaces ground to a halt.

Later that year, she also listed a new apartment, a stylish loft in Mexico City, for $71 a night on Airbnb. It's been booked almost nonstop, Ms. González said, usually by Americans working remotely for longer than a week.

''The truth is that there aren't any locals renting here now,'' she said of her Condesa neighborhood. ''It's just foreigners.''

Mexico City officials argue that high housing costs in parts of the capital are the result of years of gentrification that started in the 1980s, when a wave of new construction following a devastating earthquake ushered in younger, deeper-pocketed residents.

Still, Diana Alarcón, a top mayoral adviser, acknowledged that remote workers are also contributing to rising housing rates.

''Certainly the fact that a large number of people with higher incomes are arriving in a single area can result in an increase in prices,'' she said. ''That's precisely the reason it's important to show visitors that there are many other areas to discover in Mexico.''

Ximena Gómez Gutiérrez, a 24-year-old who commutes an hour from her family home in a neighboring state to her job at a reproductive rights organization in Mexico City, took part in a recent protest over the new Airbnb program and the city's lack of affordable housing.

Living near her job and being able to enjoy a vibrant urban lifestyle has long been a dream, Ms. Gutiérrez said.

''But my salary isn't enough to be able to even think about living'' in the capital, she said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/28/world/americas/mexico-city-airbnb-remote-workers.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/28/world/americas/mexico-city-airbnb-remote-workers.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mexico City, above, has become a leading global hub for remote workers. From top left: Karina Franco was forced from her apartment to make way for short-term rentals. The building that housed the Trevi Cafe was sold in 2018 to create a co-working space. The Palace of Fine Arts. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEJANDRO CEGARRA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A4.

**Load-Date:** December 29, 2022

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[***Fetterman vs. Oz: The Debate Aftermath***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66R4-50W1-JBG3-6099-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 28, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 25; LETTERS

**Length:** 1246 words

**Body**

To the Editor:

Re ''Debate Showing Elicits Worries in Pennsylvania'' (front page, Oct. 27):

I see much gnashing of teeth among supporters of John Fetterman for his less than stellar performance in debating Mehmet Oz. If this had been a competition to see who would be captain of the school debate team, I would feel the same and tell John to come back and try again after his recovery is further along.

But these made-for-TV debates do not capture how they would perform as a U.S. senator, someone who needs to be very familiar with the issues faced by all Pennsylvania residents to effectively represent their interests.

John Fetterman is a longtime Pennsylvania resident who spent years as mayor of Braddock learning about the difficulties faced by citizens of a ***working-class*** town and then almost four years as lieutenant governor learning from citizens all around the state.

The very wealthy Dr. Oz has virtually nothing in common with typical Pennsylvanians, giving over $20 million to his own campaign after moving to the state in late 2020 because Pat Toomey was not running for re-election. Does anyone seriously think he would be in Pennsylvania otherwise?

For those reasons, I have no doubt that John Fetterman will be far better able than Dr. Oz to work with President Biden and others in the Senate to craft effective legislation to improve the lives of Pennsylvanians and all Americans.

Ken PerkinsPittsburgh

To the Editor:

Watching the debate between John Fetterman and Mehmet Oz, one could not help feeling for Mr. Fetterman. Political views aside, I give Mr. Fetterman points for his strength and willingness to put himself out there when he is clearly compromised.

However, I fault his selfishness for continuing to run because he is not doing the best for the people of Pennsylvania, win or lose. He is clearly unable at this time to be a fully capable and functioning senator -- he may recover and be close to his old self, or he may not.

He should have, in the best interest of the people (and his own health), stepped down and let the Democrats run another candidate. If and when he recovers he can try to run again. I think his ego stood in the way of doing the right thing for himself, his family and the people of Pennsylvania.

Michael EckstutPrinceton, N.J.

To the Editor:

I spent a long career studying and taking care of patients with aphasia, or language impairment, secondary to strokes and other neurological disorders.

I have been very disappointed and disturbed by the publicity about the language problems evident in John Fetterman's speeches during the Senate campaign in Pennsylvania, and the language difficulties that he experienced during his recent debate with the Republican candidate, Dr. Mehmet Oz.

As discussed in the Opinion guest essay by Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, a neuroscientist (nytimes.com, Oct. 25), the brain has a remarkable ability to heal. Aphasia affects language, not intellect, and patients with mild aphasia have normal cognitive and intellectual functioning. Language deficits from a stroke improve over months and years.

Mr. Fetterman's use of a monitor to facilitate his understanding of questions during an interview no more disqualifies him from serving as a senator than would the use of a cane or a walker after a stroke.

People with post-stroke language disorders can function fully in employment. I hope that readers will understand that aphasia is a handicap but not a disqualifier from elected office.

Howard S. KirshnerNashvilleThe writer, a neurologist, is professor emeritus at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine and serves on the board of the National Aphasia Association.

To the Editor:

One of my favorite movie lines is from the W.C. Fields film ''It's a Gift.'' The Fields character is confronted by a man who declares, ''You're drunk!'' Fields responds: ''Yeah, and you're crazy. I'll be sober tomorrow and you'll be crazy for the rest of your life.''

John Fetterman has made great strides since his stroke in May, has no cognitive deficits and, with luck, will fully recover. On the other hand, his opponent, Dr. Mehmet Oz, shows no signs of dropping his support for an ex-president willing to subvert democracy rather than admit defeat, is fine with allowing county or state officials to control women's bodies, and even continues to maintain that he's a Pennsylvanian.

One hopes the voters of the Keystone State will be as good as the title of another Fields movie, ''You Can't Cheat an Honest Man.''

Kenneth M. CoughlinNew York

To the Editor:

Dr. Mehmet Oz's unfitness for office is startling. He refused to accept that Joe Biden was fairly elected, joining the MAGA cult of election ''deniers,'' even though he has recently started to deny his denial. Donald Trump, who has endorsed Dr. Oz, has already announced his intent to challenge an Oz loss in Pennsylvania.

During the debate Dr. Oz made a breathtaking statement that ought to have been the headline -- that abortion decisions rightfully belong to ''women, doctors, local political leaders.''

John Fetterman is successfully recovering from a stroke. His speech is impaired, but not his mind. What is wrong with Mehmet Oz cannot be cured.

Patricia GoldsmithLivingston, N.Y.

Lower Taxes and Societal Inequality

To the Editor:

Re ''This Heir to a Fortune Wants It Taken Away for Fairness' Sake'' (Saturday Profile, Oct. 22):

Kudos to Marlene Engelhorn, the subject of your profile, for speaking out against societal inequality through insufficient taxation. She points out that the very rich not only get what they want but also, through philanthropy, decide who gets to share, what and how. I support her view favoring democratic allocation of excess wealth.

And it is not just heirs born into multimillions who have benefited here. For decades our country has been throwing money at me through dramatic reductions in levels of taxation throughout my lifetime.

My lower-middle-class parents raised my brother and me hoping (as I recall my late mother saying) that we would be in the 90 percent tax bracket that existed then. To her that meant our success. We both became lawyers.

Those like us in the baby boomer generation fortunate to become professionals, learn useful trades or run successful businesses have done very well. Our outsized share of wealth today owes a great deal to those lowered tax rates. And the vast accumulation of wealth today by the few (especially in the tech world) is greatly adding to our inequality problem.

Marsha N. CohenSan FranciscoThe writer is a professor at the U.C. Hastings College of the Law.

Stop the Negative Political Ads

To the Editor:

If, like me, you are sick of the constant stream of political ads, with their claims that are often misleading or false, and if you lament the millions of dollars behind those ads, I have a suggestion:

Stop thinking of them as political ads and treat them for what they are: job applications presented to us, the prospective employers. It is our taxes, after all, that will be used to foot the bill to pay the salaries of the winning candidates.

Demand that anyone who wants an interview must forget about the ''other guy'' and tell us about themselves, why they are qualified for the position, what they feel are their biggest assets and challenges, and their goals, should we hire them.

So, let's contact all the candidates and warn them that negative ads reduce their chances of success.

Marie ConnHatboro, Pa.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/27/opinion/letters/fetterman-oz-pa-debate.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/27/opinion/letters/fetterman-oz-pa-debate.html)

**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page A25.

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[***J.D. Vance's Unlikely Boosters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65FX-YNC1-DXY4-X137-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 16, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1681 words

**Byline:** By Marc Tracy

**Body**

''Hillbilly Elegy,'' a best-selling memoir that became a star-studded film, raised the profile of the onetime ''Never Trump guy'' who won an Ohio primary with the help of the former president.

Members of New York's smart set gathered on a warm Thursday evening in the early summer of 2016 at the ornately wallpapered apartment of two Yale Law School professors in the elegant Ansonia building on Manhattan's Upper West Side to toast a Marine Corps veteran, venture capitalist and first-time author named J.D. Vance.

They were celebrating Mr. Vance's new memoir, ''Hillbilly Elegy,'' which chronicled his ***working-class*** upbringing in southwestern Ohio and an ascent that brought him to Yale, where his mentors included Amy Chua, one of the party's hosts. Mr. Vance seemed modest, self-effacing and a bit of a fish out of water among guests drawn from the worlds of publishing and journalism, a half-dozen attendees later recalled. ''It was almost stupid how disarmed the people were by that,'' said one of them, the novelist Joshua Cohen.

''Hillbilly Elegy,'' which came out as Donald J. Trump was overcoming long odds to win the presidency, became a phenomenon, and Mr. Vance -- a conservative who reassured Charlie Rose that fall that he was ''a Never Trump guy'' and ''never liked him,'' and later said he voted for a third-party candidate that year -- became widely sought out for his views on what drove white ***working-class*** Trump supporters, particularly in the Rust Belt. The book, which had a modest initial print run of 10,000 copies, went on to sell more than three million, according to its publisher, HarperCollins. It was made into a 2020 feature film by Hollywood A-listers including the director Ron Howard and the actresses Amy Adams and Glenn Close. But the J.D. Vance story did not end there.

The former ''Never Trump guy'' went on to embrace Mr. Trump last year, and eagerly accepted his endorsement in the Republican primary for an open U.S. Senate seat in Ohio that he won earlier this month. Mr. Vance, who once called Mr. Trump ''reprehensible,'' thanked Mr. Trump ''for giving us an example of what could be in this country.''

Mr. Trump's endorsement proved critical in the race, along with the financial support of Peter Thiel, the conservative Silicon Valley billionaire, and favorable coverage by Tucker Carlson on Fox News. But Mr. Vance's political rise was also made possible by the worlds of publishing, media and Hollywood, fields long seen as liberal bastions, which had embraced him as a credible geographer of a swath of America that coastal elites knew little about, believing that he shared their objections to Mr. Trump.

''The reason 'Hillbilly Elegy' was such a high-octane book was academics, professors, cultural arbitrators -- liberals -- embraced it as explaining a forgotten part of America,'' said Douglas Brinkley, a professor of history at Rice University who once introduced Mr. Vance at an event. ''They wouldn't have touched Vance with a 10-foot pole if they thought he was part of this Trump, xenophobic, bigot-fueled zeitgeist.''

Mr. Howard, who has said that he sought to downplay the political implications of ''Hillbilly Elegy'' in directing the film, describing it as a family drama, declined to comment for this article. But he told The Hollywood Reporter that he was ''surprised by some of the positions'' Mr. Vance has taken and the ''statements he's made.'' He has not spoken with Mr. Vance since the film's release, he said.

Many of the entities in publishing and Hollywood who helped fuel Mr. Vance's rise -- including HarperCollins, which published his book; Mr. Howard and his co-producer, Brian Grazer; and Netflix, which financed and distributed the film -- declined to comment on his reinvention as a Trumpist who rails against elites and who campaigned with polarizing far-right figures, including Representatives Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Matt Gaetz of Florida.

''Hillbilly Elegy'' was published by a subsidiary of News Corp., which is controlled by the conservative Murdoch family, but through a flagship imprint that puts out broadly appealing books. It did not originally mention Mr. Trump. In an afterword added to the paperback edition, Mr. Vance wrote that despite his reservations about Mr. Trump, ''there were parts of his candidacy that really spoke to me,'' citing his ''disdain for the 'elites''' and his insight that Republicans had done too little for working- and middle-class voters.

''Hillbilly Elegy'' tried to explain some of those voters' concerns, and in appearances on CNN (where he was named a contributor) and National Public Radio, as well as in opinion essays in The New York Times in 2016 and 2017, Mr. Vance tried to connect those concerns to their support for Mr. Trump.

''He owes nearly everything to having become a 'Trump whisperer' phenomenon,'' Rod Dreher, whose interview with Mr. Vance for The American Conservative in July 2016 was so popular it briefly crashed the magazine's website, said in an email. ''The thing is, he didn't seek this out. J.D. became celebrated because he really had something important to say, and said it in a way that was comprehensible to a wide audience.''

But he also found a particular audience among liberals. ''Though 'Hillbilly Elegy' was read widely across the political spectrum, my impression was that the book helped liberals to understand the causes of what had happened to them in the election of 2016,'' said Adrian Zackheim, the publisher of several Penguin Random House imprints, including Sentinel, which focuses on conservative books.

Mr. Vance's work was embraced at a moment when Mr. Trump's surprising election prompted many media executives to consider what audiences they had been overlooking. ABC, for instance, decided to make a reboot of the sitcom ''Roseanne,'' a lighthearted prime-time portrayal of people who supported Mr. Trump, including Roseanne Conner herself. (The show was later canceled after its star, Roseanne Barr, posted a racist tweet.)

In 2019, Netflix won a bidding war and pledged a reported $45 million to finance the ''Hillbilly Elegy'' film. It received poor reviews, but was reportedly among Netflix's most-streamed films the week of its release in November of 2020. Both Mr. Howard and Mr. Grazer have been generous Democratic donors, according to Federal Election Commission filings. In the run-up to the 2020 election, Ms. Close, who played Mr. Vance's grandmother, put up a series of social media posts urging voters to support Joseph R. Biden Jr. Ms. Close's representatives did not respond to inquiries.

Last year, as Mr. Vance began his Senate run, he renounced his earlier criticism of Mr. Trump. He deleted some old tweets, including one that had called Mr. Trump ''reprehensible.'' Last month, Mr. Trump embraced Mr. Vance as a prodigal son ''who said some bad'' stuff about him, using a stronger word than stuff. (Mr. Vance's campaign declined to comment for this article.)

As a Republican candidate in a Republican-leaning Midwestern state, Mr. Vance did not appear eager to tout the central role the publishing, media and film industries played in his rise. But his political opponents have been more than happy to draw the connection.

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The fact that a rising star in the Republican Party, which has recently emphasized cultural grievances with the likes of Twitter, CNN and Disney, came to prominence through elite media institutions is not surprising to scholars and cultural critics who have long understood the symbiotic relationship between those ostensible antagonists: the conservative movement and the media-entertainment complex.

''To establish populist bona fides -- since they represent economic elites -- cultural elites are the ones they can rally against,'' said Neil Gross, a professor of sociology at Colby College.

Frank Rich, an essayist, television producer, and former New York Times critic and columnist, said that some of the contemporary Republican Party's biggest stars -- including Mr. Vance, Mr. Trump and Senator Josh Hawley of Missouri -- are ''the products of elite institutions'' whose ''constant railing against the elites is just odd, because it's so disingenuous.''

''Where would Vance be if it hadn't been for mainstream publishing and book promotion, if it hadn't been for Ron Howard -- an important person in show business who identifies as liberal -- and Glenn Close and Netflix?'' Mr. Rich asked. ''Where would Trump be without NBC Universal, Mark Burnett, the whole showbiz world?''

Kathryn Cramer Brownell, an associate professor of history at Purdue University, situated Mr. Vance in a lineage of figures from the entertainment world who became Republican politicians, including George Murphy, an actor turned senator from California; Ronald Reagan, whose success as a film actor helped him become California governor and president; Arnold Schwarzenegger, another movie star and California governor; and Mr. Trump, a longtime tabloid fixture who gained newfound celebrity during the 2000s as host of the NBC reality competition show ''The Apprentice,'' created by Mr. Burnett.

''This is something they are really quick to criticize the left for -- relying too much on Hollywood for support and glamour,'' Brownell said.

''But,'' she added, ''the Republican Party has been more successful at turning entertainers into successful candidates than Democrats.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/15/arts/jd-vance-trump-hollywood.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/15/arts/jd-vance-trump-hollywood.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From top: J.D. Vance, once a ''Never Trump guy,'' won the Republican nomination for an Ohio Senate seat with the support of the former president. Vance's ''Hillbilly Elegy'' was made into a film with Amy Adams and Gabriel Basso. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID MAXWELL/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

LACEY TERRELL/NETFLIX) (C2)

**Load-Date:** May 16, 2022

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[***How Hollywood and the Media Fueled the Political Rise of J.D. Vance***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65FR-VT81-DXY4-X034-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 15, 2022 Sunday 11:09 EST

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**Section:** ARTS

**Length:** 1721 words

**Byline:** Marc Tracy

**Highlight:** “Hillbilly Elegy,” a best-selling memoir that became a star-studded film, raised the profile of the onetime “Never Trump guy” who won an Ohio primary with the help of the former president.

**Body**

“Hillbilly Elegy,” a best-selling memoir that became a star-studded film, raised the profile of the onetime “Never Trump guy” who won an Ohio primary with the help of the former president.

Members of New York’s smart set gathered on a warm Thursday evening in the early summer of 2016 at the [*ornately wallpapered*](https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/alexander-gorlin-polished-new-york-apartment-ansonia) apartment of two Yale Law School professors in the elegant Ansonia building on Manhattan’s Upper West Side to toast a Marine Corps veteran, venture capitalist and first-time author named J.D. Vance.

They were celebrating Mr. Vance’s new memoir, “Hillbilly Elegy,” which chronicled his ***working-class*** upbringing in southwestern Ohio and an ascent that brought him to Yale, where his mentors included Amy Chua, one of the party’s hosts. Mr. Vance seemed modest, self-effacing and a bit of a fish out of water among guests drawn from the worlds of publishing and journalism, a half-dozen attendees later recalled. “It was almost stupid how disarmed the people were by that,” said one of them, the novelist Joshua Cohen.

“Hillbilly Elegy,” which came out as Donald J. Trump was overcoming long odds to win the presidency, became a phenomenon, and Mr. Vance — a conservative who [*reassured Charlie Rose that fall*](https://charlierose.com/videos/29349) that he was “a Never Trump guy” and “never liked him,” and later said he voted for a third-party candidate that year — became widely sought out for his views on what drove white ***working-class*** Trump supporters, particularly in the Rust Belt. The book, which had a modest initial print run of 10,000 copies, went on to sell more than three million, according to its publisher, HarperCollins. It was made into [*a 2020 feature film*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/23/movies/hillbilly-elegy-review.html) by Hollywood A-listers including the director Ron Howard and the actresses Amy Adams and Glenn Close. But the J.D. Vance story did not end there.

The former “Never Trump guy” went on to embrace Mr. Trump last year, and eagerly accepted his endorsement in the Republican primary for an open U.S. Senate seat in Ohio that he [*won earlier this month*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/03/us/politics/vance-wins-trump-senate-primary-ohio.html). Mr. Vance, who once called Mr. Trump “reprehensible,” thanked Mr. Trump “for giving us an example of what could be in this country.”

Mr. Trump’s endorsement proved critical in the race, along with the financial support of Peter Thiel, the conservative Silicon Valley billionaire, and favorable coverage by Tucker Carlson on Fox News. But Mr. Vance’s political rise was also made possible by the worlds of publishing, media and Hollywood, fields long seen as liberal bastions, which had embraced him as a credible geographer of a swath of America that coastal elites knew little about, believing that he shared their objections to Mr. Trump.

“The reason ‘Hillbilly Elegy’ was such a high-octane book was academics, professors, cultural arbitrators — liberals — embraced it as explaining a forgotten part of America,” said Douglas Brinkley, a professor of history at Rice University who once introduced Mr. Vance at an event. “They wouldn’t have touched Vance with a 10-foot pole if they thought he was part of this Trump, xenophobic, bigot-fueled zeitgeist.”

Mr. Howard, who has said that he sought to downplay the political implications of “Hillbilly Elegy” in directing the film, describing it as a family drama, declined to comment for this article. But [*he told The Hollywood Reporter*](https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-features/ron-howard-career-star-wars-hillbilly-elegy-j-d-vance-1235143334/) that he was “surprised by some of the positions” Mr. Vance has taken and the “statements he’s made.” He has not spoken with Mr. Vance since the film’s release, he said.

Many of the entities in publishing and Hollywood who helped fuel Mr. Vance’s rise — including HarperCollins, which published his book; Mr. Howard and his co-producer, Brian Grazer; and Netflix, which financed and distributed the film — declined to comment on his reinvention as a Trumpist who rails against elites and who campaigned with polarizing far-right figures, including Representatives Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Matt Gaetz of Florida.

“Hillbilly Elegy” was published by a subsidiary of News Corp., which is controlled by the conservative Murdoch family, but through a flagship imprint that puts out broadly appealing books. It did not originally mention Mr. Trump. In an afterword added to the paperback edition, Mr. Vance wrote that despite his reservations about Mr. Trump, “there were parts of his candidacy that really spoke to me,” citing his “disdain for the ‘elites’” and his insight that Republicans had done too little for working- and middle-class voters.

“Hillbilly Elegy” tried to explain some of those voters’ concerns, and in appearances on CNN (where he was named a contributor) and National Public Radio, as well as in [*opinion essays in The New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/j-d-vance) in 2016 and 2017, Mr. Vance tried to connect those concerns to their support for Mr. Trump.

“He owes nearly everything to having become a ‘Trump whisperer’ phenomenon,” Rod Dreher, whose[*interview*](https://www.theamericanconservative.com/dreher/trump-us-politics-poor-whites/) with Mr. Vance for The American Conservative in July 2016 was so popular it briefly crashed the magazine’s website, said in an email. “The thing is, he didn’t seek this out. J.D. became celebrated because he really had something important to say, and said it in a way that was comprehensible to a wide audience.”

But he also found a particular audience among liberals. “Though ‘Hillbilly Elegy’ was read widely across the political spectrum, my impression was that the book helped liberals to understand the causes of what had happened to them in the election of 2016,” said Adrian Zackheim, the publisher of several Penguin Random House imprints, including Sentinel, which focuses on conservative books.

Mr. Vance’s work was embraced at a moment when Mr. Trump’s surprising election prompted many media executives to consider what audiences they had been overlooking. ABC, for instance, decided to make a [*reboot of the sitcom “Roseanne,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/29/business/media/roseanne-reboot-timeline.html?timespastHighlight=Roseanne,AND,ABC,and,Trump)” a lighthearted prime-time portrayal of people who supported Mr. Trump, including Roseanne Conner herself. (The show was later canceled [*after its star, Roseanne Barr, posted a racist tweet.)*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/29/business/media/roseanne-barr-offensive-tweets.html)

In 2019, Netflix won a bidding war and pledged a reported $45 million to finance the “Hillbilly Elegy” film. It received poor reviews, but was [*reportedly*](https://news.yahoo.com/amy-adams-reacts-negative-hillbilly-171136017.html?guccounter=1&amp;guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&amp;guce_referrer_sig=AQAAANPGVcVpFA2ANerNkMuYNZQ83xv2LNh-Xxf2Wk0lK-mMqw9je5bvLy4IXs_1Vj5BHCVUBX19tiBeYSfo_xtSp5elvjAcl0JlJqSDiIU6coeYnm1QEJylJOwaA7VmAYqt2eQOWTfmTWtT_yTDL_FUAChucfF53nbgFW4iNuDhLGRs) among Netflix’s most-streamed films the week of its release in November of 2020. Both Mr. Howard and Mr. Grazer have been generous Democratic donors, according to Federal Election Commission filings. In the run-up to the 2020 election, Ms. Close, who played Mr. Vance’s grandmother, put up a series of social media posts urging voters to support Joseph R. Biden Jr. Ms. Close’s representatives did not respond to inquiries.

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As a Republican candidate in a Republican-leaning Midwestern state, Mr. Vance did not appear eager to tout the central role the publishing, media and film industries played in his rise. But his political opponents have been more than happy to draw the connection.

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The fact that a rising star in the Republican Party, which has recently emphasized cultural grievances with the likes of Twitter, CNN and Disney, came to prominence through elite media institutions is not surprising to scholars and cultural critics who have long understood the symbiotic relationship between those ostensible antagonists: the conservative movement and the media-entertainment complex.

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**Load-Date:** June 22, 2023

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[***The 10 Best Books of 2022***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6700-N561-DXY4-X3J6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 29, 2022 Tuesday 23:23 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1331 words

**Byline:** The New York Times Books Staff

**Highlight:** The staff of The New York Times Book Review choose the year’s standout fiction and nonfiction.

**Body**

Fiction

The Candy House, by Jennifer Egan

You don’t need to have read Egan’s Pulitzer-winning “[*A Visit From the Goon Squad*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/21/books/21book.html)” to jump feet first into this much-anticipated sequel. But for lovers of the 2010 book’s prematurely nostalgic New Yorkers, cerebral beauty and laser-sharp take on modernity, “The Candy House” is like coming home — albeit to dystopia. This time around, Egan’s characters are variously the creators and prisoners of a universe in which, through the wonders of technology, people can access their entire memory banks and use the contents as social media currency. The result is a glorious, hideous fun house that feels more familiar than sci-fi, all rendered with Egan’s signature inventive confidence and — perhaps most impressive of all — heart. “The Candy House” is of its moment, with all that implies.

[*Read the review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/books/review/jennifer-egan-the-candy-house.html) | [*Buy from local booksellers*](https://www.indiebound.org/book/9781476716763?aff=NYT) | [*Buy from Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/Candy-House-Novel-Visit-Squad/dp/1476716765/?tag=NYTBSREV-20) | [*Buy from Apple Books*](https://goto.applebooks.apple/9781476716763?at=10lIEQ) | [*Buy from Barnes &amp; Noble*](https://www.anrdoezrs.net/click-7990613-11819508?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnesandnoble.com%2Fw%2Fthe-candy-house-jennifer-egan%2F1139746634)

Checkout 19, by Claire-Louise Bennett

Bennett, a British writer who makes her home in Ireland, first leaped onto the scene with her 2015 debut novel, “[*Pond*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/24/books/review/pond-claire-louise-bennett.html).” Her second book contains all of the first’s linguistic artistry and dark wit, but it is even more exhilarating. “Checkout 19,” ostensibly the story of a young woman falling in love with language in a ***working-class*** town outside London, has an unusual setting: the human mind — a brilliant, surprising, weird and very funny one. All the words one might use to describe this book — experimental, autofictional, surrealist — fail to convey the sheer pleasure of “Checkout 19.” You’ll come away dazed, delighted, reminded of just how much fun reading can be, eager to share it with people in your lives. It’s a love letter to books, and an argument for them, too.

[*Read the review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/02/books/review/claire-louise-bennett-checkout-19.html) | [*Buy from local booksellers*](https://www.indiebound.org/book/9780593420492?aff=NYT) | [*Buy from Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/Checkout-19-Novel-Claire-Louise-Bennett/dp/0593420497/?tag=NYTBSREV-20) | [*Buy from Apple Books*](https://goto.applebooks.apple/9780593420492?at=10lIEQ) | [*Buy from Barnes &amp; Noble*](https://www.anrdoezrs.net/click-7990613-11819508?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnesandnoble.com%2Fw%2Fcheckout-19-claire-louise-bennett%2F1139734567)

Demon Copperhead, by Barbara Kingsolver

Kingsolver’s powerful new novel, a close retelling of Charles Dickens’s “David Copperfield” set in contemporary Appalachia, gallops through issues including childhood poverty, opioid addiction and rural dispossession even as its larger focus remains squarely on the question of how an artist’s consciousness is formed. Like Dickens, [*Kingsolver*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/14/books/barbara-kingsolver-demon-copperhead.html) is unblushingly political and works on a sprawling scale, animating her pages with an abundance of charm and the presence of seemingly every creeping thing that has ever crept upon the earth.

[*Read the review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/16/books/review/barbara-kingsolver-demon-copperhead.html) | [*Buy from local booksellers*](https://www.indiebound.org/book/9780063251922?aff=NYT) | [*Buy from Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/Demon-Copperhead-Novel-Barbara-Kingsolver/dp/0063251922/?tag=NYTBSREV-20) | [*Buy from Apple Books*](https://goto.applebooks.apple/9780063251922?at=10lIEQ) | [*Buy from Barnes &amp; Noble*](https://www.anrdoezrs.net/click-7990613-11819508?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnesandnoble.com%2Fw%2Fdemon-copperhead-barbara-kingsolver%2F1140860121)

The Furrows, by Namwali Serpell

After losing her brother when she was 12, one of the narrators of [*Serpell*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/24/books/namwalli-serpell-the-furrows.html)’s second novel keeps coming across men who resemble him as she works through her trauma long into adulthood. She enters an intimate relationship with one of them, who’s also haunted by his past. This richly layered book explores the nature of grief, how it can stretch or compress time, reshape memories and make us dream up alternate realities. “I don’t want to tell you what happened,” the narrator says. “I want to tell you how it felt.”

[*Read the review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/26/books/review/namwali-serpell-furrows.html) | [*Buy from local booksellers*](https://www.indiebound.org/book/9780593448915?aff=NYT) | [*Buy from Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/Furrows-Novel-Namwali-Serpell/dp/059344891X/?tag=NYTBSREV-20) | [*Buy from Apple Books*](https://goto.applebooks.apple/9780593448915?at=10lIEQ) | [*Buy from Barnes &amp; Noble*](https://www.anrdoezrs.net/click-7990613-11819508?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnesandnoble.com%2Fw%2Fthe-furrows-namwali-serpell%2F1140674658)

Trust, by Hernan Diaz

Diaz uncovers the secrets of an American fortune in the early 20th century, detailing the dizzying rise of a New York financier and the enigmatic talents of his wife. Each of the novel’s four parts, which are told from different perspectives, redirects the narrative (and upends readers’ expectations) while paying tribute to literary titans from Henry James to Jorge Luis Borges. Whose version of events can we trust? Diaz’s spotlight on stories behind stories seeks out the dark workings behind capitalism, as well as the uncredited figures behind the so-called Great Men of history. It’s an exhilarating pursuit.

[*Read the review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/28/books/review/trust-hernan-diaz.html) | [*Buy from local booksellers*](https://www.indiebound.org/book/9780593420317?aff=NYT) | [*Buy from Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/Trust-Hernan-Diaz/dp/0593420314?tag=NYTBSREV-20) | [*Buy from Apple Books*](https://goto.applebooks.apple/9780593420317?at=10lIEQ) | [*Buy from Barnes &amp; Noble*](https://www.anrdoezrs.net/click-7990613-11819508?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnesandnoble.com%2Fw%2Ftrust-hernan-diaz%2F1139966170)

Nonfiction

An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us, by Ed Yong

Yong certainly gave himself a formidable task with this book — getting humans to step outside their “sensory bubble” and consider how nonhuman animals experience the world. But the enormous difficulty of making sense of senses we do not have is a reminder that each one of us has a purchase on only a sliver of reality. Yong is a terrific storyteller, and there are plenty of surprising animal facts to keep this book moving toward its profound conclusion: The breadth of this immense world should make us recognize how small we really are.

[*Read the review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/22/books/review-immense-world-animal-senses-ed-yong.html) | [*Buy from local booksellers*](https://www.indiebound.org/book/9780593133231?aff=NYT) | [*Buy from Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/Immense-World-Animal-Senses-Reveal/dp/0593133234?tag=NYTBSREV-20) | [*Buy from Apple Books*](https://goto.applebooks.apple/9780593133231?at=10lIEQ) | [*Buy from Barnes &amp; Noble*](https://www.anrdoezrs.net/click-7990613-11819508?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnesandnoble.com%2Fw%2Fan-immense-world-ed-yong%2F1140356781)

Stay True: A Memoir, by Hua Hsu

In this quietly wrenching memoir, Hsu recalls starting out at Berkeley in the mid-1990s as a watchful music snob, fastidiously curating his tastes and mercilessly judging the tastes of others. Then he met Ken, a Japanese American frat boy. Their friendship was intense, but brief. Less than three years later, Ken would be killed in a carjacking. Hsu traces the course of their relationship — one that seemed improbable at first but eventually became a fixture in his life, a trellis along which both young men could stretch and grow.

[*Read the review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/25/books/review/stay-true-hua-hsu.html) | [*Buy from local booksellers*](https://www.indiebound.org/book/9780385547772?aff=NYT) | [*Buy from Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/Stay-True-Memoir-Hua-Hsu/dp/0385547773?tag=NYTBSREV-20) | [*Buy from Apple Books*](https://goto.applebooks.apple/9780385547772?at=10lIEQ) | [*Buy from Barnes &amp; Noble*](https://www.anrdoezrs.net/click-7990613-11819508?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnesandnoble.com%2Fw%2Fstay-true-hua-hsu%2F1140674653)

Strangers to Ourselves: Unsettled Minds and the Stories That Make Us, by Rachel Aviv

In this rich and nuanced book, Aviv writes about people in extreme mental distress, beginning with her own experience of being told she had anorexia when she was 6 years old. That personal history made her especially attuned to how stories can clarify as well as distort what a person is going through. This isn’t an anti-psychiatry book — Aviv is too aware of the specifics of any situation to succumb to anything so sweeping. What she does is hold space for empathy and uncertainty, exploring a multiplicity of stories instead of jumping at the impulse to explain them away.

[*Read the review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/07/books/rachel-aviv-strangers-to-ourselves.html) | [*Buy from local booksellers*](https://www.indiebound.org/book/9780374600846?aff=NYT) | [*Buy from Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/Strangers-Ourselves-Unsettled-Minds-Stories/dp/0374600848?tag=NYTBSREV-20) | [*Buy from Apple Books*](https://goto.applebooks.apple/9780374600846?at=10lIEQ) | [*Buy from Barnes &amp; Noble*](https://www.anrdoezrs.net/click-7990613-11819508?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnesandnoble.com%2Fw%2Fstrangers-to-ourselves-rachel-aviv%2F1140836996)

Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of Our Nation, by Linda Villarosa

Through case histories as well as independent reporting, Villarosa’s remarkable third book elegantly traces the effects of the legacy of slavery — and the doctrine of anti-Blackness that sprang up to philosophically justify it — on Black health: reproductive, environmental, mental and more. Beginning with a long personal history of her awakening to these structural inequalities, the journalist repositions various narratives about race and medicine — the soaring Black maternal mortality rates; the rise of heart disease and hypertension; the oft-repeated dictum that Black people reject psychological therapy — as evidence not of Black inferiority, but of racism in the health care system.

[*Read the review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/08/books/review/under-the-skin-linda-villarosa.html) | [*Buy from local booksellers*](https://www.indiebound.org/book/9780385544887?aff=NYT) | [*Buy from Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/Under-Skin-Hidden-Racism-American/dp/038554488X?tag=NYTBSREV-20) | [*Buy from Apple Books*](https://goto.applebooks.apple/9780385544887?at=10lIEQ) | [*Buy from Barnes &amp; Noble*](https://www.anrdoezrs.net/click-7990613-11819508?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnesandnoble.com%2Fw%2Funder-the-skin-linda-villarosa%2F1140508316)

We Don’t Know Ourselves, by Fintan O’Toole

O’Toole, a prolific essayist and critic, calls this inventive narrative “a personal history of modern Ireland” — an ambitious project, but one he pulls off with élan. Charting six decades of Irish history against his own life, O’Toole manages to both deftly illustrate a country in drastic flux, and include a sly, self-deprecating biography that infuses his sociology with humor and pathos. You’ll be educated, yes — about increasing secularism, the Celtic tiger, human rights — but you’ll also be wildly, uproariously entertained by a gifted raconteur at the height of his powers.

[*Read the review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/books/review/fintan-otoole-we-dont-know-ourselves-ireland.html) | [*Buy from local booksellers*](https://www.indiebound.org/book/9781631496530?aff=NYT) | [*Buy from Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/We-Dont-Know-Ourselves-Personal/dp/1631496530?tag=NYTBSREV-20) | [*Buy from Apple Books*](https://goto.applebooks.apple/9781631496530?at=10lIEQ) | [*Buy from Barnes &amp; Noble*](https://www.anrdoezrs.net/click-7990613-11819508?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnesandnoble.com%2Fw%2Fwe-dont-know-ourselves-fintan-otoole%2F1138668989)

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sakshi Jain FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 30, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Port Chester, N.Y.: A ‘Tiny Little Village’ With a Lot of Development; Living in***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67NK-7J61-DXY4-X076-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 1, 2023 Wednesday 23:38 EST

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**Section:** REALESTATE

**Length:** 1785 words

**Byline:** Lisa Prevost

**Highlight:** With more than 2,800 new housing units approved in the last three years, ‘Port Chester is certainly on the move.’ Not everyone is happy about it.

**Body**

With more than 2,800 new housing units approved in the last three years, ‘Port Chester is certainly on the move.’ Not everyone is happy about it.

Hai Yang, 37, lives in a one-bedroom apartment overlooking the Byram River in downtown Port Chester, a 2.4-square-mile village in the town of Rye, in Westchester County. Since moving to the $2,700-a-month apartment a year ago, Mr. Yang has found he can walk to most everything he needs.

The Metro-North train station is a three-minute walk, which makes it easy to head into New York City to visit friends. Happy hour deals and live jazz are right next door, at the Saltaire Oyster Bar. And he doesn’t need a car to hit the local gym.

But Mr. Yang does have a car, so he can commute to his job in Danbury, Conn., where he is an engineering manager in the medical device industry. Finding a place to park in Port Chester is not an issue — particularly compared to his experience in downtown White Plains, N.Y., where he used to live. And the village, in general, is “much less congested,” he said.

Deirdre Curran, 57, moved into a townhouse across from the village’s 20-acre Lyon Park last June. A retired pet sitter and dog walker, Ms. Curran had rented in the village off and on over the years, and appreciates its diversity. “There are a lot of different cultures, and you can get any kind of food you want from Central and South America,” she said.

She paid $515,000 for her two-bedroom home, which is convenient to downtown businesses, major highways and the Westchester County Airport. But while Ms. Curran loves her home’s location, she is increasingly alarmed by the scale and pace of residential development planned for the compact downtown area.

Three large, mixed-use apartment projects are currently under construction. The six-story Tarry Lighthouse, on North Main, will have 209 apartments as well as commercial space. The Magellan, on South Main, will add another 95 apartments in a nine-story, 100-percent electrified building. And 30 Broad, across from the train station, will have 36 apartments above a microbrewery.

These follow the recent completion of Port &amp; Main, a five-story, 80-unit building a block from the train station.

“They want to do all this major development in this tiny little village that does not have the infrastructure to handle it,” Ms. Curran said. “It seems to me like an awful lot of major development in a very short period of time.”

The village has granted conditional site plan approval to projects with a total of more than 2,800 units over the past three years, said Stuart L. Rabin, the village manager. This flurry of development proposals is largely the result of a change in village zoning three years ago designed to encourage the redevelopment and revitalization of Port Chester’s downtown, waterfront and transit-adjacent parcels, he said.

“The village of Port Chester is certainly on the move,” Mr. Rabin said.

But the scale of the proposals has generated considerable public pushback, with some residents expressing concern that towering apartment buildings threaten to overwhelm the historic downtown and price out the many mom-and-pop businesses.

John Allen, an elected member of Port Chester’s board of trustees, said that while the village was “ripe for redevelopment,” given the number of buildings in disrepair, there is a growing sense that the board allowed for “these extraordinary increases for density and asked for very little in return from developers,” including having to meet more of the community’s affordable housing needs.

The board has recently begun to discuss a “narrowly tailored” moratorium on development in order to study whether further changes are needed to the zoning code, he said. A moratorium would not affect projects already under construction.

What You’ll Find

Port Chester is a densely developed village of 31,000 that “sprang to life at the crossroads of various transportation options,” including a small harbor on Long Island Sound and rail lines into New York City, said Gregg Hamilton, a retired Manhattan transplant who runs the [*Sustainable Port Chester Alliance*](https://portchesteralliance.org/).

Some remnants of its 19th- and early 20th-century industrial heyday remain. The Simons Manufacturing Company building, which once housed a major textile maker, is now a loft-style office complex. And the former headquarters of the Life Savers Candy Company now houses condominiums.

In the walkable downtown area, beauty salons, restaurants and grocery stores catering to the village’s majority-Hispanic population line the main thoroughfares of Westchester Avenue and North and South Main. (According to census data, the village population is 64 percent Hispanic, 28 percent white, 5 percent Black and 1 percent Asian.) Two large commercial bakeries — Neri’s and J.J. Cassone — are major employers.

Modest single-family and multifamily homes set close to the hilly streets surround the downtown. To the north, the streets are wider, and homes are set farther apart in suburban-style neighborhoods.

A 15-acre abandoned hospital campus on the edge of downtown, [*once a target for development by Starwood Capitol Group*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/14/realestate/port-chester-wants-to-grow-but-exactly-how-is-the-question.html?smid=url-share), is now set for redevelopment by Rose Associates and BedRock Real Estate Partners. The companies have received site plan approval for nearly 1,000 housing units, including 200 age-restricted units, and expect to begin demolition of the existing buildings by spring, said Richard Shea, a project spokesman.

The nonprofit Carver Center supports the community’s lower-income and immigrant populations with a food bank, citizenship classes, after-school programming and a teen center.

What You’ll Pay

As in most of Westchester County, housing inventory in Port Chester is very low and it is a seller’s market, said Thomas E. Consaga, the broker-owner at Re/Max Ace Realty. Competition is particularly high among first-time buyers because home prices are considerably lower than in surrounding suburbs like Greenwich, Conn., and Rye, N.Y., he said.

The median sale price for a single-family home in Port Chester last year was $645,000, almost 10 percent higher than in 2021. By comparison, the 2022 [*median sale price*](https://www.houlihanlawrence.com/communities/greenwich/) in neighboring Greenwich was almost $3 million.

As of last week, there were only about 20 single-family homes on the market, Mr. Consaga said. They ranged from a three-bedroom colonial built in 1955, listed for $475,000, to a six-bedroom colonial built in 1900, listed for $1.34 million.

The median sale price for a condominium last year was $347,500; for a cooperative, it was $118,000, he said.

Almost 60 percent of households in Port Chester are renter-occupied, according to census data. Over the last 12 months, the median rent for a two-bedroom was $2,800, Mr. Consaga said.

That figure factors in the many older, multifamily homes in the village, but rents at the new apartment buildings are considerably higher. At Port &amp; Main, which has a rooftop terrace and a fitness center, a 400-square-foot studio starts at $2,300 a month and an 1,150-square-foot, two-bedroom rents for more than $4,000, said Whitney Okun, who runs a development group at Houlihan Lawrence that is overseeing the project.

The Vibe

The Capitol Theater, on Westchester Avenue, books big-name artists that draw music lovers from throughout the region. Concertgoers swarm the wide array of downtown restaurants, including El Tio, Bartaco, T&amp;J Restaurant and Pizzeria, and Panka Peruvian Bistro.

The parking lot at the Waterfront at Port Chester mall is jammed on weekends with shoppers stocking up at Costco. The mall’s other draw is a 14-screen AMC movie theater.

The growing arts scene includes the well-established Clay Art Center, a large complex with numerous pottery studios and classrooms, as well as a public gallery, and Ice Cream Social, a relatively new space where artists working in various media can rent private or shared studios.

“Port Chester is my hometown, so it’s kind of a dream to be able to support the artists who are here,” said Jennifer Cacciola, an artist and a founder of the center, who moved to Connecticut from Brooklyn shortly before the pandemic.

The Schools

The Port Chester-Rye Union Free School District serves students in all of Port Chester and about a third of the neighboring village of Rye Brook. Of the roughly 4,500 students districtwide, about 83 percent identify as Hispanic or Latino, 12 percent as white, 3 percent as Black and 2 percent as Asian, according to state education data.

The district contracts with Corpus Christi Holy Rosary School to provide a prekindergarten program for 4-year-olds. Students in kindergarten through fifth grade attend one of four elementary schools; those in sixth through eighth grade attend Port Chester Middle School.

Port Chester High School is on a 20-acre campus bordering Rye Brook, with about 1,600 students. Academic offerings include Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. The four-year graduation rate for the class of 2022 was 88 percent.

The Commute

Port Chester station, on Metro-North’s New Haven line, is in the heart of downtown. The ride to Grand Central during peak commuting times takes just under an hour; the one-way fare is $13.75, and a monthly pass is $270.

Westchester County’s Bee-Line [*bus service*](https://transportation.westchestergov.com/images/stories/Schedules/rte6062610622.pdf) offers transportation from Port Chester to Rye, Harrison, Mamaroneck, Larchmont, New Rochelle and the Bronx.

The CT Transit 311 bus, operated by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, runs throughout the day between Liberty Square in Port Chester and Stamford, Conn., with additional stops in Greenwich, Conn.

The History

Port Chester’s sizable Hispanic and Latino population has been growing for decades, ever since Cuban refugees fleeing Fidel Castro’s rule settled in Port Chester to work in the factories in the 1960s, according to a [*New York Times account*](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/04/16/nyregion/hispanic-influx-slowly-altering-a-town-veneer.html?smid=url-share). As the factories closed, more immigrants from throughout Central and South America settled in the ***working-class*** village, opening restaurants and servicing the affluent suburbs as landscapers, day laborers, house cleaners and child-care providers. The population growth hasn’t been without tensions: In 2009, a federal judge ordered the village to adopt a new voting system that would give the Hispanic and Latino population a fairer opportunity to elect one of their own to the board of trustees. Luis Marino, a Peruvian immigrant, was elected to the board in 2010 and is now the village’s mayor.

For weekly email updates on residential real estate news, [*sign up here*](http://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/realestate/).

PHOTO: Shops and restaurants line Westchester Avenue in Port Chester, N.Y. “The village of Port Chester is certainly on the move,” said Stuart L. Rabin, the village manager. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page RE9.

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2023

**End of Document**



[***The Gentrification of Blue America; Paul Krugman***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63G4-1VD1-JBG3-64CD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 27, 2021 Friday 12:52 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1004 words

**Byline:** Paul Krugman

**Highlight:** The troubling interaction between NIMBYs and the knowledge economy.

**Body**

In my [*latest column*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/26/opinion/california-newsom-recall-economy.html), motivated by the California recall, I pointed out that the Golden State’s left turn on policy hasn’t produced the economic collapse that conservatives predicted. On the contrary, the state’s economy has boomed, even as it keeps getting trash-talked by the business press: Between the election of Jerry Brown and the Covid-19 pandemic, both output and employment grew about as fast in California as they did in Texas.

It has, however, been a peculiar kind of boom, one in which more Americans have moved out of California than have moved in.

Economists trying to understand the rise and fall of regions within a country often rely on some form of [*economic base analysis*](https://theurbanengine.com/blog//economic-base-analysis). The idea is that a region’s overall growth is determined by the performance of its export industries — that is, industries that sell mainly to customers outside the region, such as the technology firms of Silicon Valley and the Los Angeles entertainment complex (or, here in New York, the financial industry). Growth in these industries, however, generates a lot of growth in other sectors, from health care to retail trade, driven by the local spending of the base industries’ companies and employees.

But base analysis suggests that when a state has a booming export sector, as California does, it should be seeing growth in more or less everything. Instead, what we see in California is that while highly educated workers are moving in to serve the tech boom, less-educated workers are [*moving out*](https://www.ppic.org/blog/whos-leaving-california-and-whos-moving-in/):

There’s no great mystery about why this is happening: It’s because of housing. California is very much a NIMBY state, maybe even a BANANA (build absolutely nothing anywhere near anyone) state. The failure to add housing, no matter how high the demand, has collided with the tech boom, causing soaring home prices, even adjusted for inflation:

And these soaring prices are driving less affluent families out of the state.

One way to think about this is to say that California as a whole is suffering from gentrification. That is, it’s like a newly fashionable neighborhood where affluent newcomers are moving in and driving ***working-class*** families out. In a way, California is Brooklyn Heights writ large.

Yet it didn’t have to be this way. I sometimes run into Californians asserting that there’s no room for more housing — they point out that San Francisco is on a peninsula, Los Angeles ringed by mountains. But there’s plenty of scope for building up.

If we look at [*population-weighted density*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2012-10-15/america-s-truly-densest-metro-areas?sref=qzusa8bC) — the population density of the neighborhood in which the average person lives — we find that greater New York is two and a half times as dense as the San Francisco and Los Angeles metro areas, with more than 30,000 people per square mile in New York and only around 12,000 in both California metros. This doesn’t mean that every New Yorker lives in a high-rise (the metro area includes plenty of leafy green suburbs); it means only that those who choose to live in multistory apartment buildings can do so. If California were willing to offer that choice, it wouldn’t have its housing crisis.

Personal aside: My New York apartment is in a neighborhood that, according to census data, has 60,000 residents per square mile, with many 10-plus-story buildings. It’s not a teeming sea of humanity; it’s surprisingly quiet and genteel!

The thing is, California’s housing problem, while especially extreme, isn’t unique.

Since the 1980s America has experienced growing [*regional divergence*](https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/enrico-moretti-geography-jobs). We have become a knowledge economy driven by industries that rely on a highly educated work force, and firms in those industries, it turns out, want to be located in places where there are a lot of highly educated workers already — places like the Bay Area.

Unfortunately, most of these rising knowledge-industry hubs also severely limit housing construction; this is true even of greater New York, which is much denser than any other U.S. metropolitan area but could and should be even denser. As a result, housing prices in these metros have soared, and ***working-class*** families, instead of sharing in regional success, are being driven out.

The result is that there are now, in effect, two Americas: the America of high-tech, high-income enclaves that are unaffordable for the less affluent, and the rest of the country.

And this economic divergence goes along with political divergence, mainly because education has become a prime driver of political affiliation.

It may seem hard to believe now, but as recently as the early 2000s college graduates [*leaned Republican*](https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2018/03/20/1-trends-in-party-affiliation-among-demographic-groups/). Since then, however, highly educated voters — who have presumably been turned off by the G.O.P.’s embrace of culture wars and its growing anti-intellectualism — have become overwhelmingly Democratic, while non-college-educated whites have gone the other way.

As a result, the two Americas created by the collision of the knowledge economy and NIMBYism correspond fairly closely to the blue-red division: Democratic-voting districts have seen a big rise in incomes, while G.O.P. districts have been [*left behind*](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2019/09/10/america-has-two-economies-and-theyre-diverging-fast/):

Again, this didn’t have to happen, at least not to this extent. True, the growing concentration of knowledge industries in a few metropolitan areas reflects deep economic forces that are hard to fight. But not building enough housing to accommodate this concentration and share its benefits is a policy choice, one that is deepening our national divisions.

There are hints of movement toward less restrictive housing policy; California’s legislature has just [*passed a bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/26/business/california-duplex-senate-bill-9.html?action=click&amp;module=Well&amp;pgtype=Homepage&amp;section=Business) that would, in essence, force suburbs to accept some two-unit buildings alongside single-family homes. Even this modest measure would make it possible to add around 700,000 housing units — roughly the same number added in the [*whole state*](https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/time-series/demo/popest/2010s-total-housing-units.html) between 2010 and 2019.

We need much more of this. Restrictive housing policy doesn’t get nearly as much attention in national debates as it deserves. It is, in fact, a major force pulling our nation apart.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jeff Chiu/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***As Federal Cash Flows to Unions, Democrats Hope to Reap the Rewards***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67HJ-R9Y1-DXY4-X1JH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 10, 2023 Friday 15:41 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1652 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Weisman

**Highlight:** In places like West Virginia, money from three major laws passed by Congress is pouring into the alternative energy industry and other projects. “I think it’s a renaissance for the labor movement,” said one union official.

**Body**

BRIDGEPORT, W.Va. — In the mid-1970s, when Mark Raddish wasn’t more than 11 years old, his coal-mining grandfather picked him up from a mining camp and took him a thousand feet underground, to the cold darkness beneath West Virginia. There, he imparted a lesson.

“You don’t want to make this your livelihood,” warned his grandfather, a union miner, Mr. Raddish recalled. “These guys don’t know if they’re going to come home at night to see their mom or dad, to see their brothers and sisters or their little boy or girl.”

He did as he was told, getting an education and landing a pipe fitters’ union job for Mylan Pharmaceuticals. When that job was sent overseas, he took a leap of faith late last year and signed on as West Virginia Employee No. 2 for Sparkz, a California-based electric vehicle battery start-up. The company was enticed here, in the wooded hills outside Bridgeport, W.Va., in part by generous federal tax subsidies and in part by the United Mine Workers of America, which is recruiting out-of-work coal miners for the company’s new plant in a faded industrial park.

It is no accident that this plant, rising in place of a shuttered plate-glass factory, is bringing yet another alternative-energy company to rural West Virginia. Federal money is pouring into the growing industry, with thick strings attached to reward companies that pay union wages, employ union apprentices and buy American steel, iron and components.

President Biden and the Democrats who pushed those provisions are hoping that more union members will bring more political strength for unions after decades of decline. White ***working-class*** voters, even union members, have sided with Republicans on social issues, and still tend to see the G.O.P. as their economic ally, as well.

But Republicans in Congress — especially in the leadership and tax-writing committees — have for years resisted Democrats’ pro-union efforts, including writing legislation into the tax code and enacting broad policy measures. Republicans have argued that such measures were wasteful, inefficient and would bog down federal projects, in addition to cutting into companies’ profits and adding to inflation.

“What I worry about is how fiscally irresponsible the federal government is going to have to be,” said Rusty Brown, a former official in the Trump administration’s Labor Department.

The Democrats finally broke the Republican blockade, in part because the rising threat of China softened Republican resistance to domestic work and supply requirements, in part because Democrats wrote the most stringent requirement themselves, and passed the pro-labor incentives through Congress with rules that overcame a Republican filibuster.

“For the first time in a long time, we’re building an economy from the bottom up and the middle out,” Mr. Biden declared on Wednesday at the Wisconsin Laborers’ training center north of Madison, “with products made in America and with union labor.”

Money is just starting to flow from the last Congress’s three huge legislative victories — a [*$1 trillion infrastructure bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/15/us/politics/biden-signs-infrastructure-bill.html), a [*$280 billion measure to rekindle a domestic semiconductor industry*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/09/us/politics/biden-semiconductor-chips-china.html) and the [*Inflation Reduction Act*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/16/business/biden-climate-tax-inflation-reduction.html), which included $370 billion for clean energy to combat climate change.

Tucked into all of those laws were measures to give unions the power to effectively tell employers: You must pay union-scale wages and use union apprenticeship and training programs, so you might as well hire union workers.

“I think it’s a renaissance for the labor movement, especially for the building trades, to take this upswing and open our eyes,” said Mike Knisley, executive secretary and treasurer of the Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council.

This month, the [*most powerful incentives went into force*](https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy1128): tax credits for clean energy and energy efficiency projects funded by the Inflation Reduction Act. The tax credits increase in value fivefold if federal contractors pay “prevailing wages,” or wage rates generally set by unions; use “qualified” apprenticeship programs that are usually run by unions; and buy steel, iron and manufactured components that are made in the United States. Contractors that claim the credits but fail to abide by the rules face stiff fines and penalties.

The scale of those incentives was intentional: Democrats who wrote the Inflation Reduction Act made them so generous that Senate tax aides said it would be considered “fiduciary malfeasance” not to take advantage of them.

For companies like Sparkz, a 30 percent tax credit to offset the cost of investments in clean energy jumps to 40 percent if the investment lands in areas with retired coal mines or fossil-fuel power plants. [*Form Energy*](https://formenergy.com/west-virginia-governor-jim-justice-announces-form-energy-will-site-first-american-battery-manufacturing-plant-in-weirton-creating-hundreds-of-jobs/), which manufactures batteries to store power generated by alternative sources like wind and solar using iron instead of more difficult-to-find minerals, is building a plant in Weirton, W.Va, an old steel town.

If you build a clean-energy power plant on the site of a retired dirty-energy plant, you can take even more off the price of the investment.

“This is clearly saying, ‘Thou shalt create jobs,’” said Sanjiv Malhotra, the chief executive of Sparkz.

Beyond the inflation act, Democrats, with help from a few Republicans, were able to add prevailing wage requirements to the semiconductor bill. And both the Energy and Transportation Departments are making clear that access to unions, payment of prevailing wages and commitments to local hiring will be big advantages for competitive bidders seeking infrastructure and [*highway electrification projects*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/03/business/electric-trucks-catenary-wire.html), though Republican governors like Joe Lombardo in Nevada are trying to block some of those requirements.

For union leaders, the federal legislation could prove to be a spectacular gift, if they can meet the demand for union workers and persuade those workers to reward the politicians who provided their jobs.

But that is a big “if.” Asked whether Mr. Biden or the man instrumental in many of the tax subsidies, Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, were receiving credit in an overwhelmingly Republican state, Sparkz’s first two employees in the state, Mr. Raddish and Mitchell Williams, 24, shrugged.

“That’s all hush-hush,” Mr. Raddish said. “I don’t know.”

For the unions, the trajectory seems clear. Between the construction of semiconductor plants, the building of electric-vehicle charging stations and the expansion of broadband internet, leaders of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers foresee more work than union members for at least the next decade. That means they have to step up organizing.

“We are absolutely bringing more workers into the union,” said Bill Hamilton, business manager of the I.B.E.W. local that is staffing an enormous Intel semiconductor plant under construction outside Columbus, Ohio.

The leadership of the Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 81 in Syracuse, N.Y., is scrambling to bring in thousands of new members to satisfy the project labor agreement governing [*Micron’s expansive chip plant under construction*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/04/technology/micron-chip-clay-syracuse.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&amp;referringSource=articleShare) north of the city. Mr. Biden highlighted such accords last week as he talked up infrastructure projects in Baltimore, New York and New Jersey. He also promoted them on Wednesday in Wisconsin, where he hailed projects in Green Bay and Columbia County.

“People don’t realize how much is in the pipeline right now,” said Mark Muro, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who is tracking the Biden administration’s industrial policies. “There’s a fundamental delivery challenge, but it could become a tremendous opportunity for unions.”

Mr. Brown, who is now with the anti-union Freedom Foundation, noted that private-sector unions were at a low ebb, representing only about 10 percent of the private work force.

“When you’re writing laws that pretty much require companies to use labor unions, that means you’re discriminating against 90 percent of the population,” he said.

But union leaders say they are intent on strengthening labor’s power — and rewarding its allies. Mr. Hamilton said the I.B.E.W. was including education on the labor movement and an explicit section tying politics to job creation in its revamped training programs.

“We want to get 80 percent of our membership into that education program before the next presidential election,” he said.

Construction unions are targeting veterans, women and workers of color to bring into the movement.

“It goes hand in hand with what we see is going to be a big increase in our work force,” said Mark Douglas, the president of the Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council. “We have to make sure they’re educated as to how these things work, and we’re very pleased with everything that’s happened from Washington with the Biden administration.”

That could be good news for endangered Democrats up for re-election in 2024. They include Mr. Manchin, who won tax incentives to locate plants near abandoned coal mines and closed coal-fired power plants, as well as Senator Sherrod Brown, Democrat of Ohio, who secured union-scale wage requirements in the semiconductor bill.

Not all of the new money will favor organized labor. Joseph W. Kane, another Brookings researcher, said more than three-quarters of the $864 billion for roads, bridges and other projects would go to state and local governments through old spending formulas with no special strings attached.

“There’s a lot of D.C. happy talk where you have people seeing transformational, once-in-a-generation spending,” Mr. Kane said. “The reality on the ground is very different.”

PHOTOS: Mark Raddish, left, and Mitchell Williams in what will be Sparkz’s Bridgeport, W.Va., factory, making electric-vehicle batteries. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SPEAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Carl Tjader, a third-year ironworker apprentice, training at the JATC Training Center in Columbus, Ohio, on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13) This article appeared in print on page A1, A13.

**Load-Date:** February 11, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Ice, Nets, Buoys: Price 'Just Adds Up, and Up' for Fishermen***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:675X-JVD1-DXY4-X202-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 27, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4; SIERRA LEONE DISPATCH

**Length:** 1313 words

**Byline:** By Elian Peltier

**Body**

Fishermen in Sierra Leone need large amounts of ice to store their catch on multiday journeys. Like many commodities, it has become pricey.

His red soccer jersey and shorts soaked in salty water, Edison Fofana loaded his boat on a recent morning with gallons of fuel, a box of rice and bottles of soda needed for his four-day fishing journey.

Walking back and forth between the beach buzzing with dozens of other fishermen and his wooden vessel docked nearby, he also carried on his head bags of ice -- an increasingly expensive commodity, but necessary to keep his catch fresh on the trip.

''Within a week time, ice prices shoot up,'' said Mr. Fofana, 33, as he jumped into the ice storage bin on his boat and sprinkled salt on the ice he had just stacked to prevent it from melting. ''Nets, rice, fuel, ice, everything.''

Skyrocketing fuel prices caused in part by the war in Ukraine have driven up the cost of living in African countries like Sierra Leone this year, hitting fishermen and ***working-class*** communities hard and leaving millions hungry. Their governments, highly dependent on imports of basic commodities like rice and wheat, have seen meager financial reserves dwindle.

In West and Central Africa, a 2,000-mile-long stretch of food insecurity has developed among at least eight countries, according to the World Food Program, and the dire situation is likely to worsen next year as floods in Nigeria and Chad this summer ravaged a million acres of farmland.

Around 48 million people are expected to face hunger in the region next year, according to the U.N. agency, including nine million children.

In Sierra Leone, a coastal nation of eight million people, 80 percent of the population relies on fish as a source of animal protein. Every day, hundreds of fishermen leave its pristine beaches to try their luck, hoping to catch swordfish, small sharks or barracuda from their slender, colorful wooden boats with names like ''God,'' ''King'' or their hometowns.

But back on shore, their families are increasingly reliant on other food sources. On a recent evening on the main beach in Tombo, a fishing town 20 miles south of Freetown, children scurried for cheap beignets, a deep-fried pastry, as adults sucked on potatoes drowned in Maggi-seasoning sauce or a porridge of cassava and yam.

As the sun set, fishermen in groups of four to five were leaving for the night to the sound of Afrobeats, as adventurous toddlers were kept in check by their mothers. Other boats had departed earlier that morning for neighboring Guinea, where the waters, some fishermen say, are richer these days.

Fatima Koroma, a fishmonger for the past 20 years, kept the four colorful plastic bowls full of fish she had just bought close by. She said her difficulties had just ''spiraled into something else'' since the beginning of the year.

A small bag of rice that used to cost about $16 now costs nearly $27, said Ms. Koroma, 45 and the mother of seven children. ''We're more often talking about cups of rice than bags now,'' she said. Her profits every few days: around $11.

A can of palm oil is now 49 percent more expensive compared with last year, according to the World Food Program; even the price of potato and cassava leaves, two cheap staple goods produced locally, has nearly doubled as the price of fuel needed to transport them has increased. So has the price of salt.

As of August, eight out of 10 Sierra Leonean households were food insecure, according to the World Food Program. Along with Burkina Faso and Mauritania, Sierra Leone is among the West African countries with the highest rate of food insecurity.

For fishermen like Mr. Fofana, the latest challenge is the price of flake ice. But plenty of other problems pre-date that cost surge.

For the past few years, foreign trawlers, mostly from China, South Korea and Europe, have largely depleted the waters off Sierra Leone and other West African countries, forcing him to venture farther out to sea.

A fishing trip that used to take a day or two now requires up to a week -- meaning that Mr. Fofana needs more ice to keep his fish from rotting.

But when the price of the fuel and electricity needed to power the generators that make and store ice goes up, so does the cost of a bag of ice -- from about $1 to $1.40 over the past few months.

That may not sound like much, Mr. Fofana acknowledged, but that morning, he loaded 30 bags on his boat. And ice is not the only issue. One small net now costs about $430, up from $370 recently, and Mr. Fofana needs 20 to 22 of those nets knitted together when he goes to sea.

Mr. Fofana says he occasionally loses his catch when foreign trawlers tear through his nets, a fate many fishermen say they have experienced. Even the price of the dozens of buoys attached to the nets has increased.

''It just adds up, and up,'' he said. ''But what we catch out at sea, does not.''

Mr. Fofana grew up in Goderich, a buzzing wharf in western Freetown teeming with colorful wooden boats, market vendors selling poultry and fresh fish and children kicking balls around. The father of an 8-year-old boy, he has been fishing since he was a teenager and is one of the 500,000 people in Sierra Leone who depend on fishing for their livelihoods.

Fishermen across coastal Western Africa face similar challenges, according to Dr. Ifesinachi Okafor-Yarwood, a lecturer in sustainable development at the University of St. Andrews who has studied fishing communities in West Africa.

For the men who fish, and the women who process and sell the catch, only ice keeps fish sellable, whether in it is Sierra Leone, Ghana or Senegal, because refrigerators and ice containers are scarce.

''If women haven't sold fish at the end of the day, they have to sell at the giveaway price,'' Dr. Okafor-Yarwood said. ''There's so much food wastage because of the lack of preservation.''

Cyril Jengo, an economist based in Freetown, said making ice was costly in countries with regular power cuts like Sierra Leone. ''If you use your generator, you face a high bill; if you don't, you go out of business,'' Mr. Jengo said.

''Ultimately, that cost is being passed on to customers.''

Indeed, in Goderich, the price of fish has gone up 20 to 30 percent on average, but that is far less than the cost of most everything else the fishermen need.

Such hardships have already prompted people to protest. This summer an unknown number of demonstrators died in protests over the rising cost of living in Freetown.

Sierra Leone's central bank has removed three zeros from its bank notes, hoping to restore confidence in the currency and reduce the amount of paper money in circulation while keeping its value unchanged. But it has mostly sown confusion, with many Sierra Leoneans still pricing goods in the former currency, the Leone, which has lost more than 40 percent of its value against the dollar since September, 2021.

Mr. Fofana buys his ice from a nearby plant, and on a recent morning there a steady stream of sweaty deliverymen in sleeveless shirts piled up ice bags on wheelbarrows. While fishermen need it to store their catch at sea, fishmongers need it on land.

Earlier this year, a shipping container financed by the government of Iceland and designed to store fish, make ice and reduce the fishermen's dependence on the local ice plant, was installed in Goderich. But until a nearby road is completed and water can reach the container, which sits a few hundred yards away from the docked boats, it remains a lukewarm box that doesn't keep fish fresh for long, fishermen and fishmongers say.

When the local ice plant stopped functioning for a few days earlier this month, fishermen were forced to get ice from another plant a few miles away, a taxi trip that added to their ever-growing bills.

Joseph Johnson contributed reporting.Joseph Johnson contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/26/world/africa/sierra-leone-fishermen.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/26/world/africa/sierra-leone-fishermen.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: With the rising cost of ice, many fishermen in Goderich, a neighborhood in Freetown, Sierra Leone, can't afford to buy the number of bags they need to catch enough fish and keep them fresh.

Clockwise from top: Goderich residents waiting for the arrival of the fleet

Mensa Ekow and his crew can't afford to fill their storage spaces properly, limiting their time at sea to how long they can keep the fish fresh

an ice container. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY YAGAZIE EMEZI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A4.

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[***The Consequences Of the Diploma Divide***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60SC-VR21-DXY4-X025-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Michael J. Sandel

**Body**

It's having a corrosive effect on American life -- and hurting the Democratic Party.

Joe Biden has a secret weapon in his bid for the presidency: He is the first Democratic nominee in 36 years without a degree from an Ivy League university.

This is a potential strength. One of the sources of Donald Trump's political appeal has been his ability to tap into resentment against meritocratic elites. By the time of Mr. Trump's election, the Democratic Party had become a party of technocratic liberalism more congenial to the professional classes than to the blue-collar and middle-class voters who once constituted its base. In 2016, two-thirds of whites without a college degree voted for Mr. Trump, while Hillary Clinton won more than 70 percent of voters with advanced degrees.

Being untainted by the Ivy League credentials of his predecessors may enable Mr. Biden to connect more readily with the blue-collar workers the Democratic Party has struggled to attract in recent years. More important, this aspect of his candidacy should prompt us to reconsider the meritocratic political project that has come to define contemporary liberalism.

At the heart of this project are two ideas: First, in a global, technological age, higher education is the key to upward mobility, material success and social esteem. Second, if everyone has an equal chance to rise, those who land on top deserve the rewards their talents bring.

This way of thinking is so familiar that it seems to define the American dream. But it has come to dominate our politics only in recent decades. And despite its inspiring promise of success based on merit, it has a dark side.

Building a politics around the idea that a college degree is a precondition for dignified work and social esteem has a corrosive effect on democratic life. It devalues the contributions of those without a diploma, fuels prejudice against less-educated members of society, effectively excludes most working people from elective government and provokes political backlash.

Here is the basic argument of mainstream political opinion, especially among Democrats, that dominated in the decades leading up to Mr. Trump and the populist revolt he came to represent: A global economy that outsources jobs to low-wage countries has somehow come upon us and is here to stay. The central political question is not to how to change it but how to adapt to it, to alleviate its devastating effect on the wages and job prospects of workers outside the charmed circle of elite professionals.

The answer: Improve the educational credentials of workers so that they, too, can ''compete and win in the global economy.'' Thus, the way to contend with inequality is to encourage upward mobility through higher education.

The rhetoric of rising through educational achievement has echoed across the political spectrum -- from Bill Clinton to George W. Bush to Barack Obama to Hillary Clinton. But the politicians espousing it have missed the insult implicit in the meritocratic society they are offering: If you did not go to college, and if you are not flourishing in the new economy, your failure must be your own fault.

It is important to remember that most Americans -- nearly two-thirds -- do not have a four-year college degree. By telling workers that their inadequate education is the reason for their troubles, meritocrats moralize success and failure and unwittingly promote credentialism -- an insidious prejudice against those who do not have college degrees.

The credentialist prejudice is a symptom of meritocratic hubris. By 2016, many working people chafed at the sense that well-schooled elites looked down on them with condescension. This complaint was not without warrant. Survey research bears out what many ***working-class*** voters intuit: At a time when racism and sexism are out of favor (discredited though not eliminated), credentialism is the last acceptable prejudice.

In the United States and Europe, disdain for the less educated is more pronounced, or at least more readily acknowledged, than prejudice against other disfavored groups. In a series of surveys conducted in the United States, Britain, the Netherlands and Belgium, a team of social psychologists led by Toon Kuppens found that college-educated respondents had more bias against less-educated people than they did against other disfavored groups. The researchers surveyed attitudes toward a range of people who are typically victims of discrimination. In Europe, this list included Muslims and people who are poor, obese, blind and less educated; in the United States, the list also included African-Americans and the ***working class***. Of all these groups, the poorly educated were disliked most of all.

Beyond revealing the disparaging views that college-educated elites have of less-educated people, the study also found that elites are unembarrassed by this prejudice. They may denounce racism and sexism, but they are unapologetic about their negative attitudes toward the less educated.

By the 2000s, citizens without a college degree were not only looked down upon; in the United States and Western Europe, they were also virtually absent from elective office. In the U.S. Congress, 95 percent of House members and 100 percent of senators are college graduates. The credentialed few govern the uncredentialed many.

It has not always been this way. Although the well-educated have always been disproportionately represented in Congress, as recently as the early 1960s, about one-fourth of our elected representatives lacked a college degree. Over the past half-decade, Congress has become more diverse with regard to race, ethnicity and gender, but less diverse with regard to educational credentials and class.

One consequence of the diploma divide is that very few members of the ***working class*** ever make it to elective office. In the United States, about half of the labor force is employed in ***working-class*** jobs, defined as manual labor, service industry and clerical jobs. But fewer than 2 percent of members of Congress worked in such jobs before their election.

Some might argue that government by well-educated university graduates is something to welcome, not regret. Surely we want well-trained doctors to perform our appendectomies. Aren't highly credentialed leaders best equipped to give us sound public policies and reasoned political discourse?

Not necessarily. Even a glance at the parlous state of political discourse in Congress should give us pause. Governing well requires not only technocratic expertise but also civic virtue -- an ability to deliberate about the common good and to identify with citizens from all walks of life. But history suggests little correlation between the capacity for political judgment and the ability to win admission to elite universities. The notion that ''the best and the brightest'' are better at governing than their less-credentialed fellow citizens is a myth born of meritocratic hubris.

If the rhetoric of rising and the reign of technocratic merit have led us astray, how might we recast the terms of moral and political aspiration? We should focus less on arming people for a meritocratic race and more on making life better for those who lack a diploma but who make important contributions to our society -- through the work they do, the families they raise and the communities they serve. This requires renewing the dignity of work and putting it at the center of our politics.

It also requires reconsidering the meaning of success and questioning our meritocratic hubris: Is it my doing that I have the talents that society happens to prize -- or is it my good luck?

Appreciating the role of luck in life can prompt a certain humility: There, but for an accident of birth, or the grace of God, or the mystery of fate, go I. This spirit of humility is the civic virtue we need now. It is the beginning of the way back from the harsh ethic of success that drives us apart. It points beyond the tyranny of merit toward a less rancorous, more generous public life.

Michael J. Sandel is a professor of government at Harvard and the author of the forthcoming ''The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good?,'' from which this essay is adapted.

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**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GETTY IMAGES)

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[***WhenYour Boss Is an App***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:681D-3C81-JBG3-642N-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Lauren Hilgers

**Body**

Brenda Handy started doing temp work nearly 40 years ago. Back then, landing jobs took time and effort, even for a licensed practical nurse. In the 1990s she lived in Tampa, Fla., with her three children, but got her work through a man named Tony Braswell, who had his offices a half-hour away, in St. Petersburg. Braswell would call nurses with the details of their next jobs. Handy would learn her assignment and drive the family van an hour south to Sarasota, or maybe 40 minutes east to Lakeland, to reach one of the care facilities that contracted with Braswell's company. She was one of his most reliable nurses, and she liked working with him. He knew her schedule and the jobs she preferred; he was the kind of hands-on guy who would, in a pinch, drive out in his own car to give a nurse a ride. Still, the whole process could be time-consuming. After a week's worth of jobs was complete, Handy would drive to Braswell's office in St. Petersburg -- usually getting there before he'd even shown up and unlocked the door -- and wait in the parking lot with a handful of other nurses for him to arrive and cut her a check.

''That is how you know I've been in this a long time,'' she told me recently from her kitchen in St. Petersburg. ''Nobody uses paper anymore. Nobody gives you checks.'' Everything, she said, is now on her phone. ''I'm on the app every day,'' she said, as dinner sizzled audibly in the background. ''I'm on the app when we're talking right now.''

Handy still works for Braswell, but the days of phone calls and lingering outside the office are gone. In 2016, Braswell realized that he could not scale his business up without some degree of automation. So he created a software platform he called Gale Healthcare Solutions, in honor of Florence Nightingale. Handy can now log in and book work within seconds of a shift becoming available. ''It's like -- you're at the grocery store, you see something you like, you pick that shift,'' she said. ''They come up 24/7. You have to be quick on the draw.''

Handy has a full-time nursing job and works these additional shifts on the side. When we first spoke, she was also spending her mornings studying to become a registered nurse. She has an overarching philosophy of working both smart and hard -- a philosophy about life stages, efficiency and making the best use of the tools available. She is not an entrepreneur, exactly, but she speaks a language that unifies personal and career growth. ''So, I'm going to tell you how I do this,'' she said. ''On the days that I have to be in school, we go from 8 to 2. Then you get out of school. Then you can pick and choose if you want to work 3 to 11 or 11 to 7. Then I do a full-time on the weekend. I do 12 hours on Saturday and Sunday.'' At 59, she spends most of her days caring for elderly and infirm patients, watching the details of their expressions, how they hold themselves, the little signifiers of how they are feeling. Then, in her off hours, she keeps an eye on her phone.

For most Americans, the concept of ''gig work'' has been synonymous with a handful of Silicon Valley giants -- companies like Uber and DoorDash, Instacart and TaskRabbit. There was a moment in the 2010s when pundits told us to expect the ''Uberization of everything'': a future in which the typical worker would move from job to job or task to task, finding either independence and flexibility in freelancing or, more realistically, the precarity of working for platforms that may be light on benefits and aggressively exploitative of labor. But there were also those who came to wonder whether the entire phenomenon had been overblown. ''The gig economy,'' Annie Lowrey wrote in The Atlantic in 2019, ''was then and is now a more marginal phenomenon than it might have seemed.''

We do remain dependent on traditional gig labor, a fact that blazed into our collective consciousness with the pandemic and our sudden reliance on workers like delivery drivers. What is less often appreciated, though, is just how much, and how steadily, the structure and technology of gig work have expanded beyond our most obviously ''Uberized'' jobs. The gig economy, at this point, encompasses not just drivers or repairmen, not just designers or proofreaders, but also retail workers, the armies of itinerant nurses who crossed the country to shifting Covid hot spots and even white-collar professionals like lawyers and consultants. Whether they seem like ''gigs'' or not, countless varieties of jobs are sliding into the ecosystem of the gig -- the world, broadly defined, of technology-enabled temporary employment -- and steadily loosening the ties between workers and employers.

The battle lines that have been drawn around gig work and labor protections usually center on the issue of classification. Workers considered ''independent'' are paid by 1099, a tax category that exempts them from labor protections like a minimum wage, unemployment insurance and overtime -- and requires them to cover their own payroll taxes. Others are paid by W-2 and covered under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1939. Businesses often push to categorize flexible workers as independent; labor advocates push for W-2s. The standards and tests that determine classifications vary from state to state and can be open to interpretation -- workers are easily misclassified.

But even this division does not encompass the full scope of gig work and its influence. Handy, for instance, operates both within the gig ecosystem and outside it. Gale Healthcare insists that all its nurses be paid by W-2, maintaining a floor of labor protections, but still falling short of providing Handy with the level of benefits she can get from a regular, inflexible, full-time job. Hers isn't the only industry in which some of the benefits once associated with W-2 work have grown complicated. Both inside and outside the gig world, the century-old compact that has determined who is entitled to key protections is eroding. There aren't many labor questions more consequential than how we redefine or replace it.

No one is entirely sure how many Americans are working gigs, in part because the definition of gig work grows muddier by the year. Labor economists are certain the practice is growing, but it remains incredibly hard to measure. Annual surveys conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics are not designed to capture gig work as a category, and studies elsewhere use different parameters to define it. In an annual study commissioned by the ''work marketplace'' Upwork, 39 percent of the U.S. labor force was found to be doing some variety of freelance work last year -- a share representing around 60 million people and $1.35 trillion in U.S. earnings, an increase of $50 billion over 2021. A study by Pew Research Center, focusing more narrowly on platform-based gig work, found 16 percent of U.S. adults had found work via an online platform at some point. Depending on how you define them, gig workers include people taking all sorts of temporary jobs. The person taking tickets at a basketball game or your order at McDonald's may be picking up shifts using an app. Copywriters and marketing professionals offer their services on Upwork or Fiverr or via LinkedIn. There are bartenders, carpenters and even doctors looking down at their phones right now, searching for their next shift.

The platforms all these workers use vary so widely in their rules and structures that it's difficult to pin down the boundaries of the modern gig economy. Some platforms are backed by Silicon Valley venture capital and have global ambitions, while others compete in smaller markets or specific industries. Some use workers to fulfill discrete tasks for customers, while others connect labor with traditional employers, taking on the role of a staffing agency. Some allow workers to pick and choose assignments without consequence, while others penalize them for not logging on or for declining tasks. A lawyer on Upwork can set his or her own rates and negotiate directly with clients, but shift-working platforms generally post jobs with a rate already established. For many delivery and driving platforms, rates vary, per service, according to closely protected algorithms that leave income uncertain. Each of these details can have profound impacts on the daily lives of workers. Even in high-income jobs, platforms are in a position to mediate disputes and control access to work; with low-income labor, workers may find themselves entirely dependent on the largess and the algorithms of the platforms they use. About the only thing all these workers have in common is that they are beholden to reviews, with just a few negative responses holding the power to dry up their income or even get them booted from their preferred platforms.

Kristen Anderson, the chief executive of a portable workplace-benefits platform called Catch, compares gig work to the concept of the K-shaped economic recovery, in which some industries bounce back from a recession (the upper leg of the K) while others continue failing (the lower). ''I think gig work is K-shaped,'' she told me. ''The idea of the independent high-earner versus the independent low-earner. Freelance by choice and freelance by force. They have totally different experiences and totally different needs.''

Highly educated white-collar workers are especially well positioned to benefit from flexible work arrangements, using them to create better work-life balances, with time easily carved out for things like family or travel. Samer Bazzi, an online marketing professional, is a longtime freelancer who charges $200 an hour for his services through Upwork. There was a time when he tried to operate outside the platform, but he returned during a bout of kidney disease. ''I had a lot of appointments and things that I had to go to,'' he told me. ''So I hopped back on Upwork.'' Freelancing, he said, was not the walk in the park many people imagined. It only makes sense, in his opinion, when you're making upward of $100 an hour and your reputation is good enough that companies start coming to you. Right now, Bazzi splits his attention between the jobs that come to him and the not-insignificant task of generating new leads. ''If I'm down to like two or three clients,'' he says, ''I'll go on Upwork, I'll send out 100 proposals. Out of that 100, you're going to get like 10 replies and maybe two or three clients.'' One of the biggest challenges, he told me, is managing your reputation on the platform: ''Not everybody knows that, hey, if you leave me a three-star review and it sounds OK to you, it's not really OK for me. After a contract's closed, you're hand-on-your-heart until the feedback is in.''

Another Upwork user, Jaime Hollander, came to depend on the platform after moving to the suburbs of New York with two children, creating a commute that she found impossible. Full-time gigging let her work from home, stay close to her children and steadily increase her hourly rates. She was lucky, she says, because her husband's job for a nearby school district offers benefits. Bazzi pays more than $900 a month for his health insurance. (''Health insurance,'' he says. ''Holy cow.'') Both have set up their own companies, enabling them to write off expenses and avoid the tax pitfalls of a 1099. They are, literally, small businesses. Hollander has even hired a handful of people herself -- as full W-2 employees.

For the ***working class***, choice comes at a higher price. In many low-income jobs, flexibility has become entangled with the idea of just-in-time labor and staffing, a practice that cuts costs by slashing back on full-time work and making up any shortfalls with overtime, reduced breaks or last-minute workers brought in from staffing agencies. (This leaves just enough workers to meet demand -- or, perhaps, not quite enough, squeezing excess productivity out of whoever is there.) Companies that operate this way need to be able to hire temporary staff quickly. They have found flex-working platforms an efficient solution. According to an advertisement for Snagajob, a platform for on-demand jobs, ''Seventy percent of our jobs are filled in 10 minutes or less.''

And it is here, among the ***working class***, that the boundaries of the gig economy have become blurriest, with the technology and the concepts of gig work bleeding into the structure of regular employment. It is on-demand employment that has produced many of the working arrangements Americans have spent the past decade identifying as faintly dystopian. On-demand employment may mean you are subject to strict requirements for how many hours you work, but must compete for unpredictable shifts on online platforms, as if they were hot concert tickets. In retail work, it may mean mandatory overtime during peak shopping seasons and unreliable week-to-week income. In an Amazon warehouse -- or even working from home on your laptop -- it may mean intense computerized tracking of your minute-by-minute productivity, with grave consequences for even small variances. For railroad workers it may mean being denied, or penalized for taking, sick days during busy periods. These conditions easily cross the borders between gig and nongig work. Amazon, for instance, uses flexible scheduling platforms to enable full-time workers to choose shifts, letting them accrue paid time off as they work or taking it away via an automated penalty system -- an arrangement that borrows some of its flexibility, uncertainty and technological control from the world of gigs. It's also symbiotic with actual gig work: The wages are low enough that many employees do side work for platforms like DoorDash and Uber. (It is to those businesses' advantage that flex workers accrue benefits from Amazon; the extra income they offer, meanwhile, allows Amazon to keep pay low.)

Daniel Olayiwola is one such Amazon associate, working a ''flex schedule'' in San Antonio; he also creates content about the experience on a YouTube channel called ''Surviving Scamazon.'' After five years of experience, he earns $18.40 an hour. On his flex schedule, he told me, he has to work 30 hours. ''If you don't, you get a point, and once you get to 8 points, you're fired.'' (That's 8 points within a 60-day period, according to an Amazon spokesman.) Show up late, or miss a shift, and you get points. Shifts become available at specific times, and flex workers have to sign up quickly -- some set alarms to remind them the moment shifts are released -- ''or else you're going to end up working nights.'' In this job, Olayiwola told me, you have to diversify to earn a living wage. Some drive for delivery platforms during their time off. Olayiwola takes gigs as a roofer, and tries to schedule some hours every few days. ''You have to get creative,'' he says, ''in how you structure your life.''

Olayiwola's job at Amazon comes with a W-2; he is covered by employment insurance, liability insurance, workers' compensation. Still, he stakes out his schedule via a platform, taking shifts on demand. He must meet productivity expectations and keep careful track of break and bathroom times. Falling short on any metric could prompt a review process. ''They put you in a situation where they have very ample opportunity to fire you,'' he says, describing a cycle of penalties and rehirings. ''They've fired everybody I know a couple of times. I operate as if I've already been fired.''

It's hard not to be apprehensive of the ways in which the least pleasant innovations of the gig economy, and the technology that enables them, could seep into ever more industries and jobs -- a future in which the ''Uberization of everything'' doesn't mean eliminating regular employment, just forcing it to operate in increasingly giglike ways. David Weil -- who served in the Labor Department under President Obama and later as dean of the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University -- sees the expansion of gig working as part of a larger story, one he calls ''fissuring.'' When corporations started offshoring manufacturing in the mid-20th century, he says, they did so in part to access cheaper labor in other countries. Soon they found ways to do something similar at home, contracting out for roles that would, in the past, have belonged to their own pool of workers. The janitors at a tech company like Apple, for example, might once have been direct employees, entitled to benefits similar to those of their peers. Now they can be employed by a cleaning service with its own labor policies -- severing, or at least loosening, the legal ties between them and the company whose offices they will clean.

Weil considers companies like Uber and Lyft to be ''hyper-fissured.'' They minimize labor costs by categorizing all their drivers as independent -- people with, in theory, other jobs and other access to benefits -- and casting themselves as mere management systems that allow those workers to operate. Given their power over nearly every aspect of that work, though, many see these brands not as systems of management but of employment. ''So much of the platform world, they want to have things two ways at the same time,'' Weil says. ''They want as much control as they possibly can of the product and the service -- whatever the targets are related to product innovation, service and delivery -- but they don't want the messy problems of being an employer.''

The depth of this particular fissure -- the obvious way these platforms maximize control over workers while minimizing obligations to them -- has sparked multiple battles over how the law should categorize laborers. In courts and in legislatures, workers and labor advocates have butted against tech companies and business interests. The latter have scored plenty of wins. In 34 states, legislation has already been adopted that specifically exempts ''Transportation Network Companies'' (TNCs) from some state and local labor standards. The gig-working platform Handy, which has since been purchased by Angi Inc., has backed legislation that would ensure those who found jobs on apps or platforms could more easily be considered independent workers; 10 states now have such ''marketplace platform'' laws on the books. And a growing, well-funded lobby for platform work, the Coalition for Workforce Innovation, has argued for a third labor classification, beyond employees and independent contractors. This category would be created simply by having workers sign a contract called a ''Worker Flexibility Agreement,'' in which they trade away protections like a minimum wage for the ability to take outside work -- thus giving platforms, the argument goes, freedom to offer piecemeal selections of perks and benefits to entice labor.

The strongest alternative to all of this is a standard called the ''ABC test,'' which gained notoriety during a class-action suit against a California courier and delivery service called Dynamex Operations West. In 2004, Dynamex converted all of its drivers from full-time employees to independent contractors. After much litigation, the California Supreme Court ultimately relied on the ABC test -- which sets a high bar for considering workers independent -- to uphold a lower-court verdict for the plaintiffs, sparking a flurry of political action. The State Legislature passed a measure codifying the ABC test into law. In reaction, TNCs including Uber, Lyft and Instacart pushed for a state ballot measure, Proposition 22, that would place their drivers in a category of worker entitled to only limited benefits. The proposition passed in 2020, but has been hindered by legal challenges. Versions of this battle have occurred in states across the country, and even nationally. The House of Representatives has twice passed the PRO Act, a law focused on union organizing that also adopts the ABC test at a federal level; both times, in 2019 and 2021, it languished in the Senate. It was introduced a third time this February.

At the same time, the sheer variety of gig-working arrangements has continued to expand, outpacing the speed of most moves to regulate or define it. Many of the newest platforms in the field actually bill themselves as attempts to bridge the gap between flexibility and security -- using the tools of gig work to solve the problems of gig work. Yong Kim, the founder of a platform called Wonolo, told me his hope is to build a new model for protecting workers. Kim came to the United States from South Korea as a teenager and has memories of walking into stores with help-wanted signs, only to be turned away -- ''I couldn't get a job at a gas station,'' he told me, ''because of the way I looked and the way I spoke.'' His platform connects workers with businesses in need of on-demand staffing. ''Most of the gig-economy-based platforms, they are connecting workers with consumers,'' he says. ''If someone needs food delivered to their house, they use it. In our case, one side is actually businesses. There are companies like Hello Fresh and Coca-Cola that also have to think about the well-being of the workers. Can we design it in a new way and innovate around that?''

One aspect of his company's design is to require that workers are paid the same hourly rate that a company's full-time employees get for the same labor. Another is a new offer of portable occupational accident insurance, which is paid for in part by Wonolo, in part by the hiring company and in part by the worker. The platform is also trying, Kim says, to offer an affordable health care program -- a difficult task, because of the way insurance is regulated state by state. About two million workers use the platform. Kim estimates that half of the active users do so on a part-time basis. (''They may have another part-time job at Walmart or Target and pick up jobs as needed.'') Another 25 percent of active users work two or three different jobs through Wonolo itself. The final quarter, Kim says, are ''people who I call truly flexible'' -- they might work full time for a few months and then disappear for a while, or use their accounts at seemingly random intervals. Depending on the situation, he said, some of these two million workers could be considered W-2 employees.

Much of what Kim has done is simply to take a few steps back toward a model established decades ago by traditional staffing agencies. Such an arrangement might be attractive to gig workers, compared with the competition, but might still strike labor advocates as a net loss. Wonolo, in fact, has in the past been an active member of the Coalition for Workforce Innovation, and Kim has expressed interest in the establishment of a third category of worker. Conventional staffing agencies have not themselves been bulwarks of labor protection. It's an industry that aims to provide flexibility while trimming labor costs, which means even the most innovative founders may find it challenging to arrive at an equitable deal for workers.

Weil, for his part, does have some optimism that working arrangements can evolve in ways that do not abandon protections for vulnerable workers. ''I think certainly people are going to have more different jobs -- by choice and by necessity -- than they had 20 years ago,'' he told me. ''Certain things need to be more portable. You need to have portability for pensions. You need to have funds to help yourself to become trained in new areas. Portability of paid leave. Portability of workers' compensation.'' All of this, he said, was possible, in the right environment -- ''We can do that!''

The gig economy continues to grow. The philosophy of flexibility and just-in-time labor management continues to move from industry to industry. And the technology of gig work -- the ''flexible'' scheduling that leaves workers competing to seize shifts; the elaborate point-and-penalty systems that make work feel like a high-stakes game; the collection of data to monitor every aspect of labor down to the frequency of mouse movements and bathroom breaks -- all of this continues to creep into new corners of the American work force. With each of these developments, the future of work is being renegotiated, not just through legal and political arguments but also through businesses' experimenting, sometimes aggressively, with the shapes work can take. At its best, the gig economy can enable workers to balance child care or illness with a career, expand access to jobs and speed business staffing. At worst, it gives opaque, impersonal and sometimes draconian platforms immense control over not just workers but also over everything else that depends on their labor: our warehouses, our hospitals, our groceries, our supply chains.

The reason that Brenda Handy, the licensed practical nurse, keeps her full-time job -- the reason, she says, she will always keep that job -- is the package of benefits that comes with it. She gets unemployment insurance, accident insurance, access to a group health plan and a retirement plan. Even Gale Healthcare, which hires by W-2, doesn't provide the same benefits. Other parts of the industry pay by 1099, which Tony Braswell knows can be a precarious category. He says he meets with nurses who have to pick up shifts around scant child care, nurses who are living in their cars, nurses who struggle to keep their lights on. He has seen horror stories online, like a woman surprised by a $13,000 tax bill she was unable to pay -- one of the more costly aspects of being classified as a contractor.

Braswell is currently speaking against the practice of classifying health care workers as independent contractors. Doing so, he argues, will further worsen a nursing shortage and leave the elderly population neglected and underserved. The industry, he says, needs flexibility and stability at the same time. Nurses shouldn't be required to continually negotiate their jobs or act as independent businesses; they are overworked and vulnerable enough. ''We can't lose nurses,'' he says. When Gale Healthcare did a small survey of its nurses last year, it found that 65 percent were working per diem rather than in full-time jobs -- but, according to Braswell, ''they want to work full time. They just want to work on their own terms.''

Gale Healthcare is used by more than 60,000 nurses, and Braswell now provides labor to facilities across the country. It was, in the end, the online platform -- the structure built by the gig economy -- that enabled him to scale up, both expanding his reach and allowing him to offer perks like paying nurses within minutes after they complete a shift. (''I want people to be able to stop for groceries on the way home,'' he says.) He wants, he says, to provide benefits. He pays into workers' compensation for his nurses and is doing his best to offer health insurance. But without a government mandate requiring that such benefits be provided, he says, it may be difficult for Gale Healthcare to stay competitive with other platforms; the usual race to the bottom, in which platforms work to minimize every cost associated with labor, could prevail.

Handy, for her part, recently lost her life savings when, a few months before she was scheduled to graduate, the nursing school she was attending shut down amid an F.B.I. investigation of fraudulent institutions; it had never been properly accredited, and all of Handy's tuition money was gone. It's a setback that she, despite her two jobs and a lifetime of work, was not prepared for. ''I was on cruise control,'' she told me, referencing her packed schedule. ''I didn't want to work nights -- I wanted to pull it the way I wanted to pull it. But now I can't stop. I've got to keep pushing. I've got to keep working.'' She is taking more shifts than ever.

Lauren Hilgers is a writer based in New York. She is the author of ''Patriot Number One: A Chinese Rebel Comes to America.'' Derek Abella is a Cuban American illustrator based in Brooklyn. He is known for his dreamlike style.

**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page MM46, MM47, MM48, MM49, MM50, MM51.

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[***Part Revival, Part Reversal for a Classic***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66PP-6TS1-DXY4-X0T3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1125 words

**Byline:** By Jesse Green

**Body**

Lorraine Hansberry's 1959 classic ends on a note of cautious optimism. Its latest incarnation, at the Public Theater, does not.

Leaving his recent ''Long Day's Journey Into Night'' aside, Robert O'Hara doesn't typically direct revivals; nor, leaving Shakespeare aside, does the Public Theater typically produce them. Yet on Tuesday the Public opened O'Hara's take on Lorraine Hansberry's ''A Raisin in the Sun'': not merely a revival but a further ''exploration'' of an earlier production of a 1959 classic that is arguably as well known today as it was epochal when it debuted.

How, then, to make it new? Apparently, on the evidence of this staging, by furiously underlining its subtleties and downplaying its conventional strengths, a reversal of standard procedure that produces a sometimes stunning, sometimes stunted result.

It's not as if the play needed help to feel relevant; like all great works it has proved itself incessantly timely. In telling the story of the Youngers, a Black family aiming to move from a ''rat trap'' tenement on Chicago's South Side to a house in a ***working-class*** white neighborhood, it both reports on and anticipates the racist backlash to upward mobility that has been a blight on American life since Reconstruction. And in dramatizing the effects of that backlash on Walter Lee, the feckless dreamer of the family, it offers a piercing psychological portrait of Black manhood in distress.

As was customary in her time, Hansberry prioritizes the real estate plot, wrapping Walter Lee's personal drama (and that of his mother, wife, sister and son) in its ultimately hopeful arms. Beginning with the indignities of ''ghetto-itus'' -- there are just two bedrooms for the three generations and a bathroom shared with neighbors down the hall -- the play ends with them all moving out. Even the feeble houseplant, symbolically undernourished in the light-deprived apartment, is promised a new life.

O'Hara signals from the start (and reiterates throughout) that he will flip the focus, at the same time broadening and darkening it. His production begins not, as written, with Ruth Younger (Mandi Masden) making breakfast, but with Walter Lee (Francois Battiste) carrying their sleeping son, Travis, from the dim recesses of the apartment to his bed on the living room sofa. It's a haunting image that suggests the way the father's hopes, and perhaps his failures, may be borne into the future -- a future O'Hara and the scenic designer, Clint Ramos, literalize in a devastating coup de théâtre at the end.

In between, no matter how judiciously Hansberry has distributed the play's attention among the main characters -- including the matriarch, Lena (Tonya Pinkins), and her daughter, Beneatha (Paige Gilbert) -- O'Hara concentrates his prodigious theatrical imagination on Walter Lee.

Battiste, among the most compelling stage actors today, has no difficulty filling the additional space created by that interpretation, making the character more alarming than usual but no less believable. Even when O'Hara has him step completely out of the frame of the play, turning what is already a horrifying speech (''O, yassuh boss! Yassssuh, Great white Father!'') into a brutal moment of minstrelsy, Battiste manages not to rip the skin of the role.

But some of O'Hara's other attempts to muscle in on Hansberry's naturalism are less successful. Reaching not just forward but also backward along the family's male line, he transfers some of the dialogue normally assigned to Lena to the ghost of her husband, who wanders atmospherically in and out of the action, looking unmoored. (The spectral lighting is by Alex Jainchill.) Also unmoored: a passage of postcoital pillow talk for Walter Lee and Ruth, created by turning dialogue that's usually spoken live into a recorded voice-over. We hear the moans of their lovemaking too.

Rather than creating the impression of buried fondness in their marriage, as it evidently means to do, the interpolation pushes the affection offstage. That's a problem throughout. O'Hara directs most of the family scenes as overlapping free-for-alls, creating a generalized impression of dysfunction and very little of attachment. (Most of the funny and trenchant detail is lost in the noise.) At times I had the feeling that O'Hara, impatient with Hansberry's occasionally laborious dramaturgy, had spun all the dials to the extreme right: volume, contrast, hue.

Yet that was not the case in the earlier version of this revival seen at the Williamstown Theater Festival in 2019. Led more equally by Battiste's Walter Lee and S. Epatha Merkerson's Lena, that ''Raisin'' was just as daring but less cartoonish. And though the current cast is very good generally, it's noticeable that the comic material is handled most deftly, with standout performances from the piquant Gilbert and, as a nosy neighbor, Perri Gaffney.

Rather, the problem seems to be that O'Hara's continued exploration has escaped Hansberry's orbit, leaving some of the graver characters stranded in the thin air between her style and his. As Lena, Pinkins, ordinarily capable of astonishing depth and power, is largely hampered by too much directorial business, including the sudden onset of a ferocious palsy no one onstage seems to notice. And where the script famously has her slap her daughter for blasphemy, O'Hara has her go much further, leaving Beneatha flat on the floor.

Despite his similar approach to the play overall, it never stays down for long. It can't; it has too much internal energy and direction for any single misstep, including Hansberry's, to throw the whole thing off track. Beneatha's choice between two suitors -- a preppy conformist (Mister Fitzgerald) and a Nigerian idealist (John Clay III) -- is fully engaging no matter how creaky the setup is. And though the scene in which a representative of the Youngers's new neighborhood (Jesse Pennington) comes to ''welcome'' them with veiled threats is very nearly twirling-mustache melodrama, it's nevertheless one of the highlights of American theater.

In that sense, O'Hara -- who aside from his brilliant direction of contemporary works like ''Slave Play'' and ''BLKS'' is a mordant comic playwright himself -- is right to reimagine the genre expectations of ''Raisin.'' It's what we do with all classics, not because they require it but because they can handle it. And if his pessimism about American racism is somewhat at odds with Hansberry's cautious optimism, well, he's had 60 more years of history to support his point. That the play is so prescient does not mean that its story is over. It means that, sadly, it never is.

A Raisin in the SunThrough Nov. 20 at the Public Theater, Manhattan; publictheater.org. Running time: 3 hours.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/25/theater/a-raisin-in-the-sun-review.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/25/theater/a-raisin-in-the-sun-review.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Francois Battiste holding Toussaint Battiste in ''A Raisin in the Sun,'' directed by Robert O'Hara at the Public Theater. (C1)

Above from left, Mandi Masden, Francois Battiste, Tonya Pinkins and Paige Gilbert. Left, Gilbert and John Clay III in ''A Raisin in the Sun,'' which had its Broadway premiere in 1959. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C6) This article appeared in print on page C1, C6.

**Load-Date:** October 26, 2022

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[***'Superstar' Cities Lose Luster as Educated Workers Tire of Costs***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:687J-BMS1-JBG3-649S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 2553 words

**Byline:** By Emily Badger, Robert Gebeloff and Josh Katz

**Body**

Educated workers are increasingly migrating away from the country's most expensive major metros -- and have been since before the pandemic.

The college graduates who fill white-collar jobs in the San Francisco area began to leave in growing numbers about a decade ago. More and more have moved to other parts of the country -- an accelerating outflow of educated workers that, in a poorer part of America, might be thought of as brain drain.

When the pandemic arrived, these departures surged so sharply that the San Francisco area has lately lost more educated workers than have moved in.

Over this same time, a similar pattern has been taking shape in metro San Jose and Los Angeles. Across the country, it has been building in the Washington, D.C., and New York areas. Educated workers, dating to before the pandemic, have been migrating away from the most prosperous parts of the country.

This trend, visible in an Upshot analysis of census microdata, is startling in retrospect. Major coastal metros have been hubs of the kind of educated workers coveted most by high-powered employers and economic development officials. Economists have lamented the growing coastal concentration of their wealth. A politics of resentment in America has fed on it, too. These urban centers have become a class of their own -- ''superstar cities'' -- with outsize impact on the American economy fueled by the clustering of workers with degrees.

But it appears in domestic migration data that, years after lower-wage residents have been priced out of expensive coastal metros, higher-paid workers are now turning away from them, too.

Working-age Americans with a degree are still flowing into these regions from other parts of the country, often in large numbers. But as the pool leaving grows faster, that educational advantage is eroding. Boston's pull with college graduates has weakened. Seattle's edge vanished during the pandemic. And the analysis shows San Francisco, San Jose, Los Angeles and Washington all crossing a significant threshold: More college-educated workers left than moved in.

For most of this century, large metros with a million residents or more have received all of the net gains from college-educated workers migrating around the country, at the expense of smaller places. But among those large urban areas, the dozen metros with the highest living costs -- nearly all of them coastal -- have had a uniquely bifurcated migration pattern: As they saw net gains from college graduates, they lost large numbers of workers without degrees.

At least, that was true until recently. Now, large, expensive metros are shedding both kinds of workers.

The college-educated workers who've turned away from them are increasingly migrating toward major metros that are still prosperous but not quite so expensive -- places like Phoenix, Atlanta, Houston and Tampa. During the pandemic, smaller cities such as Portland, Maine, and Wilmington, N.C., also saw growing inflows of such workers.

The overall migration rate in America today is historically low, and mobility has fallen since the 1980s for all kinds of demographic groups. But these college-educated workers have recently bucked that trend. In the years leading up to the pandemic, their mobility rate was actually rising, a pattern true for both local moves and the kind of longer-distance moves between metro areas analyzed by The Upshot. That has opened a potentially new divide in the American economy between increasingly mobile white-collar workers and blue-collar workers who are increasingly likely to stay put.

For every move that anecdotally points to these trends -- and the pandemic produced many such anecdotes -- it's trickier to capture these patterns nationwide. The census doesn't publicly track moves between metro areas by demographic cohorts. So to identify these patterns, The Upshot examined an anonymized sample of millions of census records and identified people who moved, grouped them by education level and age, and then linked each mover's origin and destination with larger counties and metro areas.

The fact that big coastal metros have been losing workers without a degree is not that surprising -- living costs have surged in these places as the good big-city jobs once available to less educated workers in factories and clerical pools have dwindled. But for workers with a degree, economists have concluded that the higher pay promised in places like the Bay Area and New York should still mean it's a good deal to live there.

That makes it all the more curious that these workers have been leaving anyway.

''Migration patterns for lower-education workers make complete sense,'' said Daniel Shoag, an economist at Case Western Reserve University who has found similar trends in work with co-authors Stan Veuger and Philip Hoxie.

''For college-educated workers,'' he said, ''it's more of a puzzle.''

Affordability issues move up income ladder

For these higher-education workers, it's not so easy to separate those who can't afford a city from those who can but leave anyway. Affordability is relative and personal; for one person it means making rent, for another it means making enough to also join a gym, buy concert tickets and dine out regularly. And even a professional who can afford all of that in New York may still eventually sour on the sixth-floor walk-up and the laundromat that comes with it.

It is clear, though, that affordability has broadly been eroding up the income spectrum in the country's most expensive metros. As these regions have become richer, that has, among other things, helped fuel the rise in their housing prices.

''And it ends up pricing out more and more people -- not just people in the middle, but even people with higher incomes and college degrees,'' said Jed Kolko, the under secretary for economic affairs at the U.S. Department of Commerce (and a former Upshot contributor).

If the Bay Area, for one, ceased to be a land of opportunity more than a generation ago for bus drivers and home health aids, today it may be losing that appeal for engineers and consultants.

The sudden pandemic-era rise of remote work has also accelerated that shift. Remote work has driven demand for more space by white-collar workers in precisely the places where more space is hardest to come by. And remote work has altered the bargain that educated workers must swallow high living costs to access the highest wages.

''Now, highly educated and more high-income workers have an option that they've never had before,'' said Hans Johnson, a demographer with the Public Policy Institute of California. At least some of those workers can now keep (or accept) San Francisco jobs, while paying Houston or Charlotte living costs. Mr. Johnson suspects that helps explain why the whole state of California has now become a net domestic loser of college graduates.

''California is so beautiful, but it is a hard place to live,'' said Rebecca McGrail, 62, a school principal who moved with her husband, a consultant, and daughter from the San Francisco metro to Durham, N.C., in 2019. That sentiment encompasses wildfires, earthquake fears and traffic, she said, but above all the steep cost of everything from housing to a pizza dinner.

Expensive big metros have struggled the most to retain educated workers aged 40 to 64, who face the greatest exposure to steep mortgages, child care costs and big grocery bills. (Younger educated workers were at first a bulwark against that trend, but have increasingly migrated away from these regions, too.)

Jim Dalrymple II left Los Angeles when he reached that costly life stage -- when the smallest, cheapest house he said he and his wife could find in the city was no longer big enough to fit children.

''I love L.A., I thought we would stay there indefinitely -- I miss it still,'' said Mr. Dalrymple, a 41-year-old writer. When he and his wife concluded they couldn't afford to stay, they moved in 2019 to a much larger home within walking distance of downtown Salt Lake City. He recalled the abundant jobs and affordable housing that attracted his schoolteacher grandparents to Southern California two generations before he left.

''I would love to take advantage of all that myself,'' he said. ''It's not available to us. And it's not available to a lot of people.''

Garrett Lyon, a 40-year-old brand strategist, described having a similar realization in Seattle when he and his wife considered buying a home: ''Seattle was crazy, absolutely, absolutely insanely expensive,'' he said. They could have afforded a home an hour outside the city, he said. Instead, they moved to Nashville.

Other college-educated workers who've moved away from the coasts described in interviews quality-of-life considerations that go beyond any simple accounting of wages versus living costs. They mention wanting furniture that would never fit in a New York elevator, or having a home office with a door that actually closes. They talk about not just cheaper housing, but washing machines, walk-in closets and walls to hang artwork.

Some describe frustration that even people who've followed typical routes to success -- get a degree, save up money, work your way up to better-paying jobs -- still struggle to live comfortably in coastal metros.

''The threshold is just so high,'' Eduardo Lerro, 45, said of the income required to get by in New York. He was a public-school teacher in the city, then recently became a higher-paid consultant who could live elsewhere. In 2021, he moved home to the Minneapolis area.

Metro New York has long lost more college graduates than it gains through domestic migration (a steady influx of immigrants has historically helped make up for that population loss). But while New York continues to attract more than 100,000 inbound working-age graduates annually, the number departing has grown steadily and topped more than 200,000 in the most recent year of census data -- which encompasses Mr. Lerro's move.

''My living room is bigger than any apartment in New York I ever had,'' he said. And that was true even with a Ph.D. and a good job.

'Incredible concentration of wealth'

Prosperous cities have long grappled with the imbalance created by an exodus of lower-wage workers. Their departures stress businesses needing to hire lower-wage staff, and they fray ***working-class*** neighborhoods that have lost residents. The high cost of living in big coastal metros also means that many lower-income households are blocked from moving into places with plentiful jobs and a stronger safety net. It's bad for these regions, too, when essential workers like firefighters or child care providers can't afford to live there.

The migration of college-educated residents away from these same places, on the other hand, raises a more muddled set of questions. Domestic migration is zero-sum, meaning a loss of college graduates prized by local officials and tax collectors in Washington or San Francisco can be a gain for Kansas City or Orlando. And researchers who study inequality say it would be a good thing if college graduates (and their spending power) were less clustered on the coasts.

''There's an incredible concentration of wealth in these superstar cities that is unhealthy,'' said David Autor, an economist at M.I.T. whose work has traced the disappearance over time of good big-city jobs for less educated workers. ''It also means a lot of the affluence that goes with that is very concentrated among a small set of people.''

While it may be good for the country for that affluence to spread out more, some of the forces that appear to be driving this shift -- like a coastal housing shortage, and political paralysis around solving it -- are hardly positive.

''It's a side benefit of a very messy, costly thing,'' said Adam Ozimek, the chief economist at the Economic Innovation Group, a think tank focused on the widening inequality in America between prosperous and struggling places.

College-educated workers leaving the most expensive parts of the country are also not spreading out equally everywhere -- or even going to parts of the country that are struggling. Most are going to what could be considered the next price tier of big metros. And since the pandemic, more are going to smaller metro areas and even rural parts of the country.

These migration patterns may also reflect the fact that many cities outside coastal America have themselves changed over the last 20 years. More of them have developed the amenities associated first with big coastal cities: revitalized downtowns, brewpubs, loft apartment conversions, diverse restaurant scenes.

''Some of it is that the most expensive places got really expensive,'' Rebecca Diamond, a Stanford economist, said of shifting migration patterns. ''But also, the middle-tier places became more attractive.''

Since 2000, she has found, college graduates have increasingly been moving toward high-amenity cities and away from the highest-wage ones. ''Consumer cities,'' as she puts it, are increasingly replacing ''producer cities'' as the places where college graduates want to live.

In interviews, several movers described not just the appeal in their new homes of more space and a lower cost of living, but also the sense that they hadn't given up too much to gain those benefits. To a growing degree, they said, what they left behind they can find in Charlotte, Denver, Minneapolis, Salt Lake City, Dallas or Louisville.

Those places today may promise something like 90 percent of the city life of a big coastal metro at 60 or 70 percent of the cost. And that trade-off is particularly alluring for some workers choosing between a central neighborhood in a more affordable city or a far-flung home in the coastal exurbs.

''There's never been a time since I moved here where I was like, 'Dang, I wish I could do something I used to be able to do back in D.C.,''' said Jonathan Ruckman, 42, who moved to Louisville from Washington in 2013.

On the other hand, he can do in Louisville things he believes he couldn't afford to in D.C., including buying a home as a public-interest lawyer.

Decisions like his are noteworthy not because a lawyer, a consultant or a brand strategist who moves across the country counts for more than a waitress who does, but because their decisions say something broader about the places they've left behind and the options available to others there.

''This is about choice, and who has choices,'' said Abigail Wozniak, who directs the Opportunity and Inclusive Growth Institute at the Minneapolis Fed. That means, she said, that we have to understand what goes into the choices visible in this data to recognize what choices are closed to other people -- like the teacher who might like to move to California but can't afford to and never does, or the nursing assistant who won't make it in New York because even an entrepreneur can't.

''I had these dreams about opening a business,'' said Laura Newman, 33, who wanted to own her own bar in her native New York City. ''I really wanted to pursue those dreams. And it didn't matter how much money I saved, because the cost of achieving those goals increased as I was saving money.''

And so she moved to Birmingham, Ala., in 2017 and opened her first bar there instead.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/14/upshot/superstar-cities-thrived-on-college-graduates-now-theyre-leaving.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/14/upshot/superstar-cities-thrived-on-college-graduates-now-theyre-leaving.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Eduardo Lerro, who taught school in New York, moved to the Minneapolis area, where, he said, the income ''threshold'' is lower. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JENN ACKERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A14.

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[***Math Lessons From Pennsylvania***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:618N-GK21-DXY4-X43P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 241 words

**Byline:** ‘Sway’

**Highlight:** The state’s lieutenant governor has been tweeting since election night. Mostly he’s trying to get the president to understand simple arithmetic.

**Body**

In the postelection uncertainty, all eyes were on Pennsylvania. And [*John Fetterman*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/08/us/politics/john-fetterman-pennsylvania.html), the state’s Twitter-famous lieutenant governor, held court. He rallied Democrats with one-liners and taunted President Trump with arithmetic lessons on Twitter. Mr. Trump can try to challenge the election result, he said, but “you can’t litigate math.”

[[You can listen to this episode of “Sway” on [*Apple*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/sway/id1647215384), [*Spotify*](https://open.spotify.com/show/5JZsS7vi4ijNKveG7Ob1V9?si=itnnfKjLRrme-hWyms2VyQ), [*Stitcher*](https://listen.stitcher.com/yvap/?c=sharelink&amp;af_dp=stitcher://show/1027720&amp;af_web_dp=https://www.stitcher.com/show/1027720&amp;deep_link_value=stitcher://show/1027720), [*Amazon Music*](https://music.amazon.com/podcasts/2fefb0a7-44a6-4e2e-ab94-73e33bda9827/sway?ref=dm_sh_8raBYjH9MiA3oUHWUpQ00Zr65), [*Google*](https://podcasts.google.com/feed/aHR0cHM6Ly9mZWVkcy5zaW1wbGVjYXN0LmNvbS9aSnQzNnA0SQ) or [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/21/opinion/how-to-listen-to-sway.html).]

Mr. Fetterman, the former mayor of a Rust Belt town, is 6-foot-8, with tattoos, a shaved head and a graduate degree in public policy from Harvard. He’s not your standard politician. And that’s helped him sell progressive politics to ***working-class*** voters and become a powerful voice of the left.

In this interview with Kara Swisher, Mr. Fetterman explains the “purple churn” in Pennsylvania and why Mr. Trump’s increasingly desperate pleas for a recount won’t reverse a Biden victory. “There is no enchanted village in Pennsylvania full of 50,000 Trump voters that we haven’t heard from already,” he says. “It doesn’t exist.”

(A full transcript of the episode will be available midday on the Times website.)

Thoughts? Email us at [*sway@nytimes.com*](mailto:sway@nytimes.com).

“Sway” is produced by Nayeema Raza, Heba Elorbany, Matt Kwong and Vishakha Darbha and edited by Paula Szuchman; fact-checking by Kate Sinclair; music and sound design by Isaac Jones. Special thanks to Renan Borelli, Liriel Higa and Kathy Tu.

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[***Chicago's Mayor Faces Rivals on Both Right and the Left***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67NB-R9F1-DXY4-X2FX-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Mayor Lori Lightfoot is seeking a second term, but she faces a wide field of challengers who have attacked her record on crime, policing and education.

CHICAGO -- As residents of Chicago prepare to elect a mayor, they are staring at a highly uncertain picture: a race so wide open that even the incumbent, Mayor Lori Lightfoot, who won every ward in the city in the final balloting four years ago, is not assured a spot in an expected runoff election.

Chicagoans will pick on Tuesday among nine candidates at a pivotal time to lead the city, which has wrestled since the pandemic with a spike in homicides and an emptier downtown. At least four of the candidates are seen as serious contenders to make it to an April 4 runoff, and Ms. Lightfoot finds herself in between candidates casting themselves to her political left, and also to her right.

In the final days of the race, Ms. Lightfoot has attempted to embrace her spot in the middle, arguing that the city needs to stay the course with her. Before a crowd at a union hall over the weekend, she accused one opponent of being an undercover Republican. Another, she said, would raise taxes and cut policing.

In addition to Ms. Lightfoot, the top tier of candidates includes Jesús G. García, a progressive congressman; Brandon Johnson, a county commissioner endorsed by the local teachers' union; and Paul Vallas, a former public school executive with a far more conservative platform on policing and education.

Those candidates all describe themselves as Democrats, an unofficial prerequisite for winning citywide office, but have vastly different visions for Chicago. Here is what is shaping the race to lead the country's third-largest city:

The incumbent is on shaky ground.

Ms. Lightfoot leveraged outsider status and a promise for sweeping reforms to win her seat in 2019, becoming the first Black woman and first openly gay person to serve as Chicago's mayor.

But she will enter this Election Day with uncertain prospects, dogged by diminished popularity, homicide rates that soared to generational highs and frequent feuds with labor unions and City Council members. Her campaign's own polling in the weeks before the election showed her in the lead, but with only 24 percent of the vote.

Ms. Lightfoot has spoken about a need to attract more people to Chicago. But while the city's population grew slightly between 2010 and 2020, census estimates show that the number of residents has declined since then.

Facing a crowded field, Ms. Lightfoot has portrayed herself this time not as a political outsider but rather as a serious, experienced leader who stabilized Chicago after being dealt a lousy hand. She has emphasized her investments in long-overlooked neighborhoods, defended her handling of the virus and noted that homicides have declined from their pandemic peak.

Paul Vallas wants to talk about crime.

When Mr. Vallas, a former chief executive of Chicago Public Schools, ran for mayor four years ago, he received just over 30,000 votes and finished in a distant ninth place.

But this time, he has emerged as perhaps Ms. Lightfoot's biggest electoral threat by portraying Chicago as a city in crisis and promising to crack down on lawbreakers. His campaign website describes the city in almost dystopian terms, saying it appears Chicago ''has been surrendered to a criminal element that acts with seeming impunity in treating unsuspecting, innocent people as prey.''

Mr. Vallas has called for increasing the number of police officers, replacing the police superintendent and improving arrest rates for serious offenses. But as he has made electoral inroads, emphasizing some of the issues that Mayor Eric Adams of New York City campaigned on in 2021, some have questioned whether he is out of step with Chicago's overwhelmingly Democratic electorate.

In a city with a powerful teachers' union and a long-troubled Police Department, Mr. Vallas's calls to invest in charter schools and prosecute more misdemeanor crimes have unnerved left-leaning residents and led Ms. Lightfoot to suggest his true loyalties are with the Republican Party. Then, in the final run-up to the election, The Chicago Tribune reported that Mr. Vallas's Twitter account had liked an array of tweets about the mayor that used offensive language or described Ms. Lightfoot as a man. Mr. Vallas, who calls himself a lifelong Democrat, said he did not like those posts and suggested that his Twitter account was breached.

Key union endorsements could cut both ways.

Two powerful labor unions that Ms. Lightfoot clashed with repeatedly -- the conservative local branch of the Fraternal Order of Police and the liberal Chicago Teachers Union -- have steered their supporters to two of her opponents. How much those endorsements will help or hurt remains an open question.

Mr. Vallas received the police union endorsement, which could be crucial in consolidating support among right-leaning voters and supporters of the police. But that endorsement has been used as an attack line by Ms. Lightfoot, and it may be a liability among Chicagoans who do not trust the Police Department or who disapprove of the union's frequently brash rhetoric and coziness with Republican politicians, including Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida.

The Chicago Teachers Union, basically the political opposite of the police union, gave its endorsement to Mr. Johnson, a Cook County commissioner and teacher running on an unabashedly progressive platform.

The teachers' union has emerged over the last decade as a powerful player in Chicago politics, engaging in repeated work stoppages, fighting with the last two mayors and putting forth a liberal vision for the city that extends beyond education issues. Its endorsement is now a coveted seal of approval on the progressive left.

But after a bruising fight between that union and Ms. Lightfoot over Covid-19 school reopenings and precautions, and in a city where many residents name crime and public safety as their top concern, it is not yet clear what impact the teachers' endorsement might have.

Race has long been a factor in Chicago politics.

Chicago, which has a long history of racial and ethnic groups voting as blocs, has roughly equal numbers of white, Black and Hispanic residents. This year's mayoral field has seven Black contenders (including Ms. Lightfoot and Mr. Johnson), one white candidate (Mr. Vallas) and one Hispanic candidate (Mr. García).

Beyond the four candidates leading in the latest polls, others retain significant support and hopes of squeezing into the runoff. Willie Wilson, a businessman who is locally famous for giving away gasoline and $100 bills, finished in fourth place in the 2019 mayoral election and is running again this year on a promise to clamp down on crime. Though Mr. Wilson, who is Black, has a strong base of ***working-class*** Black supporters, he has struggled in past campaigns to win votes outside of the South and West Sides.

Some Black leaders have expressed concern that the makeup of the field could dilute the voting power of Black residents and lessen the chances of electing a Black mayor. In parts of the city with more Black and Hispanic residents, voter turnout is sometimes lower than in North Side wards where many white people live.

Other Black candidates in the race include Kam Buckner, a state legislator; Ja'Mal Green, a civil rights activist; and Sophia King and Roderick Sawyer, both members of the City Council.

But while race plays a role in Chicago politics, that role is not necessarily decisive.

Four years ago, two Black women, Ms. Lightfoot and Toni Preckwinkle, built multiracial coalitions and emerged from a large, racially diverse slate of candidates to make the runoff. And eight years ago, Mr. García, who would be Chicago's first Hispanic mayor, qualified for the runoff by uniting Hispanic voters with political progressives of all backgrounds.

Electoral suspense has been a rarity in the past.

Chicago voters of a certain age came to expect, for better or worse, a level of continuity at City Hall. Richard J. Daley led the city for more than 20 years, from the 1950s into the '70s, as did his son Richard M. Daley, who served as mayor from 1989 until 2011. Elections still came around every four years, but they became more of a formality than a referendum.

Even when the younger Mr. Daley left office 12 years ago, there was little uncertainty about who would take over. Rahm Emanuel, fresh off a stint as President Barack Obama's chief of staff, returned to Chicago and won a majority of the vote, clinching the job without a runoff. (If no single candidate gets a majority of votes in the first election, the top two finishers advance to a runoff.)

Since then, mayoral elections have become far less predictable. Mr. Emanuel won a second term in 2015 but was forced into a runoff in a surprisingly close race with Mr. García. That runoff was the first since Chicago began holding officially nonpartisan elections in 1999.

Four years ago, after Mr. Emanuel decided not to run again, Ms. Lightfoot emerged in somewhat surprising fashion from a broad group of candidates that included several more established figures, including William M. Daley, a former White House chief of staff, and Susana Mendoza, the Illinois comptroller.

Whoever wins will face a changed City Council.

To enact their agenda, every Chicago mayor must navigate the city's 50-member City Council, a body known for its clubbiness, its members' frequent criminal indictments and the immense control it can exert over development.

As mayor, Ms. Lightfoot, who eliminated some of the sweeping privileges that Council members were historically given to govern their wards, has engaged in highly public disputes with some members even as she worked with them to raise the minimum wage and approve construction of a casino.

But the Council is in the midst of a transformation. Several long-serving members have resigned or decided not to seek another term, leaving voters across much of the city to choose new representation.

With all 50 seats up for election, and redrawn ward maps being used for the first time, voters will decide whether to empower more moderate or conservative candidates who have focused their campaigns on public safety issues, or elect progressives and Democratic Socialists calling for structural change. The outcomes of those races could determine what policies Ms. Lightfoot or her successor can pursue in the next four years.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/27/us/chicago-mayoral-election-lightfoot.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/27/us/chicago-mayoral-election-lightfoot.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From left, Ja'Mal Green, Sophia King, Kam Buckner, Willie Wilson, Brandon Johnson, Paul Vallas, Mayor Lori Lightfoot, Roderick Sawyer and Jesús G. García. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TYLER PASCIAK/CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

A rally last week for Mayor Lori Lightfoot. She has seemingly embraced her position in between more liberal and conservative challengers. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES)

Paul Vallas, at Barba Yianni Grecian Taverna on Sunday, finished ninth four years ago, but this time he has emerged as a leading contender. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAYLOR GLASCOCK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A13.

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[***‘Create, Share, Unite’: A French Choreographer’s Vision***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67NC-3MF1-DXY4-X32W-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Mehdi Kerkouche, who comes from the commercial dance world, has been tapped to run an important public institution, the National Choreographic Center in Créteil.

**Body**

Mehdi Kerkouche, who comes from the commercial dance world, has been tapped to run an important public institution, the National Choreographic Center in Créteil.

PARIS — Mehdi Kerkouche was born in the Cité Jardin neighborhood of Suresnes, on the western edge of Paris. It’s not terribly far from the [*Palais Garnier*](https://www.operadeparis.fr/en/visits/palais-garnier), the city’s gilded opera house, but it might as well have been on another planet for a small boy growing up in modest circumstances in a public housing complex.

And yet, in a video made in 2021, there he is, threading his way across the elaborate mosaic-patterned floor of a circular gallery at the Palais Garnier with his distinctive movement style — tiny nods of the head, sudden swerves of the torso and ceaselessly gesticulating hands. It’s an introduction to a piece he created for the Paris Opera Ballet, a commission from its [*then-director, Aurélie Dupont*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/16/arts/dance/paris-opera-aurelie-dupont.html?searchResultPosition=2), that surprised him as much as anyone else.

“Are you sure you mean me?” Kerkouche said, describing his encounter with Dupont in an interview here last month. It was just a couple of weeks after he had taken another unlikely step: At the start of this year, he became the director of the Centre Chorégraphique National de Créteil et du Val-de-Marne, one of the [*government-supported choreographic centers*](https://accn.fr/les-ccn/histoire-et-missions) dotted around the country that have changed the dance landscape in France since their founding in the 1980s.

He felt strongly that he had a contribution to make. “Dance is so often inaccessible to people,” he said, “and I understand that because of my background.”

His motto for the new job? “Create, share, unite.”

Before the Paris Opera commission, Kerkouche, who has wild curly hair and a beaming smile, had been a prolific presence in the commercial dance world — and found himself a viral sensation online early in the pandemic. But he had made only one concert dance.

In the past, this would have made his appointment in Créteil — a ***working-class*** town whose proximity to Paris makes the center a particularly prestigious and visible one — even more improbable. Brigitte Lefèvre, the former Paris Opera Ballet director, who as a delegate for dance at France’s culture ministry was involved in the creation of many of France’s national choreographic centers, said that Kerkouche wasn’t “in the line of choreographers that have been appointed in the past, but he is an extremely interesting, creative person who has a great relationship with the public.”

The centers were intended to take dance out of Paris and to the regions. (There are 19 now, each receiving federal, regional and city funding.) Mostly run by established names, including Alwin Nikolais, Maguy Marin and Angelin Preljocaj, they allowed choreographers to employ permanent troupes and give them a long-term home.

“The focus then was on creation,” said Ariane Bavelier, the deputy culture editor of the French newspaper Le Figaro. “But even if it’s not official, the goal has changed. Now there is a strong demand for directors to do educational programs, work in schools, prisons, hospitals, to make up for a deficiency of cultural activity in national education.” Because of that, she said, the role can be an opportunity for choreographers at an earlier stage of their careers.

The central purpose of choreographic centers ‌is still the creation of new work, said Laurent Vinauger, the head of the culture ministry’s dance delegation. But he agreed that “complementary objectives” — involving school programs, master classes and outreach — were‌ now just as important and that potential candidates might feel these obligations detract from the focus on making dances.

Kerkouche exemplifies a new generation of choreographic center directors who embrace those social objectives, like the artistic collective [*La Horde in Marseille*](https://www.ballet-de-marseille.com/en/biography), and the contemporary dance-makers Noé Soulier in Angers and [*Maud Le Pladec*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/10/arts/dance/maud-le-pladecs-percussive-democracy.html?searchResultPosition=1) in Orleans.

Le Pladec, who had been choreographing for just six years when she was appointed in Orleans, said “people may think Mehdi came from the internet to a choreographic center,” when instead “he just worked in different networks.”

In France, she added, there is a large barrier between work for public institutions and commercial work. But she said she found Kerkouche’s mix of the two “super inspiring,” adding that “he clearly has the skills they wanted in Créteil.”

Kerkouche, 36, was raised mostly by his mother, a domestic worker, after his parents divorced. He was the youngest of three brothers and “always dancing,” he said; he would tape television appearances by Janet Jackson, Michael Jackson, Aaliyah and Britney Spears and memorize the choreography.

Dancing was an escape from his unhappiness at his private Catholic high school. “I didn’t understand the sacrifices my parents made for that,” he said. “I was the little Muslim from the projects. I sang, I danced. Homophobia, racism, everything gets mixed up with kids. Dance was my outlet.”

He discovered a community center hip-hop class, then began to teach neighborhood children, and used the money to take different kinds of dance classes in Paris. “I never wanted to be a purist,” he said. “I wanted to study and borrow from everything: jazz, contemporary, African dance.”

After successfully auditioning for fashion and television shows, Kerkouche left high school, promising his parents that he would home-school. (“I never did it,” he said, slightly sheepishly.) He worked steadily as a dancer and singer in musicals and on TV, and taught. By 2008, he was ready to try making his own work.

After posting a short piece online, Kerkouche got a call from the shoe designer Christian Louboutin, asking him to choreograph an event for a boutique opening. It was his first real job as a choreographer. Others soon followed — for fashion shows, musicals and television spectacles like “The Voice,” the Miss France competition and the Eurovision Song Contest.

He also began to dance with a small pop group called [*Christine and the Queens*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/06/arts/dance/christine-and-the-queens-an-alter-ego-combining-music-and-dance.html?searchResultPosition=6). “Then her first album exploded and suddenly we were at Coachella and on Jimmy Fallon,” Kerkouche said. “The choreographer was Marion Motin and it was a very contemporary, minimalist approach, much less pop, which was a big influence on me.”

After touring with the group for three years and choreographing shows for others, Kerkouche felt ready to strike out on his own. “It had been 15 years of working for other people, where my own vision wasn’t central,” he said. “I felt I had things to say.” He formed his own company of seven dancers in 2017, calling it Emka (the sound, in French, of his initials). It wasn’t easy.

“My friends in TV said, ‘Good luck, it’s not possible,’” he said. “My friends in contemporary dance said the same.”

“In France, people love to put you in boxes,” said Alexandra Trovato, one of Kerkouche’s first dancers and now his choreographic assistant. “It’s the future to mix styles and genres. Mehdi reflects a new generation. Contemporary means new, not what people think — that it has to be serious, with people dancing naked.”

He had made one work, [*“Dabkeh,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-CU6glB8oA) with his company in 2019, before Covid and lockdown arrived. Stuck in his small apartment in early 2020, Kerkouche told his dancers they would rehearse every day online. He soon posted a split-screen video on Facebook of [*a short piece*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0aiteiuH3Q) they had created. “In one day we had a million views; after a while it got to four million across social media,” he said. “The news was so bleak and scary. I think it gave people a lift.”

The news media up picked the video, and Kerkouche and his company were suddenly in the public eye, later presenting an online daylong dance marathon, “[*On Danse Chez Vous*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEzZLPa7Aew),” or “Dancing at Your House,” involving 70 artists and raising 15,000 euros for a hospital foundation.

Then came an Instagram message from Dupont, asking to meet. Kerkouche “didn’t really know anything about ballet,” having seen only one, “La Sylphide.” But when Dupont offered him a commission for the end of 2020, he recalled seeing the name of the contemporary dance choreographer Angelin Preljocaj on a poster for the Paris Opera Ballet. “I remember thinking, ‘I could do this, too,’” he said.

Dupont had become aware of Kerkouche’s work when she saw extracts from “Dabkeh” online. “I thought it was really well choreographed,” she said in a phone interview, “and that there were dancers at the Opera who would be ready to take on his vocabulary and style. He really succeeded in melding a hip-hop with a contemporary style: very grounded, with an incredible energy. It was a fantastic experience for the dancers.”

For Kerkouche, too. “Before that I was just making do, cobbling things together,” he said. “Suddenly I had an original score, a lighting designer, rehearsal space and those fantastic dancers. I discovered I was making art!”

A second lockdown prevented a live premiere, so [*the work, “Et Si,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elsZqObOZjA) was presented online and on television. Kerkouche returned to working with his dancers, presenting a live version of his “On Danse Chez Vous” festival and creating [*a group piece, “Portrait,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81NKdMZOeUA) which offers an idiosyncratic mix of dancers in a fluid blend of dance styles, suggesting a family of sorts through its imagery and occasional text.

When he heard that [*Mourad Merzouki*](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/09/arts/the-new-season-dance-from-inner-city-moves-to-outback-modes-hip-hop-as-high-art.html?searchResultPosition=2), the former head of the Créteil choreographic center, was leaving, he applied.

“There is no doubt that other candidates were better versed in that universe,” he said. “People who perhaps fit in better.”

But Kerkouche felt he had a lot to offer, and a lot to gain from the institutional support. “This kind of position, with the support it has,” he said, “can allow you to really reach a wide public, to support emerging choreographers, to create not just on stages but in public places and digitally.”

After a laborious and bureaucratic selection process — he described it as “hell” — Kerkouche heard in early September that he had the job. He was excited, he said, rather than daunted by the responsibilities.

For him the mission is clear: “I want to incorporate as many styles and influences as possible, make work that will reach as wide a public as possible. We are a generation that is open and expressive; we have craft and passion.” He halted the flood of words, but then added one more thought: “I don’t think popular means vulgar.”

PHOTO: The dancer and choreographer Mehdi Kerkouche, on the roof of the town hall in Créteil. “I wanted to study and borrow from everything: jazz, contemporary, African dance,” he said. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIEN MIGNOT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page AR7.

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2023

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[***Nets, Buoys, Salt, Ice. For West African Fishermen, ‘Everything’ Is Going Up.; sierra leone dispatch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:675P-YXC1-JBG3-63T9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1387 words

**Byline:** Elian Peltier

**Highlight:** Fishermen in Sierra Leone need large amounts of ice to store their catch on multiday journeys. Like many commodities, it has become pricey.

**Body**

Fishermen in Sierra Leone need large amounts of ice to store their catch on multiday journeys. Like many commodities, it has become pricey.

His red soccer jersey and shorts soaked in salty water, Edison Fofana loaded his boat on a recent morning with gallons of fuel, a box of rice and bottles of soda needed for his four-day fishing journey.

Walking back and forth between the beach buzzing with dozens of other fishermen and his wooden vessel docked nearby, he also carried on his head bags of ice — an increasingly expensive commodity, but necessary to keep his catch fresh on the trip.

“Within a week time, ice prices shoot up,” said Mr. Fofana, 33, as he jumped into the ice storage bin on his boat and sprinkled salt on the ice he had just stacked to prevent it from melting. “Nets, rice, fuel, ice, everything.”

Skyrocketing fuel prices caused in part by the war in Ukraine have driven up the cost of living in African countries like Sierra Leone this year, hitting fishermen and ***working-class*** communities hard and leaving millions hungry. Their governments, highly dependent on imports of basic commodities like rice and wheat, have seen meager financial reserves dwindle.

In West and Central Africa, a 2,000-mile-long stretch of food insecurity has developed among at least eight countries, according to the [*World Food Program*](https://hungermap.wfp.org), and the dire situation is likely to [*worsen*](https://www.wfp.org/news/fao-unicef-and-wfp-call-urgent-and-long-lasting-action-west-and-central-africa-region-faces) next year as [*floods in Nigeria and Chad*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/16/climate/climate-change-floods-west-africa.html) this summer ravaged a million acres of farmland.

Around 48 million people are expected to face hunger in the region next year, according to the U.N. agency, including nine million children.

In Sierra Leone, a coastal nation of eight million people, 80 percent of the population relies on fish as a source of animal protein. Every day, hundreds of fishermen leave its pristine beaches to try their luck, hoping to catch swordfish, small sharks or barracuda from their slender, colorful wooden boats with names like “God,” “King” or their hometowns.

But back on shore, their families are increasingly reliant on other food sources. On a recent evening on the main beach in Tombo, a fishing town 20 miles south of Freetown, children scurried for cheap beignets, a deep-fried pastry, as adults sucked on potatoes drowned in Maggi-seasoning sauce or a porridge of cassava and yam.

As the sun set, fishermen in groups of four to five were leaving for the night to the sound of [*Afrobeats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/01/special-series/burna-boy-afrobeats-global-hits.html), as adventurous toddlers were kept in check by their mothers. Other boats had departed earlier that morning for neighboring Guinea, where the waters, some fishermen say, are richer these days.

Fatima Koroma, a fishmonger for the past 20 years, kept the four colorful plastic bowls full of fish she had just bought close by. She said her difficulties had just “spiraled into something else” since the beginning of the year.

A small bag of rice that used to cost about $16 now costs nearly $27, said Ms. Koroma, 45 and the mother of seven children. “We’re more often talking about cups of rice than bags now,” she said. Her profits every few days: around $11.

A can of palm oil is now 49 percent more expensive compared with last year, according to the World Food Program; even the price of potato and cassava leaves, two cheap staple goods produced locally, has nearly doubled as the price of fuel needed to transport them has increased. So has the price of salt.

As of August, eight out of 10 Sierra Leonean households were food insecure, according to the World Food Program. Along with Burkina Faso and Mauritania, Sierra Leone is among the West African countries with the highest rate of food insecurity.

For fishermen like Mr. Fofana, the latest challenge is the price of flake ice. But plenty of other problems pre-date that cost surge.

For the past few years, foreign trawlers, mostly from China, South Korea and Europe, have largely depleted the waters off Sierra Leone and other West African countries, forcing him to venture farther out to sea.

A fishing trip that used to take a day or two now requires up to a week — meaning that Mr. Fofana needs more ice to keep his fish from rotting.

But when the price of the fuel and electricity needed to power the generators that make and store ice goes up, so does the cost of a bag of ice — from about $1 to $1.40 over the past few months.

That may not sound like much, Mr. Fofana acknowledged, but that morning, he loaded 30 bags on his boat. And ice is not the only issue. One small net now costs about $430, up from $370 recently, and Mr. Fofana needs 20 to 22 of those nets knitted together when he goes to sea.

Mr. Fofana says he occasionally loses his catch when foreign trawlers tear through his nets, a fate many fishermen say they have experienced. Even the price of the dozens of buoys attached to the nets has increased.

“It just adds up, and up,” he said. “But what we catch out at sea, does not.”

Mr. Fofana grew up in Goderich, a buzzing wharf in western Freetown teeming with colorful wooden boats, market vendors selling poultry and fresh fish and children kicking balls around. The father of an 8-year-old boy, he has been fishing since he was a teenager and is one of the 500,000 people in Sierra Leone who depend on fishing for their livelihoods.

Fishermen across coastal Western Africa face similar challenges, according to Dr. Ifesinachi Okafor-Yarwood, a lecturer in sustainable development at the University of St. Andrews who has studied fishing communities in West Africa.

For the men who fish, and the women who process and sell the catch, only ice keeps fish sellable, whether in it is Sierra Leone, Ghana or Senegal, because refrigerators and ice containers are scarce.

“If women haven’t sold fish at the end of the day, they have to sell at the giveaway price,” Dr. Okafor-Yarwood said. “There’s so much food wastage because of the lack of preservation.”

Cyril Jengo, an economist based in Freetown, said making ice was costly in countries with regular power cuts like Sierra Leone. “If you use your generator, you face a high bill; if you don’t, you go out of business,” Mr. Jengo said.

“Ultimately, that cost is being passed on to customers.”

Indeed, in Goderich, the price of fish has gone up 20 to 30 percent on average, but that is far less than the cost of most everything else the fishermen need.

Such hardships have already prompted people to protest. This summer an unknown number of demonstrators died in [*protests over the rising cost of living*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/12/world/africa/sierra-leone-protests.html) in Freetown.

Sierra Leone’s central bank has removed three zeros from its bank notes, hoping to restore confidence in the currency and reduce the amount of paper money in circulation while keeping its value unchanged. But it has mostly sown confusion, with many Sierra Leoneans still pricing goods in the former currency, the Leone, which has lost more than 40 percent of its value against the dollar since September, 2021.

Mr. Fofana buys his ice from a nearby plant, and on a recent morning there a steady stream of sweaty deliverymen in sleeveless shirts piled up ice bags on wheelbarrows. While fishermen need it to store their catch at sea, fishmongers need it on land.

Earlier this year, a shipping container financed by the government of Iceland and designed to store fish, make ice and reduce the fishermen’s dependence on the local ice plant, was installed in Goderich. But until a nearby road is completed and water can reach the container, which sits a few hundred yards away from the docked boats, it remains a lukewarm box that doesn’t keep fish fresh for long, fishermen and fishmongers say.

When the local ice plant stopped functioning for a few days earlier this month, fishermen were forced to get ice from another plant a few miles away, a taxi trip that added to their ever-growing bills.

Joseph Johnson contributed reporting.

Joseph Johnson contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: With the rising cost of ice, many fishermen in Goderich, a neighborhood in Freetown, Sierra Leone, can’t afford to buy the number of bags they need to catch enough fish and keep them fresh.; Clockwise from top: Goderich residents waiting for the arrival of the fleet; Mensa Ekow and his crew can’t afford to fill their storage spaces properly, limiting their time at sea to how long they can keep the fish fresh; an ice container. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY YAGAZIE EMEZI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A4.

**Load-Date:** December 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Beijing's Looming Demographic Crunch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67BT-X281-JBG3-631N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 19, 2023 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6; NEWS ANALYSIS

**Length:** 1503 words

**Byline:** By Chris Buckley, Joy Dong and Amy Chang Chien

**Body**

A demographics challenge has been building for years, but Beijing's preparations are lagging. Now, many worry that current measures may offer too little, too late.

China's leaders have long known that the country is nearing a demographic crossroads. Policymakers have warned that China must prepare for a slowly shrinking population and an era of fewer workers and more retirees. State media have urged young couples to seize the opportunity to have two or three children under relaxed family-size rules, to soften the looming economic crunch.

And yet the sense of incipient crisis grew on Tuesday, when the government confirmed that the nation's population shrank last year for the first time in six decades, sooner and sharper than many experts had forecast.

Even if Chinese officials have warned that a demographic Rubicon was approaching, their preparations have not kept pace with the long-term needs of an aging society, in the eyes of many experts and Chinese people.

China's abrupt abandonment of ''zero Covid'' controls exposed a government ill prepared for an explosion in infections. And, similarly, the mounting population pressures may reveal a government that has not done enough to avoid tough choices in coming decades over rival priorities. Between the demands of caring for young and old. Between paying for social welfare and building up China's technological and military might.

China's leader, Xi Jinping, has partly sought to tackle the long-term economic and social pressures from a shrinking, aging society more by lifting the limits on family size. He has taken steps to build a strong social safety net and announced a new phase of ''high-quality'' growth less dependent on legions of cheap, abundant migrant workers from the countryside.

''The population issue is the most important issue for the future and yet the one that is most easily neglected,'' Ren Zeping, a former chief economist for the Evergrande Group, a massive housing developer, who has studied the looming demographic crunch, wrote in a widely circulated comment after the figures were released Tuesday. Mr. Ren called for more energetic policy-making, including birth subsidies, stronger paternity and maternity leave, and improved protection of women's rights in the workplace.

After the latest population statistics were released, many suggested in social media posts and in interviews that the government's moves may be too little and too late. To many, the government has barely begun to tackle the deeper reasons many young couples choose to have one child or none at all, like the costs of rearing and educating children and lack of substantial government support, especially for women, at home and in the workplace.

''I'd like to have a kid, but the living pressures are just too much,'' Wu Yilan, a 34-year-old shopkeeper in Beijing, said in a telephone interview. She said she had discussed it with a former boyfriend. ''If I settle down with a partner, I'd probably think that one child is enough.''

Anxiety and argument about China's new demographic era have been building as birthrates have slowed, especially in recent years. It has now hit a turning point: China's population in 2022 fell by 850,000, with more deaths than births for the first time since a famine in the early 1960s caused by Mao Zedong's calamitous social experiment, the Great Leap Forward.

Chinese demographers, economists and business leaders have offered a number of ideas to support a growing number of older people and encourage couples to have more children. In 2016, the government eased the ''one-child'' policy that had been enforced for over three decades, allowing families to have two children. In 2021, it increased the limit to three.

Even so, most couples still stick to having one child, while two is common in the countryside. Many young people, especially women, remain skeptical that the government is going to make it easier for them to both have children and remain in the formal work force.

Jennie Liu, a 32-year-old podcast platform manager in Shanghai, said that she and her boyfriend agreed that they would like to raise one or two children -- but only if they could ''run,'' a Chinese buzzword for moving abroad.

''If we can run to somewhere with better welfare and an improved overall social environment where a child can obtain residency status, then we may think about having a kid,'' she said. In China, ''the aging population and decline of the working-age population will definitely put pressure on government finances.''

The societal issues run deep. After Tuesday's data release, some on the Chinese internet said that despite government promises of a fairer deal for women, many employers did not want to employ women in better, steady jobs, because they did not want to deal with maternity leave and child care.

''In the job market, they worry that if you're 23-30, you'll get married and have a kid, that if you're 30-35 you'll have a second or third one, and if you're over 35, then sorry,'' read one comment. ''This kind of social setting is already the best form of contraception. All those policies to encourage births and open up will amount to nothing.''

The measures championed by Chinese policymakers often neglect the broader pressures on women, especially those from rural and ***working-class*** backgrounds, which put them in a painful bind between family and work, said Yige Dong, an assistant professor of sociology at the University at Buffalo, which is part of the State University of New York system.

Families face intense pressure to get children into better schools, with much of the burden falling on mothers who are often also expected to care for aged parents and parents-in-law.

''They are caught between the demand to go to work and the demands for intensive parenting,'' Ms. Dong said, citing interviews with female migrant workers in central China.

''On the one hand, China is talking about this as a crisis of a declining fertility rate, and on the other hand, they are cracking down on feminism,'' she said in a telephone interview. ''With those two things in contradiction, how can you convince the next generation of young women -- who have their own aspirations -- to go into marriage?''

A shrinking, aging society is far from unique to China, even in Asia, and the effects will unfold over decades. Even so, China's heavy restrictions on family size in past decades mean that the country is confronting these pressures much sooner in its economic takeoff than, say, Japan or South Korea.

The resulting economic and population pressures will erode China's strength in coming decades and could encourage its leaders to become more aggressive before they feel their national power has ebbed, says Michael Beckley, an associate professor at Tufts University and co-author of Danger Zone: The Coming Conflict with China, a new book that lays out this argument.

''China's proposed demographic reforms are drops in the bucket. They are swamped by the fact that China will lose 5 to 10 million working-age adults and gain 5 to 10 million senior citizens every year for the foreseeable future,'' Professor Beckley said in emailed answers to questions. ''You can't compensate for that kind of demographic crunch simply by raising the retirement age.''

Other scholars have disputed Professor Beckley's forecast of a demographically led decline in Chinese power. China, they note, could counter population pressures by providing better training for workers, improving their productivity and by increasing innovation and automation across industries.

But few disagree that such changes would demand much more spending commitments from Chinese leaders, who also want to invest heavily in military modernization, technological advancement and internal security.

Mr. Xi has not been blindsided by these challenges. Beijing has unfurled policies to encourage expanded senior care, and promised more social support for women who want to have children. Since citizens have repeatedly expressed public anger over sexual harassment at universities, companies and media outlets, the government has also promised to crack down.

While Mr. Xi has endorsed equality between the sexes and repeated Mao's dictum that ''women hold up half the sky,'' he has also encouraged respect for traditional family roles.

''The broad number of women must conscientiously shoulder the burden of caring for the elderly and nurturing the young, educating children, and playing a role in building family virtues,'' he said in 2013.

But framing China's population pressures as a matter of attitude issues among young women distracts from the deeper social and economic pressures on them, said Ms. Dong, the professor from the University at Buffalo.

''It's a political issue, not a question of social engineering,'' she said. ''The blame is put on families and individuals, especially young women who are unwilling to get married, but they don't talk about the role of the state and its policies.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/world/asia/china-population-politics.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/world/asia/china-population-politics.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Declining births and an aging population have put China into a demographic bind, and to critics, preparations have not kept pace.

President Xi Jinping urges respect for traditional family roles.

Despite a policy change, many young Chinese couples still choose to have one child, or none. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GILLES SABRIÉ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A6.

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2023

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[***Panel Rejects Hochul's Pick For Top Judge***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67BT-X281-JBG3-6335-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 19, 2023 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1673 words

**Byline:** By Luis Ferré-Sadurní and Jesse McKinley

**Body**

Gov. Kathy Hochul's choice of Justice Hector LaSalle to become the state's top judge caused an intraparty Democratic battle that divided a judicial hearing on Wednesday.

ALBANY, N.Y. -- Gov. Kathy Hochul's embattled nominee to become New York State's top judge was rejected on Wednesday, an unprecedented repudiation that underscored a deep division among Democrats on the direction of the state's judicial system.

After a combative hourslong hearing, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted 10-9 against the nomination of Justice Hector D. LaSalle, whose nomination was strongly opposed by progressives who saw him as too conservative.

The committee's rejection -- the first time that New York lawmakers have voted against a governor's choice for chief judge -- laid bare how vulnerable Ms. Hochul, a Buffalo-area Democrat, may be to a challenge from her own party. All 10 senators who voted against the judge were Democrats; two Democrats voted in favor of Justice LaSalle, while one Democrat and all six Republicans on the committee voted in favor ''without recommendation.''

The rejection does not necessarily mean that the LaSalle saga is over. The governor has not ruled out taking legal action to force a vote on Justice LaSalle's nomination on the full Senate floor, raising the specter of a constitutional showdown.

The fight over the chief judge nomination, usually a noncontentious ordeal, has become the most consequential political challenge of Ms. Hochul's first full term after being elected in November. The quarrel has set her against more progressive Democrats in the State Senate, testing her relationship with lawmakers as she begins to push her recently unveiled policy agenda in Albany.

Justice LaSalle, who was vying to become the first Latino chief judge, always faced an uphill climb. His nomination in December was immediately opposed by several unions, reproductive rights groups and community organizations, which pointed to cases that they said revealed he was anti-union and anti-abortion.

A large contingent of Democrats in the State Senate had already said they opposed him -- many others raised their objections in private -- with many arguing that the judge's elevation would help perpetuate the court's conservative tilt.

In his first public remarks since emerging as a political flashpoint, Justice LaSalle sought on Wednesday to dispel what he said were unfair characterizations of his judicial record, vowing to ''set the record straight.''

''I only ask that this body look at my entire record, not just the record that certain advocates have chosen to look at,'' Justice LaSalle said in an unusually crowded legislative hearing room, arguing that some of his cases had been the target of ''mischaracterization simply to derail my nomination.''

Quizzed by lawmakers about his judicial philosophy, Justice LaSalle argued that many of the cases that had been singled out had hinged on procedural questions, and did not necessarily reflect his underlying beliefs on larger bellwether issues involving union rights and abortion.

Indeed, citing his upbringing in a union and ***working-class*** household, Justice LaSalle repeatedly leaned on his personal life story, casting his judicial career as one centered on breaking down barriers affecting marginalized communities.

''When you talk about labor, those are the people that raised me,'' Justice LaSalle said, describing how he walked ''the picket line with my abuela.''

He also reaffirmed his belief in a woman's right to abortion services, saying, ''I do not want my daughter to have fewer rights than her mother.''

Justice LaSalle is the presiding justice of the Appellate Division of the Second Judicial Department of the New York State Supreme Court, which handles civil and criminal appeals from Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, Westchester County and a half-dozen other counties.

He was considered among the more moderate potential nominees from a list of seven candidates Ms. Hochul was given to choose from by a special commission as she looked to replace Janet DiFiore, who resigned last year. The chief judge leads the Court of Appeals and oversees the state's vast and complex court system.

Even with the committee's rejection of Justice LaSalle, there's a chance that the clash over his nomination could end up in the courts. The governor has argued that a committee vote is irrelevant and that, according to her reading of the State Constitution, her nominee must be subject to a full vote on the Senate floor.

The governor on Wednesday criticized the hearing as unfair, claiming that ''the outcome was predetermined'' after the State Senate suddenly expanded the committee this month to add more Democrats, all three of whom voted against Justice LaSalle.

While Ms. Hochul did not say whether she would pursue litigation, she said she believed ''the Constitution requires action by the full Senate.''

Shortly after, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the Democratic majority leader in the State Senate, seemed to rule out that scenario, adding that her conference was interested in a chief judge who could ''change the trajectory'' of the Court of Appeals' conservative-leaning rulings in recent years.

''It's clear that this nominee was rejected and that's it,'' she said. ''We have to find a nominee that will be supported by the majority of the Senate and then get on with that.''

The State Constitution says that a governor must make judicial appointments with the ''advice and consent of the Senate.'' Ms. Hochul, as well as some legal experts and Senate Republicans, have interpreted that to mean that the entire Senate, not just a committee, must vote on her nominee.

A floor vote could arguably favor Ms. Hochul, who would have greater flexibility to cobble together enough votes from Democrats and even some Republicans in the minority to confirm Justice LaSalle.

Senate Democrats have defended the committee vote -- the process routinely used to move legislation to the floor -- by arguing that the Senate can determine its own procedural rules, especially since the Constitution does not explicitly say a candidate must be voted on by the full State Senate.

In explaining his vote against Justice LaSalle, Senator Andrew Gounardes, a Democrat from Brooklyn, used a baseball analogy, saying that ''It's not just whether a judge can call balls and strikes, but more importantly it's how they view the strike zone.''

''After reviewing Judge LaSalle's record in case after case, I believe that he has a conservative view of what the strike zone is,'' he said.

Many Democratic lawmakers raised concerns about a 2015 defamation case where Justice LaSalle and a majority of the appellate court held that while state law prohibits companies from suing unions and their representatives for labor-related activities, such lawsuits are allowed if companies can show that the representatives were acting in their personal capacity.

''Any suggestion that I'm anti-union or anti-labor is absolutely untrue,'' Justice LaSalle said, adding that he ''agreed full heartedly with the concept that big business should not be using litigation to chill the voices of organized labor.''

In his line of questioning, Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal, a Democrat from Manhattan who chairs the Judiciary Committee, sought to tie Justice LaSalle to Ms. DiFiore, who was reviled by many Democrats, noting cases in which she had reached the same conclusion as Justice LaSalle.

He also questioned Justice LaSalle, who is a former prosecutor, on instances where he had sided with the prosecution, saying that ''it would seem to me that one could make the claim that you lean toward prosecution and against civil rights.''

Justice LaSalle said he ''did not recognize the person'' that some of his opponents had made him out to be, saying that he understood ''what people deal with every day in the U.S., with police engagements, with the law.''

Other lawmakers asked Justice LaSalle about a unanimous opinion he joined in 2017 that ordered the New York attorney general to narrow a subpoena issued to the operator of anti-abortion ''crisis pregnancy centers.'' The case had led to accusations that Justice LaSalle was hostile to abortion rights.

''Based on your record, I think that it's not unfair for people to project what some of your decisions might be,'' Senator John Liu, a Democrat from Queens, said, raising concerns about the case.

Justice LaSalle reiterated that he strongly believed in ''a woman's right to make her own reproductive decisions,'' arguing that the case in question centered on prosecutorial overreach.

In an unusual twist, it was Republicans who gave Justice LaSalle a far warmer reception, with many saying that his confirmation had devolved into an intensely politicized process.

Senator Anthony H. Palumbo, a Republican from Long Island, told the judge that Justice LaSalle represented ''the embodiment, in my opinion, of the American dream.''

Despite pressure on her to withdraw her nomination, the governor has forcefully defended Justice LaSalle. Over the weekend she rallied support alongside other top Democrats, including Representative Hakeem Jeffries, the U.S. House minority leader, stressing the symbolic importance of elevating a jurist of Puerto Rican descent to the upper echelons of state government.

Indeed, Justice LaSalle's nomination has split Latino elected officials, with some suggesting that he was subjected to a double standard because of his ethnicity.

Senator Luis Sepúlveda, a Democrat from the Bronx who is Puerto Rican and voted in favor of Justice LaSalle, said the judge had been the target of a ''character assassination'' because he was Latino.

After the hearing, Mr. Hoylman-Sigal, the committee chairman, implored the governor to avoid taking legal action, warning of a potential ''constitutional crisis.''

''It's obviously the governor's decision, but we have so much work to do in Albany,'' he said. ''To be distracted by a lawsuit would be a travesty for the people of New York.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/nyregion/chief-judge-lasalle-hearing.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/nyregion/chief-judge-lasalle-hearing.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: ''I only ask that this body look at my entire record,'' Justice Hector D. LaSalle said on Wednesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CINDY SCHULTZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18) This article appeared in print on page A1, A18.

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2023

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[***Review: This Time, ‘A Raisin in the Sun’ Really Does Explode***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66PN-G461-DXY4-X0N7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 25, 2022 Tuesday 23:56 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1185 words

**Byline:** Jesse Green

**Highlight:** Lorraine Hansberry’s 1959 classic ends on a note of cautious optimism. Its latest incarnation, at the Public Theater, does not.

**Body**

Lorraine Hansberry’s 1959 classic ends on a note of cautious optimism. Its latest incarnation, at the Public Theater, does not.

Leaving his recent “[*Long Day’s Journey Into Night*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/theater/long-days-journey-into-night-review.html)” aside, Robert O’Hara doesn’t typically direct revivals; nor, leaving Shakespeare aside, does the Public Theater typically produce them. Yet on Tuesday the Public opened O’Hara’s take on [*Lorraine Hansberry’s “A Raisin in the Sun”*](https://publictheater.org/productions/season/2223/a-raisin-in-the-sun/): not merely a revival but a further “exploration” of an earlier production of a 1959 classic that is arguably as well known today as it was epochal when it debuted.

How, then, to make it new? Apparently, on the evidence of this staging, by furiously underlining its subtleties and downplaying its conventional strengths, a reversal of standard procedure that produces a sometimes stunning, sometimes stunted result.

It’s not as if the play needed help to feel relevant; like all great works it has proved itself incessantly timely. In telling the story of the Youngers, a Black family aiming to move from a “rat trap” tenement on Chicago’s South Side to a house in a ***working-class*** white neighborhood, it both reports on and anticipates the racist backlash to upward mobility that has been a blight on American life since Reconstruction. And in dramatizing the effects of that backlash on Walter Lee, the feckless dreamer of the family, it offers a piercing psychological portrait of Black manhood in distress.

As was customary in her time, Hansberry prioritizes the real estate plot, wrapping Walter Lee’s personal drama (and that of his mother, wife, sister and son) in its ultimately hopeful arms. Beginning with the indignities of “ghetto-itus” — there are just two bedrooms for the three generations and a bathroom shared with neighbors down the hall — the play ends with them all moving out. Even the feeble houseplant, symbolically undernourished in the light-deprived apartment, is promised a new life.

O’Hara signals from the start (and reiterates throughout) that he will flip the focus, at the same time broadening and darkening it. His production begins not, as written, with Ruth Younger (Mandi Masden) making breakfast, but with Walter Lee (Francois Battiste) carrying their sleeping son, Travis, from the dim recesses of the apartment to his bed on the living room sofa. It’s a haunting image that suggests the way the father’s hopes, and perhaps his failures, may be borne into the future — a future O’Hara and the scenic designer, Clint Ramos, literalize in a devastating coup de théâtre at the end.

In between, no matter how judiciously Hansberry has distributed the play’s attention among the main characters — including the matriarch, Lena (Tonya Pinkins), and her daughter, Beneatha (Paige Gilbert) — O’Hara concentrates his prodigious theatrical imagination on Walter Lee.

Battiste, among the most compelling stage actors today, has no difficulty filling the additional space created by that interpretation, making the character more alarming than usual but no less believable. Even when O’Hara has him step completely out of the frame of the play, turning what is already a horrifying speech (“O, yassuh boss! Yassssuh, Great white Father!”) into a brutal moment of minstrelsy, Battiste manages not to rip the skin of the role.

But some of O’Hara’s other attempts to muscle in on Hansberry’s naturalism are less successful. Reaching not just forward but also backward along the family’s male line, he transfers some of the dialogue normally assigned to Lena to the ghost of her husband, who wanders atmospherically in and out of the action, looking unmoored. (The spectral lighting is by Alex Jainchill.) Also unmoored: a passage of postcoital pillow talk for Walter Lee and Ruth, created by turning dialogue that’s usually spoken live into a recorded voice-over. We hear the moans of their lovemaking too.

Rather than creating the impression of buried fondness in their marriage, as it evidently means to do, the interpolation pushes the affection offstage. That’s a problem throughout. O’Hara directs most of the family scenes as overlapping free-for-alls, creating a generalized impression of dysfunction and very little of attachment. (Most of the funny and trenchant detail is lost in the noise.) At times I had the feeling that O’Hara, impatient with Hansberry’s occasionally laborious dramaturgy, had spun all the dials to the extreme right: volume, contrast, hue.

Yet that was not the case in [*the earlier version of this revival seen at the Williamstown Theater Festival*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/01/theater/a-raisin-in-the-sun-review.html) in 2019. Led more equally by Battiste’s Walter Lee and S. Epatha Merkerson’s Lena, that “Raisin” was just as daring but less cartoonish. And though the current cast is very good generally, it’s noticeable that the comic material is handled most deftly, with standout performances from the piquant Gilbert and, as a nosy neighbor, Perri Gaffney.

Rather, the problem seems to be that O’Hara’s continued exploration has escaped Hansberry’s orbit, leaving some of the graver characters stranded in the thin air between her style and his. As Lena, Pinkins, ordinarily capable of astonishing depth and power, is largely hampered by too much directorial business, including the sudden onset of a ferocious palsy no one onstage seems to notice. And where the script famously has her slap her daughter for blasphemy, O’Hara has her go much further, leaving Beneatha flat on the floor.

Despite his similar approach to the play overall, it never stays down for long. It can’t; it has too much internal energy and direction for any single misstep, including Hansberry’s, to throw the whole thing off track. Beneatha’s choice between two suitors — a preppy conformist (Mister Fitzgerald) and a Nigerian idealist (John Clay III) — is fully engaging no matter how creaky the setup is. And though the scene in which a representative of the Youngers’s new neighborhood (Jesse Pennington) comes to “welcome” them with veiled threats is very nearly twirling-mustache melodrama, it’s nevertheless one of the highlights of American theater.

In that sense, O’Hara — who aside from his brilliant direction of contemporary works like “[*Slave Play*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/09/theater/slave-play-review-jeremy-o-harris.html)” and “[*BLKS*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/09/theater/blks-review-aziza-barnes.html)” is a mordant comic playwright himself — is right to reimagine the genre expectations of “Raisin.” It’s what we do with all classics, not because they require it but because they can handle it. And if his pessimism about American racism is somewhat at odds with Hansberry’s cautious optimism, well, he’s had 60 more years of history to support his point. That the play is so prescient does not mean that its story is over. It means that, sadly, it never is.

A Raisin in the Sun

Through Nov. 20 at the Public Theater, Manhattan; [*publictheater.org*](https://publictheater.org/productions/season/2223/a-raisin-in-the-sun/). Running time: 3 hours.

PHOTOS: Francois Battiste holding Toussaint Battiste in “A Raisin in the Sun,” directed by Robert O’Hara at the Public Theater. (C1); Above from left, Mandi Masden, Francois Battiste, Tonya Pinkins and Paige Gilbert. Left, Gilbert and John Clay III in “A Raisin in the Sun,” which had its Broadway premiere in 1959. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C6) This article appeared in print on page C1, C6.

**Load-Date:** October 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Disdain for the Less Educated Is the Last Acceptable Prejudice***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60RH-HC01-DXY4-X4WX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 2, 2020 Wednesday 19:10 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1420 words

**Byline:** Michael J. Sandel

**Highlight:** It’s having a corrosive effect on American life — and hurting the Democratic Party.

**Body**

It’s having a corrosive effect on American life — and hurting the Democratic Party.

Joe Biden has a secret weapon in his bid for the presidency: He is the first Democratic nominee in 36 years without a degree from an Ivy League university.

This is a potential strength. One of the sources of Donald Trump’s political appeal has been his ability to tap into resentment against meritocratic elites. By the time of Mr. Trump’s election, the Democratic Party had become a party of technocratic liberalism more congenial to the professional classes than to the blue-collar and middle-class voters who once constituted its base. In 2016, two-thirds of whites without a college degree voted for Mr. Trump, while Hillary Clinton won more than 70 percent of voters with advanced degrees.

Being untainted by the Ivy League credentials of his predecessors may enable Mr. Biden to connect more readily with the blue-collar workers the Democratic Party has struggled to attract in recent years. More important, this aspect of his candidacy should prompt us to reconsider the meritocratic political project that has come to define contemporary liberalism.

At the heart of this project are two ideas: First, in a global, technological age, higher education is the key to upward mobility, material success and social esteem. Second, if everyone has an equal chance to rise, those who land on top deserve the rewards their talents bring.

This way of thinking is so familiar that it seems to define the American dream. But it has come to dominate our politics only in recent decades. And despite its inspiring promise of success based on merit, it has a dark side.

Building a politics around the idea that a college degree is a precondition for dignified work and social esteem has a corrosive effect on democratic life. It devalues the contributions of those without a diploma, fuels prejudice against less-educated members of society, effectively excludes most working people from elective government and provokes political backlash.

Here is the basic argument of mainstream political opinion, especially among Democrats, that dominated in the decades leading up to Mr. Trump and the populist revolt he came to represent: A global economy that outsources jobs to low-wage countries has somehow come upon us and is here to stay. The central political question is not to how to change it but how to adapt to it, to alleviate its devastating effect on the wages and job prospects of workers outside the charmed circle of elite professionals.

The answer: Improve the educational credentials of workers so that they, too, can “compete and win in the global economy.” Thus, the way to contend with inequality is to encourage upward mobility through higher education.

The rhetoric of rising through educational achievement has echoed across the political spectrum — from Bill Clinton to George W. Bush to Barack Obama to Hillary Clinton. But the politicians espousing it have missed the insult implicit in the meritocratic society they are offering: If you did not go to college, and if you are not flourishing in the new economy, your failure must be your own fault.

It is important to remember that most Americans — nearly two-thirds — do not have a four-year college degree. By telling workers that their inadequate education is the reason for their troubles, meritocrats moralize success and failure and unwittingly promote credentialism — an insidious prejudice against those who do not have college degrees.

The credentialist prejudice is a symptom of meritocratic hubris. By 2016, many working people chafed at the sense that well-schooled elites looked down on them with condescension. This complaint was not without warrant. Survey research bears out what many ***working-class*** voters intuit: At a time when racism and sexism are out of favor (discredited though not eliminated), credentialism is the last acceptable prejudice.

In the United States and Europe, disdain for the less educated is more pronounced, or at least more readily acknowledged, than prejudice against other disfavored groups. In a series of surveys conducted in the United States, Britain, the Netherlands and Belgium, a team of social psychologists led by Toon Kuppens found that college-educated respondents had more bias against less-educated people than they did against other disfavored groups. The researchers surveyed attitudes toward a range of people who are typically victims of discrimination. In Europe, this list included Muslims and people who are poor, obese, blind and less educated; in the United States, the list also included African-Americans and the ***working class***. Of all these groups, the poorly educated were disliked most of all.

Beyond revealing the disparaging views that college-educated elites have of less-educated people, the study also found that elites are unembarrassed by this prejudice. They may denounce racism and sexism, but they are unapologetic about their negative attitudes toward the less educated.

By the 2000s, citizens without a college degree were not only looked down upon; in the United States and Western Europe, they were also virtually absent from elective office. In the U.S. Congress, 95 percent of House members and 100 percent of senators are college graduates. The credentialed few govern the uncredentialed many.

It has not always been this way. Although the well-educated have always been disproportionately represented in Congress, as recently as the early 1960s, about one-fourth of our elected representatives lacked a college degree. Over the past half-decade, Congress has become more diverse with regard to race, ethnicity and gender, but less diverse with regard to educational credentials and class.

One consequence of the diploma divide is that very few members of the ***working class*** ever make it to elective office. In the United States, about half of the labor force is employed in ***working-class*** jobs, defined as manual labor, service industry and clerical jobs. But fewer than 2 percent of members of Congress worked in such jobs before their election.

Some might argue that government by well-educated university graduates is something to welcome, not regret. Surely we want well-trained doctors to perform our appendectomies. Aren’t highly credentialed leaders best equipped to give us sound public policies and reasoned political discourse?

Not necessarily. Even a glance at the parlous state of political discourse in Congress should give us pause. Governing well requires not only technocratic expertise but also civic virtue — an ability to deliberate about the common good and to identify with citizens from all walks of life. But history suggests little correlation between the capacity for political judgment and the ability to win admission to elite universities. The notion that “the best and the brightest” are better at governing than their less-credentialed fellow citizens is a myth born of meritocratic hubris.

If the rhetoric of rising and the reign of technocratic merit have led us astray, how might we recast the terms of moral and political aspiration? We should focus less on arming people for a meritocratic race and more on making life better for those who lack a diploma but who make important contributions to our society — through the work they do, the families they raise and the communities they serve. This requires renewing the dignity of work and putting it at the center of our politics.

It also requires reconsidering the meaning of success and questioning our meritocratic hubris: Is it my doing that I have the talents that society happens to prize — or is it my good luck?

Appreciating the role of luck in life can prompt a certain humility: There, but for an accident of birth, or the grace of God, or the mystery of fate, go I. This spirit of humility is the civic virtue we need now. It is the beginning of the way back from the harsh ethic of success that drives us apart. It points beyond the tyranny of merit toward a less rancorous, more generous public life.

Michael J. Sandel is a professor of government at Harvard and the author of the forthcoming “[*The Tyranny of Merit*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374289980): What’s Become of the Common Good?,” from which this essay is adapted.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374289980) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374289980). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374289980).

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PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GETTY IMAGES)

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[***What to Know About Chicago’s Mayoral Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67N5-4G21-JBG3-62K6-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Mitch Smith

**Highlight:** Mayor Lori Lightfoot is seeking a second term, but she faces a wide field of challengers who have attacked her record on crime, policing and education.

**Body**

Mayor Lori Lightfoot is seeking a second term, but she faces a wide field of challengers who have attacked her record on crime, policing and education.

CHICAGO — As residents of Chicago prepare to elect a mayor, they are staring at a highly uncertain picture: a race so wide open that even the incumbent, Mayor Lori Lightfoot, who won every ward in the city in the final balloting four years ago, is not assured a spot in an expected runoff election.

Chicagoans will pick on Tuesday among nine candidates at a pivotal time to lead the city, which has wrestled since the pandemic with a spike in homicides and an emptier downtown. At least four of the candidates are seen as serious contenders to make it to an April 4 runoff, and Ms. Lightfoot finds herself in between candidates casting themselves to her political left, and also to her right.

In the final days of the race, Ms. Lightfoot has attempted to embrace her spot in the middle, arguing that the city needs to stay the course with her. Before a crowd at a union hall over the weekend, she accused one opponent of being an undercover Republican. Another, she said, would raise taxes and cut policing.

In addition to Ms. Lightfoot, the top tier of candidates includes Jesús G. García, a progressive congressman; Brandon Johnson, a county commissioner endorsed by the local teachers’ union; and Paul Vallas, a former public school executive with a far more conservative platform on policing and education.

Those candidates all describe themselves as Democrats, an unofficial prerequisite for winning citywide office, but have vastly different visions for Chicago. Here is what is shaping the race to lead the country’s third-largest city:

The incumbent is on shaky ground.

Ms. Lightfoot leveraged outsider status and a promise for sweeping reforms to win her seat in 2019, becoming the first Black woman and first openly gay person to serve as Chicago’s mayor.

But she will enter this Election Day with uncertain prospects, dogged by diminished popularity, homicide rates that soared to generational highs and frequent feuds with labor unions and City Council members. Her campaign’s own polling in the weeks before the election showed her in the lead, but with only 24 percent of the vote.

Ms. Lightfoot has spoken about a need to [*attract more people*](https://chicago.suntimes.com/columnists/2019/12/10/21010315/chicago-growth-population-african-american-black-flight-ed-zotti-lori-lightfoot) to Chicago. But while the city’s population grew slightly between 2010 and 2020, [*census estimates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/24/us/census-2021-population-growth.html) show that the number of residents has declined since then.

Facing a crowded field, Ms. Lightfoot has portrayed herself this time not as a political outsider but rather as a serious, experienced leader who stabilized Chicago after being dealt a lousy hand. She has emphasized her investments in long-overlooked neighborhoods, defended her handling of the virus and noted that homicides have declined from their pandemic peak.

Paul Vallas wants to talk about crime.

When Mr. Vallas, a former chief executive of Chicago Public Schools, ran for mayor four years ago, he received just over 30,000 votes and finished in a distant ninth place.

But this time, he has emerged as perhaps Ms. Lightfoot’s biggest electoral threat by portraying Chicago as a city in crisis and promising to crack down on lawbreakers. His campaign website describes the city in almost dystopian terms, saying it appears Chicago “has been surrendered to a criminal element that acts with seeming impunity in treating unsuspecting, innocent people as prey.”

Mr. Vallas has called for increasing the number of police officers, replacing the police superintendent and improving arrest rates for serious offenses. But as he has made electoral inroads, emphasizing some of the issues that Mayor Eric Adams of New York City [*campaigned on*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/24/nyregion/eric-adams-crime-mayor.html) in 2021, some have questioned whether he is out of step with Chicago’s overwhelmingly Democratic electorate.

In a city with a powerful teachers’ union and a long-troubled Police Department, Mr. Vallas’s calls to invest in charter schools and prosecute more misdemeanor crimes have unnerved left-leaning residents and led Ms. Lightfoot to suggest his true loyalties are with the Republican Party. Then, in the final run-up to the election, [*The Chicago Tribune reported*](https://www.chicagotribune.com/politics/elections/ct-chicago-paul-vallas-twitter-likes-mayor-race-20230223-po6c7h7etfbv7oji5237y75jtm-story.html) that Mr. Vallas’s Twitter account had liked an array of tweets about the mayor that used offensive language or described Ms. Lightfoot as a man. Mr. Vallas, who calls himself a lifelong Democrat, said he did not like those posts and [*suggested*](https://www.chicagotribune.com/politics/elections/ct-vallas-responds-to-tweets-20230225-gjfsmla2mvdrrblyftqr3lxhle-story.html) that his Twitter account was breached.

Key union endorsements could cut both ways.

Two powerful labor unions that Ms. Lightfoot clashed with repeatedly — the conservative local branch of the [*Fraternal Order of Police*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/15/us/lori-lightfoot-police-union-vaccinations.html) and the liberal [*Chicago Teachers Union*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/04/us/chicago-teachers-union-remote-learning.html) — have steered their supporters to two of her opponents. How much those endorsements will help or hurt remains an open question.

Mr. Vallas received the police union endorsement, which could be crucial in consolidating support among right-leaning voters and supporters of the police. But that endorsement has been used as an attack line by Ms. Lightfoot, and it may be a liability among Chicagoans who do not trust the Police Department or who disapprove of the union’s frequently brash rhetoric and coziness with Republican politicians, [*including Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/20/nyregion/desantis-visit-nyc-philadelphia-chicago.html).

The Chicago Teachers Union, basically the political opposite of the police union, gave its endorsement to Mr. Johnson, a Cook County commissioner and teacher running on an unabashedly progressive platform.

The teachers’ union has emerged over the last decade as a powerful player in Chicago politics, engaging in repeated work stoppages, fighting with the last two mayors and putting forth a liberal vision for the city that extends beyond education issues. Its endorsement is now a coveted seal of approval on the progressive left.

But after a bruising fight between that union and Ms. Lightfoot over Covid-19 school reopenings and precautions, and in a city where many residents name crime and public safety as their top concern, it is not yet clear what impact the teachers’ endorsement might have.

Race has long been a factor in Chicago politics.

Chicago, which has a long history of racial and ethnic groups voting as blocs, has roughly equal numbers of white, Black and Hispanic residents. This year’s mayoral field has seven Black contenders (including Ms. Lightfoot and Mr. Johnson), one white candidate (Mr. Vallas) and one Hispanic candidate (Mr. García).

Beyond the four candidates leading in the latest polls, others retain significant support and hopes of squeezing into the runoff. Willie Wilson, a businessman who is locally famous for giving away gasoline and $100 bills, finished in fourth place in the 2019 mayoral election and is running again this year on a promise to clamp down on crime. Though Mr. Wilson, who is Black, has a strong base of ***working-class*** Black supporters, he has struggled in past campaigns to win votes outside of the South and West Sides.

Some Black leaders have [*expressed concern*](https://abc7chicago.com/chicago-mayor-election-race-candidates/12751955/) that the [*makeup of the field*](https://www.chicagotribune.com/politics/elections/ct-lori-lightfoot-grand-crossing-campaign-appearance-20230218-pmhg4gy3azah5g4tgbkz6x2urm-story.html) could dilute the voting power of Black residents and lessen the chances of electing a Black mayor. In parts of the city with more Black and Hispanic residents, voter turnout is sometimes lower than in North Side wards where many white people live.

Other Black candidates in the race include Kam Buckner, a state legislator; Ja’Mal Green, a civil rights activist; and Sophia King and Roderick Sawyer, both members of the City Council.

But while race plays a role in Chicago politics, that role is not necessarily decisive.

Four years ago, two Black women, Ms. Lightfoot and Toni Preckwinkle, built multiracial coalitions and emerged from a large, racially diverse slate of candidates to make the runoff. And eight years ago, Mr. García, who would be Chicago’s first Hispanic mayor, qualified for the runoff by uniting Hispanic voters with political progressives of all backgrounds.

Electoral suspense has been a rarity in the past.

Chicago voters of a certain age came to expect, for better or worse, a level of continuity at City Hall. Richard J. Daley led the city for more than 20 years, from the 1950s into the ’70s, as did his son Richard M. Daley, who served as mayor from 1989 until 2011. Elections still came around every four years, but they became more of a formality than a referendum.

Even when the younger Mr. Daley left office 12 years ago, there was little uncertainty about who would take over. Rahm Emanuel, fresh off a stint as President Barack Obama’s chief of staff, returned to Chicago and [*won a majority of the vote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/23/us/chicago-mayor-election.html), clinching the job without a runoff. (If no single candidate gets a majority of votes in the first election, the top two finishers advance to a runoff.)

Since then, mayoral elections have become far less predictable. Mr. Emanuel [*won a second term*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/08/us/rahm-emanuel-retains-seat-as-chicagos-mayor.html) in 2015 but was [*forced into a runoff*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/25/us/politics/chicago-votes-on-giving-rahm-emanuel-a-second-term-as-mayor.html) in a surprisingly close race with Mr. García. That runoff was the first since Chicago began holding officially nonpartisan elections in 1999.

Four years ago, after Mr. Emanuel [*decided not to run again*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/04/us/rahm-emanuel-chicago-mayor.html), Ms. Lightfoot emerged in somewhat surprising fashion from a broad group of candidates that included several more established figures, including [*William M. Daley*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/17/us/bill-daley-mayor-chicago-rahm-emanuel.html), a former White House chief of staff, and Susana Mendoza, the Illinois comptroller.

Whoever wins will face a changed City Council.

To enact their agenda, every Chicago mayor must navigate the city’s 50-member City Council, a body known for its clubbiness, its members’ frequent criminal indictments and the immense control it can exert over development.

As mayor, Ms. Lightfoot, who eliminated some of the sweeping privileges that Council members were historically given to govern their wards, has engaged in highly public disputes with some members even as she worked with them to [*raise the minimum wage*](https://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-biz-chicago-minimum-wage-approved-20191126-esp6g6do6nhzjfl7i7yphbfmrm-story.html) and approve construction of a [*casino*](https://blockclubchicago.org/2022/05/25/chicago-casino-approved-by-city-council-after-screaming-match-between-mayor-alderman/).

But the Council is in the midst of a transformation. Several long-serving members have resigned or decided not to seek another term, leaving voters across much of the city to choose new representation.

With all 50 seats up for election, and redrawn ward maps being used for the first time, voters will decide whether to empower more moderate or conservative candidates who have focused their campaigns on public safety issues, or elect progressives and Democratic Socialists calling for structural change. The outcomes of those races could determine what policies Ms. Lightfoot or her successor can pursue in the next four years.

PHOTOS: From left, Ja’Mal Green, Sophia King, Kam Buckner, Willie Wilson, Brandon Johnson, Paul Vallas, Mayor Lori Lightfoot, Roderick Sawyer and Jesús G. García. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TYLER PASCIAK/CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS); A rally last week for Mayor Lori Lightfoot. She has seemingly embraced her position in between more liberal and conservative challengers. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES); Paul Vallas, at Barba Yianni Grecian Taverna on Sunday, finished ninth four years ago, but this time he has emerged as a leading contender. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAYLOR GLASCOCK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A13.

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2023

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[***A Shrinking, Aging China May Have Backed Itself Into a Corner; News Analysis***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67BM-DJB1-DXY4-X177-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Chris Buckley, Joy Dong and Amy Chang Chien

**Highlight:** A demographics challenge has been building for years, but Beijing’s preparations are lagging. Now, many worry that current measures may offer too little, too late.

**Body**

A demographics challenge has been building for years, but Beijing’s preparations are lagging. Now, many worry that current measures may offer too little, too late.

China’s leaders have long known that the country is nearing a demographic crossroads. Policymakers have warned that China must prepare for a slowly shrinking population and an era of fewer workers and more retirees. State media have urged young couples to seize the opportunity to have two or three children under relaxed family-size rules, to soften the looming economic crunch.

And yet the sense of incipient crisis grew on Tuesday, when the government confirmed that the nation’s[*population shrank last year for the first time in six decades*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/16/business/china-birth-rate.html), sooner and sharper than many experts had forecast.

Even if Chinese officials have warned that a demographic Rubicon was approaching, their preparations have not kept pace with the long-term needs of an aging society, in the eyes of many experts and Chinese people.

China’s abrupt abandonment of “zero Covid” controls exposed a government ill prepared for an explosion in infections. And, similarly, the mounting population pressures may reveal a government that has not done enough to avoid tough choices in coming decades over rival priorities. Between the demands of caring for young and old. Between paying for social welfare and building up China’s technological and military might.

China’s leader, Xi Jinping, has partly sought to tackle the long-term economic and social pressures from a shrinking, aging society more by lifting the limits on family size. He has taken steps to build a strong social safety net and announced a new phase of “high-quality” growth less dependent on legions of cheap, abundant migrant workers from the countryside.

“The population issue is the most important issue for the future and yet the one that is most easily neglected,” Ren Zeping, a former chief economist for the Evergrande Group, a massive housing developer, who has studied the looming demographic crunch, [*wrote in a widely circulated comment*](https://archive.ph/hCxRl) after the figures were released Tuesday. Mr. Ren called for more energetic policy-making, including birth subsidies, stronger paternity and maternity leave, and improved protection of women’s rights in the workplace.

After the latest population statistics were released, many suggested in social media posts and in interviews that the government’s moves may be too little and too late. To many, the government has barely begun to tackle the deeper reasons many young couples choose to have one child or none at all, like the costs of rearing and educating children and lack of substantial government support, especially for women, at home and in the workplace.

“I’d like to have a kid, but the living pressures are just too much,” Wu Yilan, a 34-year-old shopkeeper in Beijing, said in a telephone interview. She said she had discussed it with a former boyfriend. “If I settle down with a partner, I’d probably think that one child is enough.”

Anxiety and argument about China’s new demographic era have been building as birthrates have slowed, especially in recent years. It has now hit a turning point: China’s population in 2022 fell by 850,000, with more deaths than births for the first time since a famine in the early 1960s caused by Mao Zedong’s calamitous social experiment, the Great Leap Forward.

Chinese demographers, economists and business leaders have offered a number of ideas to support a growing number of older people and encourage couples to have more children. In 2016, the government eased [*the “one-child” policy*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/10/29/world/asia/china-one-child-policy-timeline.html?searchResultPosition=2) that had been enforced for over three decades, allowing families to have two children. In 2021, it [*increased the limit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/31/world/asia/china-three-child-policy.html) to three.

Even so, most couples still stick to having one child, while two is common in the countryside. Many young people, especially women, remain skeptical that the government is going to make it easier for them to both have children and remain in the formal work force.

Jennie Liu, a 32-year-old podcast platform manager in Shanghai, said that she and her boyfriend agreed that they would like to raise one or two children — but only if they could “run,” a Chinese buzzword for moving abroad.

“If we can run to somewhere with better welfare and an improved overall social environment where a child can obtain residency status, then we may think about having a kid,” she said. In China, “the aging population and decline of the working-age population will definitely put pressure on government finances.”

The societal issues run deep. After Tuesday’s data release, some on the Chinese internet said that despite government promises of a fairer deal for women, many employers did not want to employ women in better, steady jobs, because they did not want to deal with maternity leave and child care.

“In the job market, they worry that if you’re 23-30, you’ll get married and have a kid, that if you’re 30-35 you’ll have a second or third one, and if you’re over 35, then sorry,” [*read one comment*](https://archive.ph/PssD2). “This kind of social setting is already the best form of contraception. All those policies to encourage births and open up will amount to nothing.”

The measures championed by Chinese policymakers often neglect the broader pressures on women, especially those from rural and ***working-class*** backgrounds, which put them in a painful bind between family and work, said Yige Dong, [*an assistant professor of sociology*](https://yige-dong.net/) at the University at Buffalo, which is part of the State University of New York system.

Families face intense pressure to get children into better schools, with much of the burden falling on mothers who are often also expected to care for aged parents and parents-in-law.

“They are caught between the demand to go to work and the demands for intensive parenting,” Ms. Dong said, citing [*interviews with female migrant workers in central China*](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/08969205221140927).

“On the one hand, China is talking about this as a crisis of a declining fertility rate, and on the other hand, they are cracking down on feminism,” she said in a telephone interview. “With those two things in contradiction, how can you convince the next generation of young women — who have their own aspirations — to go into marriage?”

A shrinking, aging society is far from unique to China, even in Asia, and the effects will unfold over decades. Even so, China’s heavy restrictions on family size in past decades mean that the country is confronting these pressures much sooner in its economic takeoff than, say, Japan or South Korea.

The resulting economic and population pressures will erode China’s strength in coming decades and could encourage its leaders to become more aggressive before they feel their national power has ebbed, says Michael Beckley, an associate professor at Tufts University and co-author of [*Danger Zone: The Coming Conflict with China*](https://wwnorton.com/books/9781324021308), a new book that lays out this argument.

“China’s proposed demographic reforms are drops in the bucket. They are swamped by the fact that China will lose 5 to 10 million working-age adults and gain 5 to 10 million senior citizens every year for the foreseeable future,” Professor Beckley said in emailed answers to questions. “You can’t compensate for that kind of demographic crunch simply by raising the retirement age.”

Other scholars have disputed Professor Beckley’s forecast of a demographically led decline in Chinese power. China, they note, could counter population pressures by providing better training for workers, improving their productivity and by increasing innovation and automation across industries.

But few disagree that such changes would demand much more spending commitments from Chinese leaders, who also want to invest heavily in military modernization, technological advancement and internal security.

Mr. Xi has not been blindsided by these challenges. Beijing has unfurled policies to encourage expanded senior care, and promised more social support for women who want to have children. Since citizens have repeatedly expressed public anger over sexual harassment at universities, companies and media outlets, the government has also promised to crack down.

While Mr. Xi has endorsed equality between the sexes and repeated Mao’s dictum that “women hold up half the sky,” he has also encouraged respect for traditional family roles.

“The broad number of women must conscientiously shoulder the burden of caring for the elderly and nurturing the young, educating children, and playing a role in building family virtues,” he said [*in 2013*](http://www.cwu.edu.cn/jxjyxy/zxzx/3f0f2065b24a4c0a9d4655757e1f3bed.htm).

But framing China’s population pressures as a matter of attitude issues among young women distracts from the deeper social and economic pressures on them, said Ms. Dong, the professor from the University at Buffalo.

“It’s a political issue, not a question of social engineering,” she said. “The blame is put on families and individuals, especially young women who are unwilling to get married, but they don’t talk about the role of the state and its policies.”

PHOTOS: Declining births and an aging population have put China into a demographic bind, and to critics, preparations have not kept pace.; President Xi Jinping urges respect for traditional family roles.; Despite a policy change, many young Chinese couples still choose to have one child, or none. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GILLES SABRIÉ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A6.

**Load-Date:** January 18, 2023

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[***Understanding the Massacre in Goshen; California Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67H4-B9H1-DXY4-X55M-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Soumya Karlamangla

**Highlight:** A conversation about the gun violence that killed a family, including a 10-month-old baby, in a small San Joaquin Valley town last month.

**Body**

A conversation about the gun violence that killed a family, including a 10-month-old baby, in a small San Joaquin Valley town last month.

Gang violence is common across the Central Valley. Three of its counties had the highest homicide rates in California in 2021, with Tulare County ranked third.

Still, when members from four generations of one family, including a 10-month-old baby, were [*killed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/25/us/mass-shooting-goshen-california.html), execution-style, last month in the small town of Goshen in Tulare County, even officials regularly called to investigate homicides were shocked. Locals said that they were accustomed to gang violence, but that the grisly nature of this attack was particularly unsettling.

“This feels different,” Diego Velasquez, 18, a high school student who lives near Goshen, told The New York Times. “We’re watching the cameras at our house.”

On Friday, two men [*suspected of the killings were arrested*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/03/us/mass-shooting-goshen-california-arrests.html). Law enforcement officials said they would continue to investigate the crime, as the motives for it still aren’t entirely clear. The Tulare County sheriff is also calling on Gov. Gavin Newsom to lift a moratorium on the death penalty that he imposed in 2019.

I spoke to Miriam Jordan, a Times reporter based in Los Angeles who has been closely covering the killings. She spent time in Goshen after the massacre and talked to me about what she learned about the attack, the community and the proliferation of gangs in the Central Valley.

Here’s our conversation, lightly edited for clarity and length:

What did we learn from the arrests on Friday? And what do we still not know about this case?

Two members of the Norteños had been the perpetrators, according to the sheriff. They broke into this house and went after the man who was said to be involved in gang activities, killed him, and then went on this rampage and killed everybody else in sight.

The motive for the killing is not exactly clear as of yet. But it seems like there was some kind of dispute between Norteños and at least one member of this household, who was a Sureños member. It’s not clear if it was over territory that one gang overstepped, or whether one gang is trying to gain control of the whole territory. We just don’t really know yet.

Part of what seemed to shock people about this crime is that it happened in Goshen, a San Joaquin Valley town of 5,000 people. I think there’s a perception that gangs exist only in big cities.

In the American public’s imagination, gangs are a thing of urban enclaves, not of little rural towns. That was one thing that took me there — it’s something you wouldn’t think would happen in a small town.

But, for quite a long time now, gangs and Mexican cartels have been moving into rural America to expand their drug markets, to recruit new members and to evade detection by authorities.

There’s good reason for that: You can more easily hide people and drugs in sparsely populated areas. These rural communities in the Central Valley often abut the State Route 99 and the I-5, which are major trafficking routes for drugs because they’re south to north, from Mexico all the way to Washington State and onward to Canada. And then there is demand in rural areas for drugs just like there is in big cities.

You described Goshen as a gritty town without much going on, with some farm fields and warehouses straddling Route 99. I imagine there has to be an economic factor in the prevalence of gangs there.

These are impoverished communities where unemployment is high. If there are jobs, they’re poorly paid work in the fields and in warehouses. Some people end up taking this path of making a living by dealing drugs.

So there are a bunch of decentralized factions of bigger gangs that are operating in these rural areas today. And in Goshen, there’s a dominant gang — the Norteños. And then there are also some Sureños gang members, and sometimes there are bloody confrontations between them. And it seems that that’s behind the massacre of four generations of an entire family in this tiny, ***working-class*** town.

Despite there being gang violence in the Central Valley, you interviewed many people in the area who found this particular crime disturbing. Why did it seem out of the ordinary?

Because it was such a grisly act, such a horrific massacre, it really shook this community that has learned how to coexist with the presence of gangs. Gangs are now entrenched in this town, in this area. Gang members do their thing — they don’t want to be caught selling drugs or draw law enforcement’s attention, so they try to stay under the radar.

When there is violence between them, at times innocent people are caught in the crossfire. But in this case, the mission appeared to be to kill an entire family to settle a major disagreement, and that included a grandmother, a teen mom and an infant, according to the county sheriff. That really did shake residents to their core.

The rest of the news

* Drought: Many communities, especially low-income Latino residents, still have dry wells, and the recent deluge [*can’t bring much relief to the state’s depleted groundwater*](https://calmatters.org/environment/water/2023/02/california-depleted-groundwater-storms/), CalMatters reports.

1. Homeownership: An expansion to the state’s mortgage relief program to help those still struggling through the pandemic [*will cover California homeowners’ second mortgages and loan deferrals*](https://calmatters.org/california-divide/ca-divide-housing/2023/02/california-mortgage-relief-expansion/), with a maximum total grant of $80,000, CalMatters reports.
2. In Opinion: A California activist sneaked into a gas chamber for hogs and installed three cameras. [*See for yourself what they show*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/04/opinion/meat-pork-animal-farm.html).

* Living with roaches: A group of 100 tenants living in South Los Angeles have [*sued their landlord*](https://www.latimes.com/homeless-housing/story/2023-02-07/we-basically-sleep-with-the-roaches-tenants-sue-at-large-south-l-a-apartment-complex), Pama Properties, complaining of rampant vermin infestations, faulty plumbing, deficient electricity and heating, and other significant habitability problems, The Los Angeles Times reports.

1. Gustavo Dudamel leaving: The charismatic conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic [*will be leaving his post in 2026*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/07/arts/music/new-york-philharmonic-gustavo-dudamel.html) to become the music director of the New York Philharmonic.

* Hospital crisis: Fresno supervisors voted on Tuesday to [*formally end the county’s state of emergency declaration*](https://www.fresnobee.com/fresnoland/article272228588.html), despite warning the public their hospitals are “still at capacity or over capacity,” The Fresno Bee reports.
* Police misconduct: Officials for the City of Vallejo intentionally, and with approval from a senior attorney for the city, [*destroyed evidence in multiple killings by the police*](https://openvallejo.org/2023/02/05/vallejo-destroyed-evidence-of-police-killings/) as well as in nonfatal shootings, Open Vallejo reports.

1. Housing crisis: Mayor London Breed of San Francisco had promised $5 million to fix crumbling housing for homeless people, but more than six months after the money was made available, [*none of it has been spent*](https://www.sfchronicle.com/sf/article/homeless-housing-sro-breed-17767837.php) to address repairs and infrastructure issues, The San Francisco Chronicle reports.
2. Nut hoarders: An exterminator inspected a home for mealworms and found that acorn woodpeckers had [*stored over 700 pounds of acorns*](https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/woodpeckers-hoard-over-700-pounds-of-acorns-in-glen-ellen-vacation-rental/) stacked almost 25 feet high in the home’s chimney, The Press Democrat reports.

What we’re eating

[*Salmon fried rice.*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1020152-salmon-fried-rice)

Where we’re traveling

Today’s tip comes from Isabelle Gaston, who lives in Berkeley:

“Only a few weeks are left before a beautiful and rare burrowing owl departs from its winter home at the water’s edge of Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley. This tiny and endearing bird (the size of a beer can) is a real treat to watch.

Information as to the owl’s location in the park can be found on the [*Chavez Park Conservancy website*](https://chavezpark.org/). Owl docents are often there in the mornings before 10 a.m. to help visitors locate the owl (which is not easy given its small size and camouflage) and to explain why providing a safe sanctuary for the owl is critically important.”

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.

Tell us

We’re looking for recommendations for where to see the best art in California. What galleries have you visited over and over? Which exhibits do you insist on taking all out-of-town visitors?

Email us at [*CAToday@nytimes.com*](mailto:CAToday@nytimes.com) with your suggestions, and a few lines on why it’s your pick.

And before you go, some good news

Perhaps you’ve heard of the [*Linda Lindas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/09/arts/music/the-linda-lindas-growing-up.html), the all-girl punk band made up of school-age Angelenos.

They shot to fame nearly two years ago after a video of them performing at the Los Angeles Public Library went viral. They’ve since opened for the Yeah Yeah Yeahs and were featured on NPR’s Tiny Desk Concert series. They’ll perform at Coachella this year.

The Los Angeles Times recently asked the girls [*what their ideal day around Los Angeles would be*](https://www.latimes.com/lifestyle/story/2023-01-20/the-linda-lindas-sunday-funday-in-los-angeles). Their dream itinerary included roller-skating in Glendale, a trip to Vroman’s Bookstore in Pasadena, and karaoke and pastries in Little Tokyo. Their perfect outing would end like this, they said:

Lucia: Then we’d each grab a pint of ice cream from [*Jeni’s Splendid Ice Cream*](https://jenis.com/).

Mila: We better not have school the next day.

Bela: I like Brambleberry Crisp.

Mila: I like the Savannah Buttermint one. That one is seasonal, but on our ideal Sunday, they would have it.

Lucia: Eloise likes the Brown Butter Almond Brittle one. My go-to is the Wildberry Lavender.

Mila: I would fall asleep during the movie and in the car. I’d eat my ice cream later.

Thanks for reading. I’ll be back tomorrow. — Soumya

P.S. Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini).

Isabella Grullón Paz and Allison Honors 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: A makeshift memorial created near the Parraz family home in Goshen, Calif. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Adam Perez for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 19, 2023

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[***Hospitals at Risk As State Rejects Medicaid Funds***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67WH-R2B1-JBG3-64GG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 2119 words

**Byline:** By Sharon LaFraniere

**Body**

Mississippi is one of 10 states, all with Republican-led legislatures, that continue to reject federal funding to expand health insurance for the poor, intensifying financial pressure on hospitals.

GREENWOOD, Miss. -- Since its opening in a converted wood-frame mansion 117 years ago, Greenwood Leflore Hospital had become a medical hub for this part of Mississippi's fertile but impoverished Delta, with 208 beds, an intensive-care unit, a string of walk-in clinics and a modern brick-and-glass building.

But on a recent weekday, it counted just 13 inpatients clustered in a single ward. The I.C.U. and maternity ward were closed for lack of staffing and the rest of the building was eerily silent, all signs of a hospital savaged by too many poor patients.

Greenwood Leflore lost $17 million last year alone and is down to a few million in cash reserves, said Gary Marchand, the hospital's interim chief executive. ''We're going away,'' he said. ''It's happening.''

Rural hospitals are struggling all over the nation because of population declines, soaring labor costs and a long-term shift toward outpatient care. But those problems have been magnified by a political choice in Mississippi and nine other states, all with Republican-controlled legislatures.

They have spurned the federal government's offer to shoulder almost all the cost of expanding Medicaid coverage for the poor. And that has heaped added costs on hospitals because they cannot legally turn away patients, insured or not.

States that opted against Medicaid expansion, or had just recently adopted it, accounted for nearly three-fourths of rural hospital closures between 2010 and 2021, according to the American Hospital Association.

Opponents of expansion, who have prevailed in Texas, Florida and much of the Southeast, typically say they want to keep government spending in check. States are required to put up 10 percent of the cost in order for the federal government to release the other 90 percent.

But the number of holdouts is dwindling. On Monday, North Carolina became the 40th state to expand Medicaid since the option to cover all adults with incomes below 138 percent of the poverty line opened up in 2014 under the terms of the 2010 Affordable Care Act. The law, a major victory for President Barack Obama, has continued to defy Republican efforts to kill or limit it.

''This argument about rural hospital closures has been an incredibly compelling argument to voters,'' said Kelly Hall, the executive director of the Fairness Project, a national nonprofit that has successfully pushed ballot measures to expand Medicaid in seven states.

In Mississippi, one of the nation's poorest states, the missing federal health care dollars have helped drive what is now a full-blown hospital crisis. Statewide, experts say that no more than a few of Mississippi's 100-plus hospitals are operating at a profit. Free care is costing them about $600 million a year, the equivalent of 8 percent to 10 percent of their operating costs -- a higher share than almost anywhere else in the nation, according to the state hospital association.

Expanding Medicaid would uncork a spigot of about $1.35 billion a year in federal funds to hospitals and health care providers, according to a 2021 report by the office of the state economist.

And it would guarantee medical coverage to some 100,000 uninsured adults making less than $20,120 a year in a state whose death rates are at or near the nation's highest for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, kidney disease and pneumonia. Infant mortality is also sky-high, and the Delta has the nation's highest rate of foot and leg amputations because of diabetes or hypertension.

Health officials blame those numbers in part on the high rate of uninsured residents who miss out on preventive care.

''I can tell you I have a number of patients who are on dialysis with renal failure for the rest of their life because they couldn't afford the medication for their blood pressure, and that caused their kidneys to go bad,'' said Dr. John Lucas, a Greenwood Leflore surgeon.

Among Mississippi adults, only disabled people and parents with extremely low incomes, along with most pregnant women, are eligible for Medicaid. Many of the ineligible are also too poor to qualify for the tax credits for insurance under the Affordable Care Act, leaving them without affordable options.

The same is true for close to two million other Americans who live in the states that have not expanded Medicaid. Three in five are adults of color, according to a 2021 study by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a nonprofit research group. In Mississippi, more than half are Black.

Gov. Tate Reeves, a Republican, and key G.O.P. state lawmakers argue that a bigger Mississippi program is not in taxpayers' best interest. The governor says the state's $3.9 billion surplus would be best used to help eliminate Mississippi's income tax.

''Don't simply cave under the pressure of Democrats and their allies in the media who are pushing for the expansion of Obamacare, welfare and socialized medicine,'' Mr. Reeves said in his annual State of the State address in January.

Opponents also argue that the newly insured would become dependent on Medicaid and therefore be less likely to work. ''I believe we should be working to get people off Medicaid as opposed to adding more people to it,'' said Philip Gunn, the powerful Republican House speaker.

Yet in Mississippi's Delta, a flat swath of fields of corn, soybeans and other crops nearly as big as Delaware, access to any kind of medical care is drying up for lack of money. More than 300,000 people live here, about two-thirds of them Black. Nearly a third of residents live in poverty, a rate roughly three times the national average.

Dr. Daniel P. Edney, the state's top health officer, said he did not set Medicaid policy, and he has been careful not to take sides. But he predicted emerging health care deserts where women would have to travel long distances to deliver babies and more sick people would die because they could not gain access to care.

Of the state's hospitals, ''I have maybe heard of two that are generating any profit,'' he said. When he asks hospital executives if Medicaid expansion would help their balance sheets, he said, ''they say it's a game changer.''

He predicted that five hospitals would soon downgrade into mere emergency rooms, where doctors work to stabilize patients, then transfer them to the nearest hospital.

If that happens, some of the sickest will not make it, said Dr. Jeff Moses, an emergency room physician at Greenwood Leflore.

''Where are they going? Davy Jones's locker,'' he said. ''It is very dark, and I'm not exaggerating this. I just can't imagine what will happen to this community if this hospital closes.''

Nine years after states began expanding Medicaid, evidence is growing that broader coverage saves lives. In a 2021 analysis, researchers affiliated with the National Bureau of Economic Research estimated that in one four-year period, 19,200 more adults aged 55 to 64 survived because of expanded coverage, and nearly 16,000 more would have lived if that coverage was nationwide.

Other studies suggest why: Making medical care more affordable led to increases in regular checkups, cancer screenings, diagnoses of chronic diseases and prescriptions for needed medicines.

Especially during the first six years of the Medicaid expansion, when the federal government picked up 95 to 100 percent of the cost, many states found that the program was a net fiscal gain. Some states have imposed taxes on hospitals or health care providers to cover their share of the expense, the same strategy used to help fund other Medicaid costs.

Now the federal government is offering a new incentive for the holdouts: As part of a 2021 pandemic relief measure, it agreed to temporarily pay a higher proportion of costs for some existing Medicaid patients if states broadened eligibility.

Mississippi's office of the state economist has estimated that for at least the first decade, those savings and others would fully cover the roughly $200 million a year that Medicaid expansion would cost the state government.

Tim Moore, the president of the Mississippi Hospital Association, said expansion was ''a no-brainer.'' The state is so poor, he said, that for every dollar it spends on Medicaid, the federal government pumps four back in.

Polls, including by Mississippi Today and Siena College, appear to show Mississippians support Medicaid expansion, regardless of their political affiliation. Brandon Presley, the Democratic candidate for governor, is highlighting hospital closures as a reason to deny Mr. Reeves a second term in elections this November.

In a possible sign of political nervousness, the governor and the legislature recently agreed to extend Medicaid coverage to pregnant women for 12 months after they give birth, prolonging a federal pandemic-era policy.

The legislators are also trying to prop up the hospitals with a one-time infusion of $83 million or more. But that is a pittance compared with what the state has given up in Medicaid payments.

The state has lost four hospitals since 2008, according to the hospital association, and Dr. Edney, the state health officer, said that it would inevitably lose more. He said he worried most about health care access in the Delta, where he grew up, the child of ***working-class*** parents with no health insurance.

On Saturday, Representative Bennie Thompson, Democrat of Mississippi, said victims of a tornado that struck the Delta last week had to be ferried 50 miles away for medical treatment because the local hospital had no power. More Medicaid dollars, he said, would have equipped it with an emergency generator.

An hour due west from Greenwood Leflore, another major hospital, run by Delta Health System, is also in serious trouble. Licensed for more than 300 beds, the hospital one day last month held just 72 inpatients.

Thirty-two of them were kept in the emergency department, partly because of nursing cuts. One upshot is that patients seeking emergency care now wait an average of two hours, four times as long as they should, according to Amy Walker, the chief nursing officer. Some simply walk out.

The neonatal intensive care unit closed last July. Now babies in trouble must be ferried by ambulance or helicopter 125 miles south to Jackson.

Iris Stacker, the chief executive, said the hospital could remain open through the end of the year; after that, she makes no promises. She is hoping federal grants will help keep the doors open, despite the state's failure to expand Medicaid.

But she said, ''It's very hard to ask the federal government for more money when you have this pot of money sitting here that we won't touch.''

A top message on Greenwood Leflore's website is now a request for donations. So far, the hospital has raised less than $12,000.

Mike Hardin, a 70-year-old retiree, was one of a handful of inpatients one recent day. He had come to the emergency room two days before with slurred speech. Doctors quickly diagnosed a stroke and now were sending him home with revised medications.

''They have to do something to keep this hospital open,'' he said as he was wheeled out of his room. ''The people around this area wouldn't have any place else to go.''

The hospital's outpatient clinics are largely still in business, and doctors there say their caseloads are full of impoverished patients who should have been treated earlier.

Dr. Abhash Thakur, a cardiologist, said he routinely saw patients in the late stages of congestive heart failure who had never seen a cardiologist or been prescribed heart medication. Some have as little as 10 percent of their heart function left.

''They are not the exception,'' he said, before examining a 52-year-old man who uses a wheelchair because of his heart disease. ''Every day, probably, I will see a few of them.''

Dr. Raymond Girnys, a general surgeon, had just treated a man in his late 50s. He said that a week earlier, the man had punctured his foot on a sharp stick while walking in his tennis shoes in a field.

The man did not seek medical attention until the foot became infected because he was poor and uninsured. Dr. Girnys pointed out the irony: If his patient lost his foot, he would become eligible for Medicaid because then he would be disabled.

''If they had insurance, they wouldn't be afraid to seek care,'' he said.

Margot Sanger-Katz contributed reporting. Kitty Bennett and Susan C. Beachy contributed research.Margot Sanger-Katz contributed reporting. Kitty Bennett and Susan C. Beachy contributed research.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Greenwood Leflore Hospital in Mississippi lost $17 million last year, and its cash reserves are dwindling. ''They have to do something to keep this hospital open,'' said Mike Hardin, below left, a recent inpatient. Below right, Dr. Abhash Thakur, a cardiologist.

Mississippi's death rates are at or near the nation's highest for heart disease and other ailments. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13) This article appeared in print on page A1, A13.

**Load-Date:** March 31, 2023

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[***The Ascension of Bernie Sanders***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6342-W6G1-DXY4-X16W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 7; MAUREEN DOWD

**Length:** 1460 words

**Byline:** By Maureen Dowd

**Body**

BURLINGTON, Vt. -- I want to talk to Bernie about Balenciaga. And Britney. And Dua Lipa, Sha'Carri Richardson and Joe Manchin's houseboat. And whether he prefers red or white horseradish on his gefilte fish. And the state of capitalism, and the absurd price of a Birkin bag.

We settle into a retro yellow booth at Henry's Diner and I pull out a thick sheaf of questions. Eyeing it suspiciously, he asks with that booming Brooklyn accent, ''You givin' a speech?''

He reaches into his shirt pocket and pulls out his own piece of paper, a list of items written in his loopy scrawl. These are the only things he's here to talk about.

At 79, Bernie Sanders is a man on a mission, laser-focused on a list that represents trillions of dollars in government spending that he deems essential. When I stray into other subjects, the senator jabs his finger at his piece of paper or waves it in my face, like Van Helsing warding off Dracula with a cross.

''Maureen, let me just tell you what we're trying to do here,'' he says. ''We're working on what I think is the most consequential piece of legislation for working families since the 1930s.''

Sanders, long a wilderness prophet in Washington, a man who wrote a memoir bragging about being an outsider, admits that it is strange to be a key member of The Establishment. As the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, the democratic socialist is now pulling the levers in the control room.

He has changed the whole debate in the nation's capital. He is the guy trying to yank his party back to its ***working-class*** roots and steer President Biden in a bolder, more progressive direction.

Mirabile dictu: A president and senator who are both pushing 80, men who were underestimated and dismissed for years in Democratic circles, are now teaming up to transform the country. It's the Bernie and Joe show.

Sanders passionately believes that the only way to undo the damage done by Donald Trump and Trumpism is by showing that government can deliver, that good policy can overcome dangerous conspiracy theories and lies.

''I would have loved to run against him, to tell you the truth,'' he says of Trump. ''He's a fraud and he's a phony. That's what he is, and he has to be exposed for that.''

Even with Trump out of office, Sanders feels we are still on the precipice. Democrats need to speak to the struggles of the white ***working class***, he says, something that ''sometimes part of the Democratic elite does not fully appreciate.'' He adds: ''We've got to take it to them. I intend, as soon as I have three minutes, to start going into Trumpworld and start talking to people.''

''It's absolutely imperative if democracy is to survive that we do everything that we can to say, 'Yes, we hear your pain and we are going to respond to your needs.' That's really what this is about. If we don't do that, I fear very much that conspiracy theories and big lies and the drift toward authoritarianism is going to continue. You got all these folks out there who are saying, 'Does anybody pay attention to me?'''

Sanders is a purist who doesn't like to acknowledge how intertwined the personal and political can be. Yet he and Biden have a bond that could have a profound effect on the lives of Americans.

While the two men disagree on a lot of things, the former Senate colleagues and 2020 rivals share a mutual respect. Sanders has easy access to the White House. It is a big difference from the way he was treated in 2016 by Clinton, Inc. Not only did Hillary's henchmen run a nasty campaign and try to rig the primaries; Hillary herself would later say about him in a 2020 documentary: ''Nobody likes him. Nobody wants to work with him.''

Sanders says he gives the president a lot of credit for looking at the budget not just as numbers on a spreadsheet but as a chance to reshape the American identity.

''Who denies the realities of what he is taking on?'' Sanders says, digging into some eggs over easy and white toast. ''Does anyone deny that our child care system, for example, is a disaster? Does anyone deny that pre-K, similarly, is totally inadequate? Does anyone deny that there's something absurd that our young people can't afford to go to college or are leaving school deeply in debt? Does anybody deny that our physical infrastructure is collapsing? Does anybody except anti-science people deny that climate change is real? Does anyone deny that we have a major health care crisis? Does anyone deny that we pay the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs? Does anyone deny we have a housing crisis? Does anyone deny that half the people live paycheck to paycheck?''

Sanders, who has talked about spending up to $6 trillion on the reconciliation package, says he will not support a two- or three-trillion-dollar bill. ''That's much too low.''

What about grumbling coming from members of the progressive wing that they want Sanders to stay a hell-raiser, not be a bridge-builder who gives Biden and the center-left cover?

''You know politics,'' he answers with a shrug. ''You can't please all of the people all of the time.'' He adds that he sees this moment as a chance to ''address concerns progressives have had for decades.''

Sanders was a lonely voice on democratic socialism for decades; now he has a squad to keep him company.

He lights up talking about ''Alexandria, Rashida, Ilhan, Pramila, Ayanna from Massachusetts,'' noting that ''they really came from very much the same place that I was coming from, and they all came from different parts of the world.''

Still, Sanders is not in lock step with the most progressive members of his party on everything. He says, for example, that he prefers ''fundamental reform'' to defunding the police.

''A cop's life is a difficult life,'' he says, sounding like the mayor he once was. ''Schedules are terrible. Salaries, in many cases, are inadequate. It's a dangerous job. It's a job with a lot of pressure. We need to significantly improve training for the police. In certain communities, what is going on is absolutely unacceptable. It must be changed, period. We cannot have racism in policing. If you go to Black communities or Latino communities, they want this protection.''

When I ask Sanders if he thinks A.O.C. could be president someday, out comes the list.

''That's not what I want to get into,'' he barks. ''I want to get into what this legislation is about.''

''You don't want to discuss 'Free Britney'?'' I ask.

''No.''

But I get him on the American sprinter Sha'Carri Richardson being suspended from the U.S. Olympics team because of marijuana use.

''I think it speaks to the problems of the so-called war on drugs,'' he says. ''So I have a problem with that.''

Sitting across from Sanders in this little diner in this little town, it's wild to contemplate that the 79-year-old has become an icon of popular culture, beloved by people under 30, featured in this month's Vanity Fair cover story as a friend of pop star Dua Lipa, and that he was an inspiration for a Balenciaga show in Paris in 2017.

He rolls his eyes at fashion. ''I'm not chic,'' he says. ''I'm the least chic person in the world. Trust me.''

He's also unimpressed by billionaires and their toys.

''You have the richest guys in the world who are not particularly worried about earth anymore,'' he says. ''They're off in outer space.'' People are sleeping on the streets, but ''Mr. Bezos is worth $200 billion and now he wants to get a spaceship. That's very nice. That's what this legislation is about, Maureen. I want to talk about this legislation.''

But wait, what does he think of Marjorie Taylor Greene's lurking around A.O.C.'s office and calling her ''a little communist''?

''You're getting off the subject here,'' Sanders chides, before relenting: ''Look, she is the future of a segment of the Republican Party which is delusional, which tends toward violence.'' He adds: ''It's not just Jan. 6. It's taking place at state capitols. There's people walking around with guns.''

If he were not a senator, he says, he might want to do something in media, helping journalists relate to the ***working class*** and correctly define political terms like ''liberal'': ''Liberals want to do nice things. And progressives understand that you have to take on powerful special interests to make it happen.''

Before the senator leaves to work the phones, he returns to his list with one last directive: ''Tell people what we are trying to accomplish.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/10/opinion/bernie-sanders-interview-maureen-dowd.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/10/opinion/bernie-sanders-interview-maureen-dowd.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY IAN THOMAS JANSEN-LONNQUIST FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***On the Margins***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66P3-65X1-JBG3-6351-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 14; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1263 words

**Byline:** By Mychal Denzel Smith

**Body**

A civil rights advocate investigates.

BLACK SKINHEAD: Reflections on Blackness and Our Political Future, by Brandi Collins-Dexter

In her debut essay collection, ''Black Skinhead,'' Brandi Collins-Dexter, a former senior campaign director for the civil rights nonprofit Color of Change, takes on a task I don't envy even slightly: trying to make sense of Kanye West. The rapper, producer and fashion designer, who now goes by Ye, has been the architect of some of our era's most enduring popular music, as well as some of the most head-scratching cultural controversies. Collins-Dexter spends the most time unpacking the ordeal that may have alienated the largest portion of his fan base: when Ye, in May 2018, having already endorsed Donald Trump for the presidency a few years prior, went on TMZ Live and said that slavery was a choice.

In the essay ''Kanye Was Right-ish,'' Collins-Dexter -- a self-proclaimed ''Kanye-whisperer'' -- looks to clarify on his behalf. She points out that the next day, on Twitter, Ye tried to explain what he'd meant -- not that the enslaved had made a choice to be shackled, but that the institution's persistence for 400 years, despite the enslaved outnumbering the enslavers, ''means that we were mentally enslaved'' in a way he warns against perpetuating for 400 more. ''There's a lot in this that's true,'' she writes, citing the ''mental terror ... inflicted upon Black communities to keep those enslaved subservient,'' the beatings, rapes and lynchings meant to deter Black people from revolt. ''He was right about the impact of psychological abuse.''

The interpretation feels generous. Ye's take -- ''When you hear about slavery for 400 years. For 400 years? That sounds like a choice'' -- didn't appear to be about the psychological terror inflicted on the enslaved, but about a mentality they adopted. It overlooks the number of revolts that took place, the coordinated efforts to escape, the work to buy their freedom, and all their other daily acts of subversion and resistance.

Collins-Dexter's point here, however, isn't just about Ye or his understanding of American history: It's about what he embodies. ''A canary in a coal mine,'' the artist is for her ''an example of an emerging party-ambivalent Black voter base that could upend expected Black voter norms in the coming years.'' Taking its title from Ye's 2013 song, the book aims to identify those on the margins of mainstream Black culture and politics -- the Black skinheads -- who can tell us something about where our future may lie.

To anyone familiar with modern white supremacist movements, the moniker seems like a contradiction in terms, but Collins-Dexter begins with the origins of the term ''skinhead'' in 1960s Britain, as a reference to the ''multicultural ***working-class*** subculture rooted in Black -- particularly Jamaican -- music.''

For Collins-Dexter, the modern Black skinhead similarly ''lives in the cracks and uncertainties'' of mainstream culture -- a ''disillusioned political outlier,'' this voter has been defined by a history of Democratic alignment, despite a range of ideologies that are changing demographic norms. Still a nascent contingent, she writes, ''they live outside of the bounds of fetishized Black political identity.''

Collins-Dexter compellingly ties her engaging assessments of the Black skinheads' artistic output to a broader political critique, often drawing on the history of media and labor movements and social justice. In the essay ''Hood Vampires,'' she traces the birth of drill music in the years following 2008 as a response to the disillusionment of the hope in the first Black presidency. In Chicago, the realities of persistent inequality, divestment from Black communities and violence moved young people to express themselves through the macabre sounds of drill. ''Hard Times'' finds an entry point to the successes and failures of populism in professional wrestling. Each essay reflects deep research, passion and respect for her subject.

The bulk of the book is dedicated to examining a particular kind of Black skinhead: the Black Trump supporter. Their numbers are slim, but as Collins-Dexter sees it, they are significant enough to undermine whatever confidence the Democratic Party has in securing ''the Black vote.''

There are holes in Collins-Dexter's theory. She mentions that younger Black voters show more interest in socialism than their elders; by her definition, would they not also be considered Black skinheads? Are Black-led L.G.B.T.Q. movements also Black skinheads, standing on the margins and attempting to move the center?

And while Collins-Dexter dismisses the political provocateur Candace Owens for ''using her own identity as a Black woman to launder far right ideology,'' the distinction she draws between this more established Black conservatism and the newer, self-identified ''conscious Black conservatives'' is in the latter's commitment to Black advancement -- through, of course, capitalism.

The thing is, this ideology is not as new as the author makes it out to be. Versions of this thinking can be found in Booker T. Washington (name-dropped several times in the book), the Nation of Islam and most Black Democratic officials of the late 20th and early 21st century. It's what produces misplaced nostalgia for Black Wall Street, and to a degree what animates the judicial philosophy of the Supreme Court justice Clarence Thomas.

Yet the progressive-leaning Collins-Dexter, who repeatedly refers to herself as a ''Bernie broad,'' lends these ''conscious Black conservatives'' a sympathetic ear. ''At least they have a plan,'' she writes. ''Do we?'' Never mind that this plan perpetuates misogyny, homophobia and transphobia; the answer to her question is yes. The book downplays the demonstrable influence of Black leftist thought and principles in a moment when such ''radical'' ideas as police and prison abolition and more robust union organizing are seeing more airtime than they have in decades.

I understand where Collins-Dexter is coming from. It's a common refrain I know from my youth, whenever the problems of Black communities were the topic of conversation: Black unity. ''I don't want it to be an us (left) versus them (liberal) versus them (conservative) dynamic,'' Collins-Dexter writes on the subject of mental health in communities. ''I remain convinced that any chance we have to thrive relies on being able to come to the table to form a baseline consensus.''

There is something romantic in imagining ''a collective Black us,'' joined in the fight against a common enemy. But we have to ask what that unity would require of us: Are there any just compromises to be found with an ideology that would replicate capitalist excess and exploitation, but with Black faces at the top? Would Black queer people need to put aside any hope of having their identities affirmed, and material needs met? Is unity worth that price?

My heart wants the same thing Collins-Dexter's does, and maybe that's the place to start: an acknowledgment and honoring of those on the margins. Perhaps her point is that we are actually all Black skinheads, conforming in some ways and not in others -- all just trying to reconcile our inner Kanye West.

Mychal Denzel Smith is a Puffin Foundation fellow at the Type Media Center, and the author of ''Invisible Man, Got the Whole World Watching'' and ''Stakes Is High: Life After the American Dream.''

BLACK SKINHEAD: Reflections on Blackness and Our Political Future | By Brandi Collins-Dexter | 274 pp. | Celadon Books | $26.99

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/16/books/review/black-skinhead-brandi-collins-dexter.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/16/books/review/black-skinhead-brandi-collins-dexter.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Kanye West (PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIAN BERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page BR14.

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[***What Will Smith and Joe Biden Have in Common; John McWhorter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654D-46J1-JBG3-63JW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 1, 2022 Friday 14:43 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1524 words

**Byline:** John McWhorter

**Highlight:** The slap and the slip were the same kind of gaffe.

**Body**

President Biden’s gaffe about Vladimir Putin and Will Smith slapping Chris Rock at Sunday’s Academy Awards ceremony were demonstrations of a single phenomenon.

Let me explain.

Saturday, in Warsaw, addressing Putin’s war in Ukraine, Biden [*departed from his prepared remarks*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/26/biden-putin-regime-change/) with this coda: “For God’s sake, this man cannot remain in power.” He was roundly and justifiably criticized for implying that the United States is seeking the ouster of Russia’s president. Biden has since [*explained*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/us/politics/biden-putin.html) that he was merely expressing “moral outrage,” insisting that it’s “ridiculous” to think he was articulating a policy of regime change.

The problem is that expressions of this kind of personal sentiment are the province of casual speech. Biden’s speech was supposed to be a formal statement to a world audience, in which certain phraseologies carry specific meanings. For example, in his case for war, Putin [*warned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/world/europe/putin-ukraine-speech.html) that “consequences will be such as you have never seen in your entire history”; it was read to imply that Russia might use nuclear weapons to deter any third-party country from interfering with its invasion.

Biden elided the line between the formal and the casual, because the off-the-cuff and even clumsy remark is his wont, from [*comparing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/07/nyregion/biden-compares-la-guardia-airport-to-third-world.html) La Guardia Airport to a “third-world country” to dropping an f-bomb when Obamacare was signed into law. In contrast, and despite the relatively conversational tone of his fireside chats, Franklin D. Roosevelt never seemed to go off message. We know about the colorful, even profane things Lyndon B. Johnson said behind closed doors, but he wasn’t known for saying them before the cameras.

One might be inclined to let Biden’s more unbuttoned approach pass as a personality quirk, especially today, when the line between the formal and the informal in public language has become so much hazier. The president’s oratorical messiness could be seen as consonant with the eclipse of the fedora and dancing according to plotted steps — but not this time. When the topic is war, the old ways are the only proper ones: Biden’s feelings weren’t supposed to edge out the objectivity of officialese, and his contorted effort to explain away his remark is one of his more obtuse moments.

Meanwhile, the relationship between Smith and anything to do with Biden may seem thin. But my take on what Smith did at the Oscars is that in a moment of umbrage, he, too, lost sight of the line — choosing a vernacular, of sorts, while in a regimented setting. To slap Rock was, of course, utterly unpardonable — and to an extent so stark that it gets one surmising about the psychology behind it.

I cannot know precisely what was going on in Smith’s head, but I suspect that a part of him was doing something that he thought the Black community, broadly speaking, would read differently than many other observers. And if so, he may not have been entirely wrong.

The Atlantic’s Jemele Hill [*wrote*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/03/two-americas-debating-will-smith-chris-rock-oscars-slap/629407/) that after the slap, she received an avalanche of texts, mostly from Black folks, and that “a lot of them, both men and women, said they at least understood Will Smith’s reaction to Rock’s mockery of his wife, even if they disagreed with how and where Smith showed it.” The Philadelphia Inquirer’s Elizabeth Wellington [*wrote*](https://www.inquirer.com/columnists/will-smith-chris-rock-smack-oscars-20220328.html) that “Smith strolled onstage and slapped the taste out of Rock’s mouth,” not exactly a disapproving description, even though she went on to clarify: “Should Smith have hit Rock? No. But I get why he did.” The actress and comedian Tiffany Haddish [*said*](https://people.com/movies/oscars-2022-tiffany-haddish-responds-to-will-smith-chris-rock-smack/) “when I saw a Black man stand up for his wife” that “meant so much to me,” calling it “the most beautiful thing I’ve ever seen.” After the slap, Smith’s son Jaden [*tweeted*](https://twitter.com/jaden/status/1508295733551632389) “And That’s How We Do It.”

With that sense, that Smith was doing something “we,” it’s hard not to see a parallel in, for example, the “beef” culture in the rap world focused on duel-style retributions (often, but not always, confined to lyrics) for perceived slights, and a similar trope among gangs on the streets, as documented even by Black and other sympathetic observers.

We now mostly think of him as an actor, and throughout his chart-topping music career, Smith’s image was that of a clean rapper with crossover appeal, but at the Oscars, he dipped into a culture that elevates beefs and demands comebacks to slights. In the ’90s, the sociologist Elijah Anderson [*documented*](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1994/05/the-code-of-the-streets/306601/) that “street culture has evolved what may be called a code of the streets, which amounts to a set of informal rules governing interpersonal public behavior, including violence,” such that “people become very sensitive to advances and slights, which could well serve as warnings of imminent physical confrontation.”

This idea that slights can’t be left unaddressed might alternately be chalked up to Black people’s frustration with a racist culture. Writing about the Smith slap for Zora, Maia Niguel Hoskin [*argues*](https://zora.medium.com/while-were-talking-about-will-smith-s-behavior-let-s-also-talk-about-the-system-that-helped-8220827d7b6a): “I am not suggesting that people should greet their grievances with balled-up fists or open-palmed slaps. But I think there is space for empathy and to discuss the system and the cultural norms and expectations that have created frustration in Smith and many other people of color which can sometimes present in this way.”

Another proposal presents something of a paradox: In “Black Rednecks and White Liberals,” no less a figure than Thomas Sowell suggests that ***working-class*** Black men modeled this kind of response on a similar one among the white ***working-class*** culture “[*from a bygone era*](https://books.google.com/books?id=JMxpBOnQIH8C&amp;q=Scots-Irish#v=snippet&amp;q=violence&amp;f=false),” particularly in the South.

Whatever its source, the beef culture thing is, as often as not, as much about performance as outcome. Smith is a professional performer, of course, and it might be relevant that he slapped rather than punched Rock, with the intention, seemingly, of shock (and awe, even) rather than physical injury. We can even see this performance aspect in facets of Black popular culture, including comedy. To wit: In one episode of the classic ’90s sitcom “Martin,” Tisha Campbell’s Gina pulls a jar of Vaseline [*out of her bag*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HBbYPaC9dTg) in preparation for a threatened — but never realized — physical altercation with another female character, a reference to a pre-scrap precaution many Black people would have been familiar with, where a woman protects her face against potential scratching. Funny this was, but I don’t think a similar scene would have been likely on “Saved by the Bell” or even “Roseanne.”

In this vein I suspect that Smith was, on a certain level, performing for Black America, supposing that many of his Black fans would see him as going to a perhaps unideal extreme, but one that might be warranted when a man decides to “stand up” for his woman. Smith seems to have been trying for something vernacular, as it were, not unlike Biden letting go with his unfiltered personal take on Putin. But the Oscars incident was a smack seen around the world, where so many saw not “how we do it,” but violence, period.

There are times when only the established norm will do the job, regardless of one’s feelings. It reminds me that a few years after Anita Hill’s mistreatment during Justice Clarence Thomas’s confirmation hearings, the scholar Karla F.C. Holloway, in her book “Codes of Conduct: Race, Ethics, and the Color of Our Character,” asked whether Hill would have been better off “[*turning it out*](https://books.google.com/books?id=Pwdzr7aAqH4C&amp;pg=PA80&amp;lpg=PA80&amp;dq=Karla+Holloway+When+angelou+did+not+step+or+gesture,+when+she+did+not+move+at+all+around+the+small+space+of+the+inaugural+platform&amp;source=bl&amp;ots=zqRwmx-yDd&amp;sig=ACfU3U2oQSagJ0yBMbZw2Eyd43KqkHal4g&amp;hl=en&amp;sa=X&amp;ved=2ahUKEwj3gvjyrPH2AhXcRjABHdL5C7kQ6AF6BAgTEAM#v=snippet&amp;q=turning%20it%20out&amp;f=false)” in those hearings. If, in other words, she had directly excoriated the white male senators giving her grief by using a Black American cadence and phraseology. If she had “[*read them for filth*](https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=read%20for%20filth),” in today’s parlance. For a Black woman, Holloway wrote, that meant “handing over to our adversary our version of the stereotype that motivates their disrespect to us — just to prove to them that they could no better handle the stereotype than they can determine and control our character.”

But as riveting as this might have been, it would not have served the case of Hill or anyone else. What might have been a satisfying riposte in the eyes of many, and not only Black people, would have read as uncontrolled and inarticulate to a wider public. Hill was wise in sticking to faceless mainstream standards of communication.

It’s the same with Smith. He was correct to [*apologize*](https://apnews.com/article/chris-rock-will-smith-academy-condemnation-a19008f7e102a20b4de043f7e9739daf), however awkwardly and self-servingly. Hitting somebody at the Oscars — or at all — cannot qualify as a valiant refusal to put aside what are widely thought of by people of all races as accepted norms. Anyone who harbors the idea that Smith’s actions are understandable should reconsider. There is no lens, including one that reckons racially, through which we ought to process assault as a kind of permissible vigilantism.

We live in times when we are taught that authenticity, however defined, is the enlightened default. There’s something to that — at times. But both Biden and Smith would have been better off allowing that sometimes uptight is just right.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com).

John McWhorter ([*@JohnHMcWhorter*](https://twitter.com/JohnHMcWhorter)) is an associate professor of linguistics at Columbia University. He hosts the podcast “[*Lexicon Valley*](https://www.booksmartstudios.org/s/lexicon-valley)” and is the author, most recently, of “[*Woke Racism*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/696856/woke-racism-by-john-mcwhorter/): How a New Religion Has Betrayed Black America.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Delcan and Co. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 6, 2022

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[***Las Vegas, ‘the Most Honest City in America’; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62CK-3NF1-DXY4-X3Y6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 6, 2021 Tuesday 22:55 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 812 words

**Byline:** Amanda Fortini

**Highlight:** “Paradise, Nevada,” Dario Diofebi’s debut novel, follows four characters through the daily dramas of the desert city.

**Body**

PARADISE, NEVADA

By Dario Diofebi

“Las Vegas is a city of stories,” Dario Diofebi asserts more than once in his debut novel, “Paradise, Nevada.” Let’s leave aside for the moment the fact that any city, whether Rome or Seattle, Paris or Paducah, is a city of stories. Las Vegas is a city of the kinds of stories that appeal to ambitious writers keen to advance a grand statement: tales of ***working-class*** people and moneyed tourists, professional poker players, Mormons, criminals and drifters, all of whom rub shoulders at the casinos on the Strip. Las Vegas is so gauche, this line of thinking goes, so unabashed about its own vulgarity, that it is a perfect metonym for that original embarrassment, America. The same might be said of this gaseous, bloated 500-page exemplar of narrative sprawl.

Paradise, Nev., is a real place — the unincorporated, census-designated town where the Las Vegas Strip is actually located — and the title’s obvious joke is that this unfortunate outpost in the desert (“the ugliest city in America,” as a character who has come to shop at its outlet malls puts it) is anything but. Here, an eccentric, reclusive billionaire named Al Wiles has built the Positano, a facsimile of Italy’s Amalfi Coast that is meant to resemble the real lasagna in every faux detail: “the cliffs, the sea, down to the … lemon trees!”

The resort, where much of the drama takes place, exerts its gaudy, philistine pull on the four main characters. Tom, an Italian immigrant and “hopeless beta” who overstays his visa to play professional poker. Ray, an online poker whiz turned live player who exists “in pursuit of a perfect machinelike neutrality toward outcomes,” and whose tedious sections read as if they were generated by A.I. Mary Ann, a depressed, down-on-her-luck (of course) cocktail waitress who wants to “metaphorically vomit herself out of her body” and finds purpose in joining a shadow union working to sabotage the casino. And Lindsay, a 20-something Mormon journalist who has written an article about layoffs at one of Wiles’s secondary resorts. The omniscient third-person narrator weaves in and out of their thoughts, along with those of a chorus of minor characters — so many that the book feels fractured and lacks momentum.

The ersatz elements of the Positano raise the question of the book’s own imitative impulses. It somehow unspools like a heist film that is also emulating David Foster Wallace poorly. Many of the sentences are so long that I don’t have room to quote one here, but watching them pinball around is disorienting; you have no idea where they’re headed next. Diofebi is similarly unrestrained when it comes to structure, tossing in email exchanges, footnotes, charts and vlog scripts, most of which feel superfluous and obscure.

Las Vegas “is the most honest city in America,” Walter, a businessman who frequents the Positano, says. “See, in the rest of the world, the rich hide away from the poor.” It’s commendable that Diofebi addresses class, that great taboo subject, but he seems to have either contempt for his ***working-class*** characters or precious little experience with their real-life analogues. Karen, an aging waitress and Mary Ann’s aunt, is said to have built her life around the “lesser American dream.” (And what is the greater American dream? Writing?) She wears “an oversize Las Vegas souvenir T-shirt” that reads “This Town Wasn’t Built on Winners,” which is also the subtitle of the book.

“There isn’t a single Italian who doesn’t hold a strong idea of what America is,” Diofebi writes, in a section about Tom, who is arguably a stand-in for the novel’s Italian author. This is certainly not the first take on America through European eyes, but there are the works of de Tocqueville and Baudrillard, where foreignness confers insight, and then there’s “Perfect Strangers,” in which the cultural comparisons are ham-handed, and the gags are cheap. Diofebi trots out all the familiar American topics — fraternities, road trips, Greyhound buses, casino buffets. “A land where shrimp cascaded by the tableful, just there for the taking,” Tom marvels.

In the end, all the characters, whose story lines obliquely brush against one another throughout the book, converge on the Positano for a dramatic, cinematic set piece that seems written with a Hollywood adaptation in mind. Rather than illuminating the cheesiness of Las Vegas, Diofebi succumbs to it.

Amanda Fortini is the Beverly Rogers fellow at the Black Mountain Institute at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. PARADISE, NEVADA By Dario Diofebi 494 pp. Bloomsbury Publishing. $28.

PHOTO: Las Vegas: “the most honest city in America.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE BUGLEWICZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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2. [*Vegas as a Literary Hub? You Bet*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/23/books/review/maria-konnikova-the-biggest-bluff.html)

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[***No Easy Answers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62RM-8YD1-JBG3-6213-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 23, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 1; ESSAY

**Length:** 325 words

**Byline:** By Joe Klein

**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.

**Graphic**

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)

**Load-Date:** June 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘We’re Going Away’: A State’s Choice to Forgo Medicaid Funds Is Killing Hospitals***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67WB-4661-JBG3-63B3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 28, 2023 Tuesday 17:55 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 2175 words

**Byline:** Sharon LaFraniere

**Highlight:** Mississippi is one of 10 states, all with Republican-led legislatures, that continue to reject federal funding to expand health insurance for the poor, intensifying financial pressure on hospitals.

**Body**

Mississippi is one of 10 states, all with Republican-led legislatures, that continue to reject federal funding to expand health insurance for the poor, intensifying financial pressure on hospitals.

GREENWOOD, Miss. — Since its opening in a converted wood-frame mansion 117 years ago, Greenwood Leflore Hospital had become a medical hub for this part of Mississippi’s fertile but impoverished Delta, with 208 beds, an intensive-care unit, a string of walk-in clinics and a modern brick-and-glass building.

But on a recent weekday, it counted just 13 inpatients clustered in a single ward. The I.C.U. and maternity ward were closed for lack of staffing and the rest of the building was eerily silent, all signs of a hospital savaged by too many poor patients.

Greenwood Leflore lost $17 million last year alone and is down to a few million in cash reserves, said Gary Marchand, the hospital’s interim chief executive. “We’re going away,” he said. “It’s happening.”

Rural hospitals are struggling all over the nation because of population declines, soaring labor costs and a long-term shift toward outpatient care. But those problems have been magnified by a political choice in Mississippi and nine other states, all with Republican-controlled legislatures.

They have spurned the federal government’s offer to shoulder almost all the cost of expanding Medicaid coverage for the poor. And that has heaped added costs on hospitals because they cannot legally turn away patients, insured or not.

States that opted against Medicaid expansion, or had just recently adopted it, accounted for [*nearly three-fourths of rural hospital closures between 2010 and 2021*](https://www.aha.org/system/files/media/file/2022/09/rural-hospital-closures-threaten-access-report.pdf), according to the American Hospital Association.

Opponents of expansion, who have prevailed in Texas, Florida and much of the Southeast, typically say they want to keep government spending in check. States are required to put up 10 percent of the cost in order for the federal government to release the other 90 percent.

But the number of holdouts is dwindling. On Monday, [*North Carolina became the 40th state to expand Medicaid*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/27/us/politics/north-carolina-medicaid-expansion.html) since the option to cover all adults with incomes below 138 percent of the poverty line opened up in 2014 under the terms of the 2010 Affordable Care Act. The law, a major victory for President Barack Obama, has continued to defy Republican efforts to kill or limit it.

“This argument about rural hospital closures has been an incredibly compelling argument to voters,” said Kelly Hall, the executive director of the [*Fairness Project*](https://thefairnessproject.org/), a national nonprofit that has successfully pushed ballot measures to expand Medicaid in seven states.

In Mississippi, one of the nation’s poorest states, the missing federal health care dollars have helped drive what is now a full-blown hospital crisis. Statewide, experts say that no more than a few of Mississippi’s 100-plus hospitals are operating at a profit. Free care is costing them about $600 million a year, the equivalent of 8 percent to 10 percent of their operating costs — a higher share than almost anywhere else in the nation, according to the state hospital association.

Expanding Medicaid would uncork a spigot of about $1.35 billion a year in federal funds to hospitals and health care providers, according to a 2021 report by the office of the state economist.

And it would guarantee medical coverage to some 100,000 uninsured adults making less than $20,120 a year in a state whose death rates are at or near the nation’s highest for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, kidney disease and pneumonia. Infant mortality is also sky-high, and the Delta has the nation’s highest rate of foot and leg amputations because of diabetes or hypertension.

Health officials blame those numbers in part on the high rate of uninsured residents who miss out on preventive care.

“I can tell you I have a number of patients who are on dialysis with renal failure for the rest of their life because they couldn’t afford the medication for their blood pressure, and that caused their kidneys to go bad,” said Dr. John Lucas, a Greenwood Leflore surgeon.

Among Mississippi adults, only disabled people and parents with extremely low incomes, along with most pregnant women, are eligible for Medicaid. Many of the ineligible are also too poor to qualify for the tax credits for insurance under the Affordable Care Act, leaving them without affordable options.

The same is true for close to two million other Americans who live in the states that have not expanded Medicaid. Three in five are adults of color, according to a [*2021 study by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*](https://www.cbpp.org/research/health/closing-medicaid-coverage-gap-would-help-diverse-group-and-narrow-racial), a nonprofit research group. In Mississippi, more than half are Black.

Gov. Tate Reeves, a Republican, and key G.O.P. state lawmakers argue that a bigger Mississippi program is not in taxpayers’ best interest. The governor says [*the state’s $3.9 billion surplus*](https://mississippitoday.org/2022/12/29/mississippi-legislature-surplus-2023/) would be best used to help eliminate Mississippi’s income tax.

“Don’t simply cave under the pressure of Democrats and their allies in the media who are pushing for the expansion of Obamacare, welfare and socialized medicine,” Mr. Reeves said in his annual [*State of the State address*](https://mississippitoday.org/2023/01/30/tate-reeves-2023-state-of-the-state/) in January.

Opponents also argue that the newly insured would become dependent on Medicaid and therefore be less likely to work. “I believe we should be working to get people off Medicaid as opposed to adding more people to it,” said Philip Gunn, the powerful Republican House speaker.

Yet in Mississippi’s Delta, a flat swath of fields of corn, soybeans and other crops nearly as big as Delaware, access to any kind of medical care is drying up for lack of money. More than 300,000 people live here, about two-thirds of them Black. Nearly a third of residents live in poverty, a rate roughly three times the national average.

Dr. Daniel P. Edney, the state’s top health officer, said he did not set Medicaid policy, and he has been careful not to take sides. But he predicted emerging health care deserts where women would have to travel long distances to deliver babies and more sick people would die because they could not gain access to care.

Of the state’s hospitals, “I have maybe heard of two that are generating any profit,” he said. When he asks hospital executives if Medicaid expansion would help their balance sheets, he said, “they say it’s a game changer.”

He predicted that five hospitals would soon downgrade into mere emergency rooms, where doctors work to stabilize patients, then transfer them to the nearest hospital.

If that happens, some of the sickest will not make it, said Dr. Jeff Moses, an emergency room physician at Greenwood Leflore.

“Where are they going? Davy Jones’s locker,” he said. “It is very dark, and I’m not exaggerating this. I just can’t imagine what will happen to this community if this hospital closes.”

Nine years after states began expanding Medicaid, evidence is growing that broader coverage saves lives. In a 2021 analysis, researchers affiliated with the National Bureau of Economic Research estimated that in one four-year period, [*19,200 more adults aged 55 to 64*](https://www.cbpp.org/research/health/medicaid-expansion-has-saved-at-least-19000-lives-new-research-finds) survived because of expanded coverage, and nearly 16,000 more would have lived if that coverage was nationwide.

Other studies suggest why: Making medical care more affordable led to increases in regular checkups, cancer screenings, diagnoses of chronic diseases and prescriptions for needed medicines.

Especially during the first six years of the Medicaid expansion, when the federal government picked up 95 to 100 percent of the cost, many states found that the program was a net fiscal gain. Some states have imposed taxes on hospitals or health care providers to cover their share of the expense, the same strategy used to help fund other Medicaid costs.

Now the federal government is offering a new incentive for the holdouts: As part of a 2021 pandemic relief measure, it agreed to temporarily pay a higher proportion of costs for some existing Medicaid patients if states broadened eligibility.

Mississippi’s office of the state economist has estimated that for at least the first decade, those savings and others would fully cover the roughly $200 million a year that Medicaid expansion would cost the state government.

Tim Moore, the president of the Mississippi Hospital Association, said expansion was “a no-brainer.” The state is so poor, he said, that for every dollar it spends on Medicaid, the federal government pumps four back in.

Polls, including by Mississippi Today and Siena College, appear to show Mississippians support Medicaid expansion, regardless of their political affiliation. Brandon Presley, the Democratic candidate for governor, is highlighting hospital closures as a reason to deny Mr. Reeves a second term in elections this November.

In a possible sign of political nervousness, the governor and the legislature recently agreed to extend Medicaid coverage to pregnant women for 12 months after they give birth, prolonging a federal pandemic-era policy.

The legislators are also trying to prop up the hospitals with a one-time infusion of $83 million or more. But that is a pittance compared with what the state has given up in Medicaid payments.

The state has lost four hospitals since 2008, according to the hospital association, and Dr. Edney, the state health officer, said that it would inevitably lose more. He said he worried most about health care access in the Delta, where he grew up, the child of ***working-class*** parents with no health insurance.

On Saturday, Representative Bennie Thompson, Democrat of Mississippi, said victims of a tornado that struck the Delta last week had to be ferried 50 miles away for medical treatment because the local hospital had no power. More Medicaid dollars, he said, would have equipped it with an emergency generator.

An hour due west from Greenwood Leflore, another major hospital, run by Delta Health System, is also in serious trouble. Licensed for more than 300 beds, the hospital one day last month held just 72 inpatients.

Thirty-two of them were kept in the emergency department, partly because of nursing cuts. One upshot is that patients seeking emergency care now wait an average of two hours, four times as long as they should, according to Amy Walker, the chief nursing officer. Some simply walk out.

The neonatal intensive care unit closed last July. Now babies in trouble must be ferried by ambulance or helicopter 125 miles south to Jackson.

Iris Stacker, the chief executive, said the hospital could remain open through the end of the year; after that, she makes no promises. She is hoping federal grants will help keep the doors open, despite the state’s failure to expand Medicaid.

But she said, “It’s very hard to ask the federal government for more money when you have this pot of money sitting here that we won’t touch.”

A top message on Greenwood Leflore’s website is now [*a request for donations*](https://glh.org). So far, the hospital has raised less than $12,000.

Mike Hardin, a 70-year-old retiree, was one of a handful of inpatients one recent day. He had come to the emergency room two days before with slurred speech. Doctors quickly diagnosed a stroke and now were sending him home with revised medications.

“They have to do something to keep this hospital open,” he said as he was wheeled out of his room. “The people around this area wouldn’t have any place else to go.”

The hospital’s outpatient clinics are largely still in business, and doctors there say their caseloads are full of impoverished patients who should have been treated earlier.

Dr. Abhash Thakur, a cardiologist, said he routinely saw patients in the late stages of congestive heart failure who had never seen a cardiologist or been prescribed heart medication. Some have as little as 10 percent of their heart function left.

“They are not the exception,” he said, before examining a 52-year-old man who uses a wheelchair because of his heart disease. “Every day, probably, I will see a few of them.”

Dr. Raymond Girnys, a general surgeon, had just treated a man in his late 50s. He said that a week earlier, the man had punctured his foot on a sharp stick while walking in his tennis shoes in a field.

The man did not seek medical attention until the foot became infected because he was poor and uninsured. Dr. Girnys pointed out the irony: If his patient lost his foot, he would become eligible for Medicaid because then he would be disabled.

“If they had insurance, they wouldn’t be afraid to seek care,” he said.

Margot Sanger-Katz contributed reporting. Kitty Bennett and Susan C. Beachy contributed research.

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PHOTOS: Greenwood Leflore Hospital in Mississippi lost $17 million last year, and its cash reserves are dwindling. “They have to do something to keep this hospital open,” said Mike Hardin, below left, a recent inpatient. Below right, Dr. Abhash Thakur, a cardiologist.; Mississippi’s death rates are at or near the nation’s highest for heart disease and other ailments. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13) This article appeared in print on page A1, A13.

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[***It's a Very Miami Christmas in Santa's Enchanted Forest***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6752-P1R1-DXY4-X31D-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Patricia Mazzei and Scott McIntyre

**Body**

How Miami Does Christmas

We're exploring how America defines itself one place at a time. In Miami, a holiday theme park has for decades embodied the city's distinct mix of cultures.

MEDLEY, Fla. -- Fake snow blows on a gravel lot to greet visitors at one of South Florida's most enduring Christmas traditions. Past a tunnel of blinding colored lights, dioramas celebrate the holiday with a subtropical twist: Santa on a Jet Ski. Santa on a fishing boat. Surfing Santa.

Food vendors hawk Brazilian picanha steak and dulce de leche churros. ''All I Want for Christmas Is You'' blares over loudspeakers in Spanish. A 100-foot artificial tree lights up in sync to reggaeton and Latin trap tunes.

This is Santa's Enchanted Forest, Miami's interpretation of an American Christmas.

For 39 years, miles from South Beach and most of Miami's tourist haunts, the seasonal theme park known simply as Santa's has been a mainstay of the holiday season. Though it is now in its third location in four years after its longtime lease expired -- and the enchanted forest now consists of trees that had to be trucked in -- its garish lights and throwback kitsch continue to symbolize Christmas for many of the region's ***working-class*** people. Many are immigrants; some have never seen real snow or been able to afford a Disney vacation.

''There was no Christmas in Cuba,'' said GiGi Diaz, 37, who immigrated to Miami as a child and has visited Santa's most years since. ''I had never seen a Christmas tree. I learned the concept of Santa Claus when I was 10 years old.''

While in high school, she and other girls in a dance group recorded a jingle for Santa's that still plays on the radio during the holiday season. She now brings students from the dance academy she owns to perform at the theme park. ''It's a place where you can be a kid again,'' Ms. Diaz said.

In a city with little interest in tradition, Santa's has become a touchstone where adults who came as teenagers now bring their children, and vendors run booths once operated by their parents.

''I remember being 3 years old and running in to get my face painted,'' said Karly Calvo, 28, whose father, Carlos, ran the Santa photo booth and several food stands for 37 years. After his death in April, she took charge.

''People I don't know come up to me all the time: 'Your dad was here when I was a kid!''' she said. ''Sometimes I do feel he's with me in spirit.''

She still gets her face painted almost every day over the roughly two months a year that Santa's is open.

''All right, darling,'' Jackie Jorge, a makeup artist, told Ms. Calvo as she put the finishing touches of glitter on her face with a Q-Tip on a recent Friday evening. ''One, two, three: Beautiful!''

At a nearby picnic table, the Leon family, which had arrived early to beat the crowds, was getting ready to head home.

Jendry Leon, 33, had come with his wife, mother and 12-year-old son, David, a fan of corn dogs and the Ferris wheel. ''We come every year,'' Mr. Leon said.

''We used to come when he was a boy,'' Mr. Leon's mother, Milagros Rumbaut, 55, chimed in.

''We'd say, 'OK, it's Christmas. Time to go to Santa's!''' Mr. Leon recalled.

I braved the traffic on the Palmetto Expressway to visit Santa's recently -- I confess, for the first time, having somehow dodged it as an undergraduate at the University of Miami. I wanted to understand why it was so beloved by friends and acquaintances who rarely miss a year of attendance, and what that loyalty said about Miami culture.

''It sounds insane to call Santa's Enchanted Forest 'culture,''' said Alex Fumero, 40, a film and television producer from Miami who a decade ago referenced the theme park in a video titled, ''12 Days of Miami Christmas.'' (''On the 10th day of Christmas, Abuela gave to me / 10 bucks off at Santa's.'')

''People know that there's Cubans and Latinos,'' said Mr. Fumero, who now lives in Los Angeles. ''But they don't really know that there's also this second-generation culture that's native to Miami that's the result of all this Latin American immigration.''

Like others who were raised in Miami, Mr. Fumero grew up speaking English at least half the time but frequently slips into Spanish -- ''I didn't know I had an accent till I left,'' he said -- and has embraced both traditional American holiday customs and more brash South Florida flair.

Santa's encapsulates that, he said: ''There's Santa Claus and Christmas trees and lights, but there's also an Avalanche ride that goes backwards really fast, and they're just blaring booty music on it.''

''I looked for Santa's here in L.A.,'' he added, a little forlorn. ''And it does not exist.''

I had planned to go to Santa's in Decembers past, but it had never panned out. Then, in early 2020, Santa's lease at its longtime location, Tropical Park, first signed in 1992, expired. Its landlord, Miami-Dade County, did not renew it. The coronavirus pandemic kept Santa's closed, and I worried I had missed my chance.

Santa's returned last year, but its new home in the heavily Cuban city of Hialeah, just northwest of Miami, was so cramped that entrance lines were two hours long. Parking, of utmost concern to South Floridians, was a nightmare.

The theme park finds itself in yet another setting this year:a 40-acre lot in Medley, an industrial town near Miami International Airport. Parking is not a problem, but the namesake ''forest,'' a reference to Tropical Park's many tall trees, is gone.

''You walked through there and it was like Miami's version of magic,'' said Billy Corben, a documentary filmmaker whose Jewish grandparents were friends with Santa's Jewish founder, Jerry A. Shechtman. Mr. Shechtman died in 1995; his son Steven now owns the operation and runs it with his brother, Brian.

When Mr. Corben's cousins would visit over the holidays, three generations would caravan in multiple cars to Santa's, where they had devised a strategic route to hit favorite food vendors and rides.

''I'm not going because it's in Medley now,'' Mr. Corben declared at one point in our interview.

Then he kept reminiscing.

''We don't really have a lot of common culture anymore,'' he said, pointing to South Florida's transient population and lack of institutional memory. ''With all the tribalism of Miami, Santa's very much felt like Switzerland. Like kind of neutral territory.''

''There's just great memories there, and I think that's probably true for any Jew you ask, any Cuban you ask, any Haitian you ask,'' he continued. ''And how many of those things do we have?''

The fajitas at Santa's were so good, Mr. Corben said, that he once tried to buy some from the side of the highway, through the Tropical Park fence. Ward Deal, who runs the Viva la Fajita stand, told me that many of his devoted customers tried to do that at Santa's previous location.

''People email me to find out if I'm here and figure out if they should get a season pass,'' he said. ''I see generations of kids that were here in strollers and are now here with their own families.'' (The chicken fajita with guacamole did not disappoint.)

Mr. Corben said going to Santa's ''felt kind of pure.''

''It was naked capitalism,'' he conceded. (Tickets for ages 9-64 are $42.99 a pop.) ''But it also felt like this sort of benevolent thing. They gave us this Christmas gift.''

He paused.

''Maybe we'll go this year,'' he said.

Susan C. Beachy and Kirsten Noyes contributed research.Susan C. Beachy and Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/22/us/santas-enchanted-forest-miami-christmas-park.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/22/us/santas-enchanted-forest-miami-christmas-park.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Fake snow blows on a gravel lot to greet visitors to Santa's Enchanted Forest in Medley, Fla., an industrial town near Miami International Airport.

Below, clockwise from upper left, holiday mirth without the mistletoe at Santa's Enchanted Forest

students from GiGi Diaz's dance school performing a Christmas number

one of several dioramas showing Santa engaged in subtropical pastimes

celebrating a winning ball toss at a game booth. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SCOTT MCINTYRE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A11.

**Load-Date:** December 23, 2022

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[***In the Decade Since Xi Jinping Came to Power, Some Chinese Writers Have Tried to Capture the everyday Realities that the Government Hides.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68W8-V2N1-JBG3-637V-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Han Zhang

**Body**

On an August evening in 2021, the best-selling Chinese novelist Hao Qun, who writes under the name Murong Xuecun, was procrastinating in his one-bedroom apartment. He needed to be at Beijing Capital International Airport around 6 the next morning to catch a flight to London, but he found it hard to pack. Though Hao had a valid tourist visa to Britain, the Chinese government had kept tabs on him for years, and it was possible that he would be prevented from leaving; other public intellectuals had tried to travel abroad only to discover that they were under exit bans. Hao might have been packing for a life of exile or a futile trip to the airport.

His forthcoming book, ''Deadly Quiet City,'' would be published soon, and Hao's editors were worried for his safety. A collection of nonfiction, it was about the terrifying, Kafkaesque early days of the Covid-19 outbreak in Wuhan, where residents had been subjected to an unrelenting information-suppression campaign. The Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market was considered the pandemic's origin point, but the state had strangled reporting on daily life there. When Hao arrived at the shuttered market in April 2020, he was met by tired guards, who, to discourage him from taking photos, presented coercion as patriotic duty. ''You know, the Americans are exhausting their ways to frame our country,'' one of them said. ''It'd be no good if your photos were used by foreign media. Please cooperate.''

Hao was not deterred. Square-faced and of average height, he has the look of a Chinese everyman. You can picture him striking up conversations with ease, and over the course of his reporting trip he talked to people from all walks of life -- office employees, store owners, taxi drivers and migrant workers. Some introductions were made by reporters, who were forbidden to cover many aspects of the pandemic. These meetings were often hourslong affairs. ''At the time, people had a strong desire to talk,'' Hao recalls. One interview with a citizen journalist named Zhang Zhan lasted from noon until after dusk. All the while, he tried to shake off the eerie suspicion that he was being watched. It was a paranoid hunch, but it wasn't an irrational one. After all, the guobao, or Chinese secret police, had shadowed him for the better part of a decade. In Wuhan, he conducted conversations at odd locations: on a street lined with office buildings abandoned during the pandemic, or by the windy bank of the Yangtze River.

In his hotel room, he sometimes made phone calls under a blanket to ensure privacy. One night, the sound of two men speaking in hushed voices outside his door left him thinking of citizen journalists who had disappeared after posting reports from the city. A distant memory flashed: Five or six years ago in Beijing, Hao was invited to a celebration at the Swedish Embassy. A couple of guobao officers showed up at his home a day before the event. ''You won't be able to go,'' one of them informed Hao, hinting that they would physically stop him if he tried. Feeling rebellious, Hao insisted that he would go, but the guobao taunted him. ''Look at yourself,'' one of them said. ''How many blows would you be able to withstand?'' The men in the hallway eventually left, but Hao was covered in cold sweat. Days after he departed from Wuhan, he got word that Zhang had been arrested.

''Deadly Quiet City,'' which was published in the United States in March by the New Press, captures how such state-enforced silence, combined with inadequate access to medical care, intensified ordinary people's despair during the crisis. Reading these stories, you not only feel for Hao's subjects but also fear for the political trouble Hao's unflinching clarity invites. After Hao submitted the manuscript to Hardie Grant Books, his Australian publisher, in spring 2021, his editors urged him to leave China out of concern for his safety. He equivocated. A few years in prison was a price he was willing to pay for the book's publication.

His editors continued to press him, and by midsummer he had decided to flee. He boarded the flight to London successfully and, after a spell, moved on to Melbourne. When he spoke to me in late January, he seemed to be in a bit of disbelief at where his life ended up. Exile in Australia was worlds away from the circumstances in which he first rose to prominence. As China strove for a larger role on the international stage at the turn of the century, the arrival of the internet and a relatively relaxed political environment sparked an unprecedented boom in self-expression. Afforded new license, many writers of Hao's generation tested the boundaries of Chinese literary culture, writing stories that portrayed the lives of the rapidly growing middle class and the opulent nouveau riche while revealing the ethical toll an increasingly materialistic worldview took on their nation. These writers experimented with subjects that were quotidian but taboo on the page -- corruption, sexual desire and evolving gender roles -- often wielding confession to upend convention.

There is a Chinese idiom: ''Spilled water will not flow backward.'' This period opened a floodgate of creation that forever altered contemporary Chinese literary culture. Where the government once vetted all writing for its conformity to state values, the internet provided a marketplace of ideas where writers could independently attract tremendous audiences. In today's China, though, the pursuit of free expression requires writers to weather new political pressures and operate under the ever-watchful eye of a complex state surveillance system. This can resemble a high-stakes game of Whac-a-Mole in which writers, editors and online publishers try to outmaneuver the Chinese Communist Party's apparatus, using any opportunity and resource at their disposal to chronicle life as they see it.

In 1978, as China emerged from Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution and decades of isolation, the Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping inaugurated his Opening Up policy. This was both an overture to foreign business and a kind of domestic glasnost. Over the next few decades, ''openness'' became a political buzzword. By 2001, that ethos had borne its most symbolic fruits: After campaigning for more than a decade, China became a member of the World Trade Organization and was selected to host the 2008 Summer Olympic Games.

Jiang Zemin, Deng's successor, applied the old man's vision to cultural work, which, as he said at the 2002 national party congress, should be ''geared toward modernization, the world and the future.'' Soon the government introduced policies, like tax relief for companies that transitioned from state-owned bureaucracies to market-driven enterprises, that equipped creative industries to produce dynamic and competitive work.

This general openness coincided with the popularization of the internet, which was new enough that it largely eluded outmoded print-era censorship. For much of the first decade of the new millennium, the Great Firewall -- the infrastructure that bans an ever-growing list of foreign websites -- hadn't yet been erected. Chinese citizens could access Facebook, Wikipedia and Google somewhat freely, and the state had yet to develop a robust mechanism to track sensitive words as a way to curb the spread of inconvenient information. By the end of the decade, scholars and writers debated public affairs on Weibo, a Twitter-like platform. Elsewhere, vibrant communities emerged around niche passions. The poet who writes under the name Xiaoyin remembers the new poetry websites of that era as chaotic and fun spaces. On sites like Poetry Life, his peers quarreled daily over matters like the possibilities of colloquial poetry writing. ''Anyone could start their own bulletin boards,'' he told me. ''It was like bandits occupying hills and claiming to be kings.''

This internet-based community constituted a sea change for Chinese literature. Until the mid-1990s, jobs were assigned by the government. For generations of writers, membership in the state-sponsored writers' association and staff jobs at party publications or state news agencies were more or less the only path to a career in letters. Some of China's most prestigious novelists -- like Yan Lianke and Mo Yan, known for their realist novels about the village life of their youth -- published their debuts while serving in the People's Liberation Army. But by the 2000s, such formal affiliations were no longer a prerequisite. Anyone with a computer and an internet connection could share his or her work on literary forums, where censorship was nascent and piecemeal. Free from the scrutiny of editors and censors, writers had a more direct relationship with their readers, who relished their refreshingly unabashed accounts of their historical moment.

Explaining the differences between these generations to me over the phone, the celebrated novelist who writes under the name A Yi borrowed concepts from classic martial-arts stories: Traditional writers, he told me, inhabited miaotang, or temples and courts, whereas writers of the internet age inhabited jianghu, or the unkempt natural world. Unburdened from the institutional gaze, they explored subjects and feelings that didn't align with the state's values. One essayist, writing under the name Muzimei, earned her reputation by publishing sex journals detailing her one-night stands and flirtatious encounters with rock stars and other public figures. If the era's cosmopolitanism was thrilling, it was also morally ambiguous. Sometimes, upward mobility could engender a spiritual hollowness.

Without the relative freedom that the open internet provided, Hao might never have started writing. After testing into a university in Beijing and studying law, in 2000 he got a job in H.R. at a cosmetics company and moved to the southern metropolis Shenzhen -- the heartland of Deng's reforms. When Hao became a writer, he was an untethered man: His parents, who had been farmers in his rural home village, had both died by the time he was in college. He was briefly married in the late 1990s, but that relationship ended in divorce in 2000. Browsing one of the literature bulletin boards, he came across a serialized novel titled ''My Beijing,'' published under the pseudonym Drunken Fish. The story of a group of friends finding their way in the rapidly growing and suddenly wealthy capital inspired Hao to try his hand at a story that reflected his own time in China's urban environments. ''We wrote about the stories happening around us, our own anxieties, expectations and sense of rootlessness,'' he told me.

Soon he had begun a novel about a recent university graduate in the southwestern city Chengdu navigating office politics and questioning his marriage. By April 2002, he was posting chapters to several bulletin boards under his new pseudonym: Murong Xuecun, a name reminiscent of a hero in a martial-arts novel. Eventually titled ''Leave Me Alone,'' the novel captured the hopes and delusions of recent college graduates who, like Hao, grew up in modest circumstances and now found themselves surrounded by temptations of fast cash and meaningless sex. Hao's depiction of Chengdu's seedy underbelly became a sensation on forums like Tianya, one of the period's largest blogging platforms. Once, a colleague recommended the novel to Hao without knowing that he was Murong Xuecun. Within two months, he was approached by booksellers and publishers, and the novel came out that December. He enjoyed the spoils of success, frequently treating friends to fancy dinners and letting them borrow money when they needed it. Beijing is divided into six concentric rings radiating from downtown; generally speaking, the closer to downtown, the more prosperous the neighborhood. By 2010, Hao lived in a penthouse in the third ring.

Hao's fiction tended to explore imperfect protagonists, abuse of power and the moral corrosion of city life. In his 2008 best-selling novel, ''Dancing Through Red Dust,'' the narrator, Wei Da, is a well-connected partner at a law firm who moves with confidence through gambling dens and corporate offices alike. Wei comes from a simple family, but in a world where money keeps everything in motion and compassion is weakness, his survival instincts and desire for influence overwhelm his better nature. In one scene, Wei runs over a poor farmer while driving drunk; in the end, the farmer is forced to pay Wei for damaging his car. Hao's transition from a pulp-fiction writer to a daring documentarian and critic of the government was a natural progression. ''From the get-go, he has been completely obsessed with how people are corrupted by the environment in which they live,'' says Megan Walsh, author of ''The Subplot,'' a book about contemporary Chinese literature. In reading his work, she says, you come to believe that people can exist in and perpetuate ''horrendous cycles of injustice.''

Authorities mostly viewed Hao and other newcomers with suspicion. At National Writers' Association conferences, leaders urged ''literature workers'' to fight against ''diversification of thought'' -- ideas that subverted authoritarian, patriarchal norms. Later, at a propaganda meeting, the deputy party secretary of Chengdu criticized Hao's fiction for damaging the city's image. A more ''correct'' local performance artist, Li Boqing, accused Hao of failing to present the city's ''mainstream features.'' To him, Li said in an interview, Chengdu was ''a beautiful, kind and tolerant mother, who also has a graceful figure.'' Disgusted by the lust and greed portrayed in Hao's work, Li insisted that writers should focus on the city's relaxing atmosphere, famed history of brocade production and beautiful Chinese hibiscus.

As Hao went through a political awakening, that distrust turned into persecution. In 2011, Hao learned that his close friend Ran Yunfei, a scholar of classical Chinese, was arrested and charged with subversion after he warned that if China didn't make reforms, it risked an upheaval like the Jasmine Revolution protests in North Africa. On Weibo, where Hao had millions of followers, he denounced the arrest and called Ran ''the conscience of the country.'' Ran was released from detention that same year, but Hao's encounter with state repression radicalized him. ''Until that point, I had enjoyed my life as a best-selling author and avoided getting into trouble,'' he says. ''But when their hands reached those close to me, I had to step up.'' Hao's writing steered to social commentary, and he began contributing to The International New York Times.

The repercussions were swift. Hao was banned from Weibo, and before long it became clear that he was blacklisted. In 2014, he started to receive invitations to tea -- slang for informal police questioning. In the next few years, he had tea about 40 times, as often as once a month. Sometimes, as if they were old friends, officers would ask what Hao had been up to or what he had been thinking about. His writing career essentially came to an end: He never published another book in China, and he made his living by ghostwriting screenplays for movies and TV shows. When, out of habit, he reached for the bill while out at dinner, friends dissuaded him and insisted that he needed to think about his future. By the time he left China, he had rented a studio apartment outside Beijing's fifth ring. Thirty-six of his friends -- writers, scholars, activists and lawyers -- had been detained or sentenced to prison. Late at night, as he fell asleep, he wondered when his turn would come. ''I didn't have long-term plans,'' he says, ''because I felt that I had one foot in prison already.''

Under President Xi Jinping, who took office in 2013, the Communist Party has sought to assert China's position as a rising global power. Domestically, Xi's government has shown less tolerance for the kind of writing that Deng's reforms fostered and has been keen on creating a centralized discourse that nurtures national pride through an emphasis on ''telling China's story well'' -- a piece of ubiquitous political boilerplate that Xi introduced into the national consciousness. In the spring of 2013, less than two months after Xi became president, state outlets reported on a party central document that instructed cadres to prioritize ''the struggles in the ideological sphere'' and to ''reinforce our management of propaganda on the cultural front'' and ''cut off channels of erroneous ideologies and speech at their headwaters.'' This course correction was a tacit admission that Deng's Opening Up policy stoked growing conversation about notions like feminism, queerness and civil rights -- and that their discussion needed to be curbed.

To that end, the state has developed a robust surveillance and censorship apparatus. The guobao, local police officers, publishing authorities and digital surveillance tools are all mobilized into a multifaceted operation whose purpose is to control ''China's story.'' That machinery has transformed the internet from a place of experimentation into Exhibit A of the state's power. This often takes the form of a 404 error page -- a notice that the state has deemed an article or a piece of social media content unfit for public consumption. No one is immune: In 2021, former Prime Minister Wen Jiabao published an essay remembering his mother, writing that China ''should be a country full of justice and fairness.'' On the popular social media app WeChat, users couldn't share Wen's essay on their timelines or private chats.

Xi's approach has strangled free expression. According to Freedom House, which surveys internet freedom around the world by tracking control measures, the freedom of the Chinese internet has dropped by 40 percent since 2011, and for the last eight years, China has earned the ignominious distinction of being the ''most repressive'' among the countries that the organization monitors. In publishing, each new title requires individual approval, which can result in an exhausting process: Once a publisher decides to pursue a book proposal, it will be reviewed by in-house editors before they submit a request to the National Administration of Press and Publication, which decides whether the idea will materialize. In the last decade, the publication of new titles categorized as ''literary'' has decreased by 15 percent. Seven out of 10 literary titles published in 2013 were new works. By 2021, reprints made up half of publications.

In this environment of intense censorship and fractured cultural infrastructure, writers must be flexible, willing to forgo old forms and move fluidly among genres if they want to continue making meaningful work. Journalists become serial entrepreneurs who dream up new ways of creating to fill the lacunae they see. When one project becomes infeasible, they move on to another.

Zhang Wenmin, a veteran journalist who writes under the name Jiang Xue, became known for her coverage of a 2002 civil rights case in which four policemen showed up at a newlywed couple's home because they were watching porn. Among many colleagues, there had been the consensus that no matter what, they had to try to say a little more, Zhang recalls. Sensing increasing pressure, she quit institutional journalism in 2015 to become a self-publishing blogger. With long, straight hair, Zhang dresses simply. In contrast to the steely insistence on common sense in her writing, there is a vulnerable shyness in her physical presence. ''I've never been cool,'' she joked softly, her arms draped in front of her body. On WeChat, she wrote stories about dissidents, something no news outlet would allow, she said, because it's like violating a tiantiao -- a statute sent from heaven. She was uninvited from journalism events. She lost her Weibo and WeChat accounts, becoming virtually invisible. ''Friends and family think I went too far,'' Zhang said. When her city, Xi'an, went into lockdown, a friend offered her own WeChat account to publish Zhang's journals. They went viral but also drew attacks. ''The worsening media environment in the last 10 years makes people see things upside down,'' she said. ''When you do the most normal thing, it appears abnormal.''

Elsewhere, an even more bottom-up kind of writing community appeared. Its participants are assisted by affordable technology -- three-quarters of the Chinese population are smartphone owners -- allowing a wider swath of people to publish more varieties of writing. While Hao's generation of writers was predominantly middle class and upwardly mobile, the spread of internet-enabled technology has allowed ***working-class*** people without degrees to pursue literature. On social media platforms like Kuaishou, where users post short video clips, factory workers, masseuses and truck drivers started to compose poems. In 2017, a 44-year-old single mother, Fan Yusu, became a literary star almost overnight after her autobiographical essay, ''I Am Fan Yusu,'' went viral on WeChat. Beginning with a striking line -- ''My life is a hard-to-read book: Destiny bound me poorly'' -- it narrates her rural youth and eventual employment by an uber-rich Beijing businessman who hires her to take care of the child he shares with a mistress. Six days a week, she leaves her own daughters behind and attends to the love child. She started writing in her free time because, she thought, ''to live, you have to do something besides eating.''

The journalist and editor Yang Ying has been a champion for overlooked stories and the platforms that host them. She has managed to build a successful career despite cycles of setback and rebirth: A former reporter for a business weekly, she left that magazine in 2014 after growing dissatisfied with conventional media. Along with a couple of other editors, she started a popular digital outlet whose name translates to Curiosity Daily that covered subjects like the Shanghai Pride Parade, a Texan who moved into a dumpster for a year to explore sustainable living and the work of the Japanese auteur Hirokazu Kore-eda, who once commented that creators should keep influence of the state at bay. After the authorities suspended the outlet twice for ''illegally building a news gathering and editing team,'' the outfit dissolved in 2019. Yang persisted, following that project with a digital magazine called Xiaoniao, or Little Birds, in which she published literary writing on subjects that could no longer be explored in journalism. ''Literature is our last refuge,'' Yang told me.

''In stories, people can communicate with one another,'' Zhang Jieping, a journalist turned media entrepreneur and founder of the fellowship Zaichang, or ''On the Scene,'' told me. ''Their joys and sadness become relatable. With today's news outlets, it's increasingly hard to achieve that.'' As journalism institutions collapsed, Zhang built Zaichang to create a community and a ladder for aspiring journalists to learn to tell such stories. Editors like Yang and Zhang want to correct that dearth of connection by normalizing what Yang called ''everyday messiness'' -- topics that the state considers counterproductive, like disappearing traditional villages and the rising diagnosis of anxiety in the aftermath of disasters. In Xi's China, though, publishing this work means courting unwanted attention. During Shanghai's Covid lockdown, Xiaoniao published a special edition that collected haunting real stories, including one about a young woman who evaded the rules to cross the city to see her critically ill father. Soon, Yang was treated to tea by her local police. Apparently swamped with tea appointments, they asked her to remove the entire issue from the publication's mobile app. She complied.

Without public distribution channels, the special issue of Xiaoniao lives as a PDF passed around among friends. ''I have no idea how far it has reached,'' Yang said. ''There is something samizdat-like to it,'' she said, referring to the underground literature of 20th-century Eastern Europe, which circulated hand to hand. In today's China, people create knowing that publishing is transient in nature -- online articles can be taken down; books can be removed from the shelves; writers can be blacklisted; bloggers can be ''disappeared.'' (One of the websites Xiaoyin frequented, Poetry Life, announced its shutdown on July 13. ''Poetry Life was born on the internet where it will dissipate,'' the announcement read. ''It has been a mirage as well as our real land.'')

Yet many people go on writing in whatever capacity they can manage. ''If the goal was to escape censorship, then we wouldn't be in this business,'' Yang said. They focus, instead, on creating a new possibility of public writing: a vibrant, breathing thing. ''Here, people are quick to forget,'' she said. ''Sometimes they are forced to forget. Other times, new events overwrite the old before you know it. It's like we live in an environment where people can't keep going if they don't learn to forget.'' She paused to search for the precise words. ''Literature is a good way to help people remember things.''

Earlier this year, Zhang Wenmin and Hao were introduced by mutual friends and met while they were each traveling. Pondering her future, Zhang was both curious about and daunted by the examples of Hao and other expatriate writers. At a dinner with other Chinese writers, she spoke almost to herself. ''How does a writer come to accept their status of exile?''

In Melbourne, Hao is curious about his new surroundings. Every experience presents opportunities for discoveries: After contracting Covid and speaking with a public-health official on the phone, he was prescribed free medication. ''Isn't this socialism?'' he wondered. He went to observe a local election and chatted with people outside. ''It's eye-opening,'' he says. ''There is a party representing sex workers. There is also a party for animal rights.''

Hao is eager to master his new language but is baffled by the choice of other exiled writers, like the late Milan Kundera, to abandon their mother tongues in their work. The act of writing -- of making sense of one's experiences -- is so bound up in the language a person speaks, along with all the little intricacies and inexplicable imagery within it. To abandon it is almost like abandoning yourself. He told me the story behind his favorite Chinese phrase: huangliang yimeng, or ''a fleeting dream as the golden millet cooks.'' It refers to a story in which a young man falls asleep at an inn as the innkeeper steams a pot of millet. In his dream, the man marries a beautiful woman from a wealthy family, rises to power in court politics and narrowly escapes death after jealous rivals set him up. After a lifetime, he wakes up. The millet isn't done yet. Which is the reality: eventless destitution or surreal splendor punctuated by viciousness?

Hao has readily joined a growing community of Chinese activists and writers in exile. ''As the environment grows dire,'' he wrote to Zhang on Signal, the encrypted messaging service, ''we are a generation that's destined to be uprooted and scattered, to drift through the world.'' Privately, though, Hao is still processing the past. Since self-exiling, Hao has experienced a measure of survivor's guilt. His tally of arrested friends has risen to 41. Last fall, when thousands of citizens protested the arbitrary Covid policies, Hao had an intense feeling of missing out. One day, perhaps, he thought, he would decide to return home as abruptly as he left. In his early essays, Hao depicted himself to be a somewhat feeble man. When he encountered physical conflict in the streets, he tended to avert his eyes and avoid getting involved. It's different, however, when the conflict is intellectual. He finds himself oscillating between wary caution and reckless bravery. He cannot stomach the government's authoritarian grip on China's literary culture and public life. ''Who gives you the right to rule this way?'' he wondered aloud.

Last year, Hao began writing fiction again at the age of 48. He is in the middle of a new novel he is calling ''Homeless Dog.'' The working title is inspired by a friend's experience during a tea session when a guobao officer scolded him: ''Don't fancy yourself to be some kind of big figure. To me, you are merely a homeless dog.'' Seen in this light, the title poses a question: Who gets to define writers like Hao? ''I had to make many difficult choices, but I'm proud of the life I lived,'' Hao says. In May, he was touring for his Wuhan book in Norway. In drizzling rain, on a train passing through unfamiliar cities, he dozed. A dream came: He was 18 again and about to take the college entrance exam. He was feeling unprepared. He woke up feeling jittery, then remembered that the old days are long gone. He is far from home.

Han Zhang is a journalist on The New Yorker's editorial staff. She has written about the political and literary narratives that have shaped Chinese culture and identities. She is also the editor at large for Riverhead Books, where she is working to introduce contemporary Chinese-language literary works to English readers.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/03/magazine/chinese-literature-censorship.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/03/magazine/chinese-literature-censorship.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY TOMMY KHA) (MM38)

Hao Qun (right) with the citizen journalist Zhang Zhan in a Wuhan hotel room. Opening pages: Hao and an unnamed writer. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM MELANIE WANG) (MM41)

Hao in June. ''I had to make many difficult choices, but I'm proud of the life I lived,'' he says. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TOMMY KHA) (MM42) This article appeared in print on page MM38, MM39, MM40, MM41, MM42, MM43.

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**Highlight:** Gig work has been silently taking over new industries, but not in the way many expected.

**Body**

Brenda Handy started doing temp work nearly 40 years ago. Back then, landing jobs took time and effort, even for a licensed practical nurse. In the 1990s she lived in Tampa, Fla., with her three children, but got her work through a man named Tony Braswell, who had his offices a half-hour away, in St. Petersburg. Braswell would call nurses with the details of their next jobs. Handy would learn her assignment and drive the family van an hour south to Sarasota, or maybe 40 minutes east to Lakeland, to reach one of the care facilities that contracted with Braswell’s company. She was one of his most reliable nurses, and she liked working with him. He knew her schedule and the jobs she preferred; he was the kind of hands-on guy who would, in a pinch, drive out in his own car to give a nurse a ride. Still, the whole process could be time-consuming. After a week’s worth of jobs was complete, Handy would drive to Braswell’s office in St. Petersburg — usually getting there before he’d even shown up and unlocked the door — and wait in the parking lot with a handful of other nurses for him to arrive and cut her a check.

“That is how you know I’ve been in this a long time,” she told me recently from her kitchen in St. Petersburg. “Nobody uses paper anymore. Nobody gives you checks.” Everything, she said, is now on her phone. “I’m on the app every day,” she said, as dinner sizzled audibly in the background. “I’m on the app when we’re talking right now.”

Handy still works for Braswell, but the days of phone calls and lingering outside the office are gone. In 2016, Braswell realized that he could not scale his business up without some degree of automation. So he created a software platform he called Gale Healthcare Solutions, in honor of Florence Nightingale. Handy can now log in and book work within seconds of a shift becoming available. “It’s like — you’re at the grocery store, you see something you like, you pick that shift,” she said. “They come up 24/7. You have to be quick on the draw.”

Handy has a full-time nursing job and works these additional shifts on the side. When we first spoke, she was also spending her mornings studying to become a registered nurse. She has an overarching philosophy of working both smart and hard — a philosophy about life stages, efficiency and making the best use of the tools available. She is not an entrepreneur, exactly, but she speaks a language that unifies personal and career growth. “So, I’m going to tell you how I do this,” she said. “On the days that I have to be in school, we go from 8 to 2. Then you get out of school. Then you can pick and choose if you want to work 3 to 11 or 11 to 7. Then I do a full-time on the weekend. I do 12 hours on Saturday and Sunday.” At 59, she spends most of her days caring for elderly and infirm patients, watching the details of their expressions, how they hold themselves, the little signifiers of how they are feeling. Then, in her off hours, she keeps an eye on her phone.

For most Americans, the concept of “gig work” has been synonymous with a handful of Silicon Valley giants — companies like Uber and DoorDash, Instacart and TaskRabbit. There was a moment in the 2010s when pundits told us to expect the “Uberization of everything”: a future in which the typical worker would move from job to job or task to task, finding either independence and flexibility in freelancing or, more realistically, the precarity of working for platforms that may be light on benefits and aggressively exploitative of labor. But there were also those who came to wonder whether the entire phenomenon had been overblown. “The gig economy,” [*Annie Lowrey wrote in The Atlantic in 2019,*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/01/gig-economy-isnt-really-taking-over/580180/) “was then and is now a more marginal phenomenon than it might have seemed.”

We do remain dependent on traditional gig labor, a fact that blazed into our collective consciousness with the pandemic and our sudden reliance on workers like delivery drivers. What is less often appreciated, though, is just how much, and how steadily, the structure and technology of gig work have expanded beyond our most obviously “Uberized” jobs. The gig economy, at this point, encompasses not just drivers or repairmen, not just designers or proofreaders, but also retail workers, the armies of itinerant nurses who crossed the country to shifting Covid hot spots and even white-collar professionals like lawyers and consultants. Whether they seem like “gigs” or not, countless varieties of jobs are sliding into the ecosystem of the gig — the world, broadly defined, of technology-enabled temporary employment — and steadily loosening the ties between workers and employers.

The battle lines that have been drawn around gig work and labor protections usually center on the issue of classification. Workers considered “independent” are paid by 1099, a tax category that exempts them from labor protections like a minimum wage, unemployment insurance and overtime — and requires them to cover their own payroll taxes. Others are paid by W-2 and covered under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1939. Businesses often push to categorize flexible workers as independent; labor advocates push for W-2s. The standards and tests that determine classifications vary from state to state and can be open to interpretation — workers are easily misclassified.

But even this division does not encompass the full scope of gig work and its influence. Handy, for instance, operates both within the gig ecosystem and outside it. Gale Healthcare insists that all its nurses be paid by W-2, maintaining a floor of labor protections, but still falling short of providing Handy with the level of benefits she can get from a regular, inflexible, full-time job. Hers isn’t the only industry in which some of the benefits once associated with W-2 work have grown complicated. Both inside and outside the gig world, the century-old compact that has determined who is entitled to key protections is eroding. There aren’t many labor questions more consequential than how we redefine or replace it.

No one is entirely sure how many Americans are working gigs, in part because the definition of gig work grows muddier by the year. Labor economists are certain the practice is growing, but it remains incredibly hard to measure. Annual surveys conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics are not designed to capture gig work as a category, and studies elsewhere use different parameters to define it. In an annual study commissioned by the “work marketplace” Upwork, [*39 percent of the U.S. labor force was found to be doing some variety of freelance work*](https://www.upwork.com/research/freelance-forward-2022) last year — a share representing around 60 million people and $1.35 trillion in U.S. earnings, an increase of $50 billion over 2021. A study by Pew Research Center, focusing more narrowly on platform-based gig work, found [*16 percent of U.S. adults had found work via an online platform*](https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2021/12/08/the-state-of-gig-work-in-2021/) at some point. Depending on how you define them, gig workers include people taking all sorts of temporary jobs. The person taking tickets at a basketball game or your order at McDonald’s may be picking up shifts using an app. Copywriters and marketing professionals offer their services on Upwork or Fiverr or via LinkedIn. There are bartenders, carpenters and even doctors looking down at their phones right now, searching for their next shift.

The platforms all these workers use vary so widely in their rules and structures that it’s difficult to pin down the boundaries of the modern gig economy. Some platforms are backed by Silicon Valley venture capital and have global ambitions, while others compete in smaller markets or specific industries. Some use workers to fulfill discrete tasks for customers, while others connect labor with traditional employers, taking on the role of a staffing agency. Some allow workers to pick and choose assignments without consequence, while others penalize them for not logging on or for declining tasks. A lawyer on Upwork can set his or her own rates and negotiate directly with clients, but shift-working platforms generally post jobs with a rate already established. For many delivery and driving platforms, rates vary, per service, according to closely protected algorithms that leave income uncertain. Each of these details can have profound impacts on the daily lives of workers. Even in high-income jobs, platforms are in a position to mediate disputes and control access to work; with low-income labor, workers may find themselves entirely dependent on the largess and the algorithms of the platforms they use. About the only thing all these workers have in common is that they are beholden to reviews, with just a few negative responses holding the power to dry up their income or even get them booted from their preferred platforms.

Kristen Anderson, the chief executive of a portable workplace-benefits platform called Catch, compares gig work to the concept of the K-shaped economic recovery, in which some industries bounce back from a recession (the upper leg of the K) while others continue failing (the lower). “I think gig work is K-shaped,” she told me. “The idea of the independent high-earner versus the independent low-earner. Freelance by choice and freelance by force. They have totally different experiences and totally different needs.”

Highly educated white-collar workers are especially well positioned to benefit from flexible work arrangements, using them to create better work-life balances, with time easily carved out for things like family or travel. Samer Bazzi, an online marketing professional, is a longtime freelancer who charges $200 an hour for his services through Upwork. There was a time when he tried to operate outside the platform, but he returned during a bout of kidney disease. “I had a lot of appointments and things that I had to go to,” he told me. “So I hopped back on Upwork.” Freelancing, he said, was not the walk in the park many people imagined. It only makes sense, in his opinion, when you’re making upward of $100 an hour and your reputation is good enough that companies start coming to you. Right now, Bazzi splits his attention between the jobs that come to him and the not-insignificant task of generating new leads. “If I’m down to like two or three clients,” he says, “I’ll go on Upwork, I’ll send out 100 proposals. Out of that 100, you’re going to get like 10 replies and maybe two or three clients.” One of the biggest challenges, he told me, is managing your reputation on the platform: “Not everybody knows that, hey, if you leave me a three-star review and it sounds OK to you, it’s not really OK for me. After a contract’s closed, you’re hand-on-your-heart until the feedback is in.”

Another Upwork user, Jaime Hollander, came to depend on the platform after moving to the suburbs of New York with two children, creating a commute that she found impossible. Full-time gigging let her work from home, stay close to her children and steadily increase her hourly rates. She was lucky, she says, because her husband’s job for a nearby school district offers benefits. Bazzi pays more than $900 a month for his health insurance. (“Health insurance,” he says. “Holy cow.”) Both have set up their own companies, enabling them to write off expenses and avoid the tax pitfalls of a 1099. They are, literally, small businesses. Hollander has even hired a handful of people herself — as full W-2 employees.

For the ***working class***, choice comes at a higher price. In many low-income jobs, flexibility has become entangled with the idea of just-in-time labor and staffing, a practice that cuts costs by slashing back on full-time work and making up any shortfalls with overtime, reduced breaks or last-minute workers brought in from staffing agencies. (This leaves just enough workers to meet demand — or, perhaps, not quite enough, squeezing excess productivity out of whoever is there.) Companies that operate this way need to be able to hire temporary staff quickly. They have found flex-working platforms an efficient solution. According to an advertisement for Snagajob, a platform for on-demand jobs, “Seventy percent of our jobs are filled in 10 minutes or less.”

And it is here, among the ***working class***, that the boundaries of the gig economy have become blurriest, with the technology and the concepts of gig work bleeding into the structure of regular employment. It is on-demand employment that has produced many of the working arrangements Americans have spent the past decade identifying as faintly dystopian. On-demand employment may mean you are subject to strict requirements for how many hours you work, but must compete for unpredictable shifts on online platforms, as if they were hot concert tickets. In retail work, it may mean mandatory overtime during peak shopping seasons and unreliable week-to-week income. In an Amazon warehouse — or even working from home on your laptop — it may mean intense computerized tracking of your minute-by-minute productivity, with grave consequences for even small variances. For railroad workers it may mean being denied, or penalized for taking, sick days during busy periods. These conditions easily cross the borders between gig and nongig work. Amazon, for instance, uses flexible scheduling platforms to enable full-time workers to choose shifts, letting them accrue paid time off as they work or taking it away via an automated penalty system — an arrangement that borrows some of its flexibility, uncertainty and technological control from the world of gigs. It’s also symbiotic with actual gig work: The wages are low enough that many employees do side work for platforms like DoorDash and Uber. (It is to those businesses’ advantage that flex workers accrue benefits from Amazon; the extra income they offer, meanwhile, allows Amazon to keep pay low.)

Daniel Olayiwola is one such Amazon associate, working a “flex schedule” in San Antonio; he also creates content about the experience on a YouTube channel called “Surviving Scamazon.” After five years of experience, he earns $18.40 an hour. On his flex schedule, he told me, he has to work 30 hours. “If you don’t, you get a point, and once you get to 8 points, you’re fired.” (That’s 8 points within a 60-day period, according to an Amazon spokesman.) Show up late, or miss a shift, and you get points. Shifts become available at specific times, and flex workers have to sign up quickly — some set alarms to remind them the moment shifts are released — “or else you’re going to end up working nights.” In this job, Olayiwola told me, you have to diversify to earn a living wage. Some drive for delivery platforms during their time off. Olayiwola takes gigs as a roofer, and tries to schedule some hours every few days. “You have to get creative,” he says, “in how you structure your life.”

Olayiwola’s job at Amazon comes with a W-2; he is covered by employment insurance, liability insurance, workers’ compensation. Still, he stakes out his schedule via a platform, taking shifts on demand. He must meet productivity expectations and keep careful track of break and bathroom times. Falling short on any metric could prompt a review process. “They put you in a situation where they have very ample opportunity to fire you,” he says, describing a cycle of penalties and rehirings. “They’ve fired everybody I know a couple of times. I operate as if I’ve already been fired.”

It’s hard not to be apprehensive of the ways in which the least pleasant innovations of the gig economy, and the technology that enables them, could seep into ever more industries and jobs — a future in which the “Uberization of everything” doesn’t mean eliminating regular employment, just forcing it to operate in increasingly giglike ways. David Weil — who served in the Labor Department under President Obama and later as dean of the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University — sees the expansion of gig working as part of a larger story, one he calls “fissuring.” When corporations started offshoring manufacturing in the mid-20th century, he says, they did so in part to access cheaper labor in other countries. Soon they found ways to do something similar at home, contracting out for roles that would, in the past, have belonged to their own pool of workers. The janitors at a tech company like Apple, for example, might once have been direct employees, entitled to benefits similar to those of their peers. Now they can be employed by a cleaning service with its own labor policies — severing, or at least loosening, the legal ties between them and the company whose offices they will clean.

Weil considers companies like Uber and Lyft to be “hyper-fissured.” They minimize labor costs by categorizing all their drivers as independent — people with, in theory, other jobs and other access to benefits — and casting themselves as mere management systems that allow those workers to operate. Given their power over nearly every aspect of that work, though, many see these brands not as systems of management but of employment. “So much of the platform world, they want to have things two ways at the same time,” Weil says. “They want as much control as they possibly can of the product and the service — whatever the targets are related to product innovation, service and delivery — but they don’t want the messy problems of being an employer.”

The depth of this particular fissure — the obvious way these platforms maximize control over workers while minimizing obligations to them — has sparked multiple battles over how the law should categorize laborers. In courts and in legislatures, workers and labor advocates have butted against tech companies and business interests. The latter have scored plenty of wins. In 34 states, legislation has already been adopted that specifically exempts “Transportation Network Companies” (TNCs) from some state and local labor standards. The gig-working platform Handy, which has since been purchased by Angi Inc., has backed legislation that would ensure those who found jobs on apps or platforms could more easily be considered independent workers; 10 states now have such “marketplace platform” laws on the books. And a growing, well-funded lobby for platform work, the Coalition for Workforce Innovation, has argued for a third labor classification, beyond employees and independent contractors. This category would be created simply by having workers sign a contract called a “Worker Flexibility Agreement,” in which they trade away protections like a minimum wage for the ability to take outside work — thus giving platforms, the argument goes, freedom to offer piecemeal selections of perks and benefits to entice labor.

The strongest alternative to all of this is a standard called the “ABC test,” which gained notoriety during a class-action suit against a California courier and delivery service called Dynamex Operations West. In 2004, Dynamex converted all of its drivers from full-time employees to independent contractors. After much litigation, the California Supreme Court ultimately relied on the ABC test — which sets a high bar for considering workers independent — to uphold a lower-court verdict for the plaintiffs, sparking a flurry of political action. The State Legislature passed a measure codifying the ABC test into law. In reaction, TNCs including Uber, Lyft and Instacart pushed for a state ballot measure, Proposition 22, that would place their drivers in a category of worker entitled to only limited benefits. The proposition passed in 2020, but has been hindered by legal challenges. Versions of this battle have occurred in states across the country, and even nationally. The House of Representatives has twice passed the PRO Act, a law focused on union organizing that also adopts the ABC test at a federal level; both times, in 2019 and 2021, it languished in the Senate. It was introduced a third time this February.

At the same time, the sheer variety of gig-working arrangements has continued to expand, outpacing the speed of most moves to regulate or define it. Many of the newest platforms in the field actually bill themselves as attempts to bridge the gap between flexibility and security — using the tools of gig work to solve the problems of gig work. Yong Kim, the founder of a platform called Wonolo, told me his hope is to build a new model for protecting workers. Kim came to the United States from South Korea as a teenager and has memories of walking into stores with help-wanted signs, only to be turned away — “I couldn’t get a job at a gas station,” he told me, “because of the way I looked and the way I spoke.” His platform connects workers with businesses in need of on-demand staffing. “Most of the gig-economy-based platforms, they are connecting workers with consumers,” he says. “If someone needs food delivered to their house, they use it. In our case, one side is actually businesses. There are companies like Hello Fresh and Coca-Cola that also have to think about the well-being of the workers. Can we design it in a new way and innovate around that?”

One aspect of his company’s design is to require that workers are paid the same hourly rate that a company’s full-time employees get for the same labor. Another is a new offer of portable occupational accident insurance, which is paid for in part by Wonolo, in part by the hiring company and in part by the worker. The platform is also trying, Kim says, to offer an affordable health care program — a difficult task, because of the way insurance is regulated state by state. About two million workers use the platform. Kim estimates that half of the active users do so on a part-time basis. (“They may have another part-time job at Walmart or Target and pick up jobs as needed.”) Another 25 percent of active users work two or three different jobs through Wonolo itself. The final quarter, Kim says, are “people who I call truly flexible” — they might work full time for a few months and then disappear for a while, or use their accounts at seemingly random intervals. Depending on the situation, he said, some of these two million workers could be considered W-2 employees.

Much of what Kim has done is simply to take a few steps back toward a model established decades ago by traditional staffing agencies. Such an arrangement might be attractive to gig workers, compared with the competition, but might still strike labor advocates as a net loss. Wonolo, in fact, has in the past been an active member of the Coalition for Workforce Innovation, and Kim has expressed interest in the establishment of a third category of worker. Conventional staffing agencies have not themselves been bulwarks of labor protection. It’s an industry that aims to provide flexibility while trimming labor costs, which means even the most innovative founders may find it challenging to arrive at an equitable deal for workers.

Weil, for his part, does have some optimism that working arrangements can evolve in ways that do not abandon protections for vulnerable workers. “I think certainly people are going to have more different jobs — by choice and by necessity — than they had 20 years ago,” he told me. “Certain things need to be more portable. You need to have portability for pensions. You need to have funds to help yourself to become trained in new areas. Portability of paid leave. Portability of workers’ compensation.” All of this, he said, was possible, in the right environment — “We can do that!”

The gig economy continues to grow. The philosophy of flexibility and just-in-time labor management continues to move from industry to industry. And the technology of gig work — the “flexible” scheduling that leaves workers competing to seize shifts; the elaborate point-and-penalty systems that make work feel like a high-stakes game; the collection of data to monitor every aspect of labor down to the frequency of mouse movements and bathroom breaks — all of this continues to creep into new corners of the American work force. With each of these developments, the future of work is being renegotiated, not just through legal and political arguments but also through businesses’ experimenting, sometimes aggressively, with the shapes work can take. At its best, the gig economy can enable workers to balance child care or illness with a career, expand access to jobs and speed business staffing. At worst, it gives opaque, impersonal and sometimes draconian platforms immense control over not just workers but also over everything else that depends on their labor: our warehouses, our hospitals, our groceries, our supply chains.

The reason that Brenda Handy, the licensed practical nurse, keeps her full-time job — the reason, she says, she will always keep that job — is the package of benefits that comes with it. She gets unemployment insurance, accident insurance, access to a group health plan and a retirement plan. Even Gale Healthcare, which hires by W-2, doesn’t provide the same benefits. Other parts of the industry pay by 1099, which Tony Braswell knows can be a precarious category. He says he meets with nurses who have to pick up shifts around scant child care, nurses who are living in their cars, nurses who struggle to keep their lights on. He has seen horror stories online, like a woman surprised by a $13,000 tax bill she was unable to pay — one of the more costly aspects of being classified as a contractor.

Braswell is currently speaking against the practice of classifying health care workers as independent contractors. Doing so, he argues, will further worsen a nursing shortage and leave the elderly population neglected and underserved. The industry, he says, needs flexibility and stability at the same time. Nurses shouldn’t be required to continually negotiate their jobs or act as independent businesses; they are overworked and vulnerable enough. “We can’t lose nurses,” he says. When Gale Healthcare did a small survey of its nurses last year, it found that 65 percent were working per diem rather than in full-time jobs — but, according to Braswell, “they want to work full time. They just want to work on their own terms.”

Gale Healthcare is used by more than 60,000 nurses, and Braswell now provides labor to facilities across the country. It was, in the end, the online platform — the structure built by the gig economy — that enabled him to scale up, both expanding his reach and allowing him to offer perks like paying nurses within minutes after they complete a shift. (“I want people to be able to stop for groceries on the way home,” he says.) He wants, he says, to provide benefits. He pays into workers’ compensation for his nurses and is doing his best to offer health insurance. But without a government mandate requiring that such benefits be provided, he says, it may be difficult for Gale Healthcare to stay competitive with other platforms; the usual race to the bottom, in which platforms work to minimize every cost associated with labor, could prevail.

Handy, for her part, recently lost her life savings when, a few months before she was scheduled to graduate, the nursing school she was attending shut down amid an F.B.I. investigation of fraudulent institutions; it had never been properly accredited, and all of Handy’s tuition money was gone. It’s a setback that she, despite her two jobs and a lifetime of work, was not prepared for. “I was on cruise control,” she told me, referencing her packed schedule. “I didn’t want to work nights — I wanted to pull it the way I wanted to pull it. But now I can’t stop. I’ve got to keep pushing. I’ve got to keep working.” She is taking more shifts than ever.

Lauren Hilgers is a writer based in New York. She is the author of “Patriot Number One: A Chinese Rebel Comes to America.” Derek Abella is a Cuban American illustrator based in Brooklyn. He is known for his dreamlike style.

This article appeared in print on page MM46, MM47, MM48, MM49, MM50, MM51.

**Load-Date:** May 14, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Give Them as Gifts to Others (or to Yourself)***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:645G-84D1-DXY4-X486-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 26, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 17

**Length:** 574 words

**Byline:** By Joumana Khatib

**Body**

A Booker Prize finalist based on a true story, essays from Siri Hustvedt, an imaginative biography of John Milton and more.

'The Ballerinas,' by Rachel Kapelke-Dale (St. Martin's, Dec. 7)

In this debut thriller, three dancers try to conceal their secrets at the Paris Opera Ballet. Delphine is back in Paris after years in St. Petersburg, choreographing a new ballet and hoping to reconcile with her former friends, but their shared past threatens to topple the production.

'Creative Types: And Other Stories,' by Tom Bissell (Pantheon, Dec. 14)

Expect plenty of satire and uncomfortably funny scenarios for the characters in this collection, which run the gamut from a literary magazine assistant to a couple considering a threesome to a Bush administration lawyer.

'The Fortune Men,' by Nadifa Mohamed (Knopf, Dec. 14)

This novel taps the real-life story of a Somali sailor in Wales who was falsely accused of murder. With this book, Mohamed became the first British Somali writer shortlisted for the Booker Prize, and she said in an interview that writing the novel, despite its tragic premise, was ''cathartic.''

Read our interview with Mohamed

'Garbo,' by Robert Gottlieb (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, Dec. 7)

A veteran editor of The New Yorker and Knopf attempts to pin down the life of an actress known for her elusiveness. Greta Garbo stopped acting in her 30s and appeared in just 24 Hollywood films, yet left an outsize influence. Gottlieb traces her life from her early years in ***working-class*** Stockholm through her later years living as ''a hermit about town'' in New York, and includes clips from scholars, co-stars and critics that offer fresh perspectives on her life.

'Making Darkness Light: A Life of John Milton,' by Joe Moshenska (Basic, Dec. 7)

An Oxford professor offers an imaginative biography of the 17th-century poet that sets out to capture Milton's ''desire to escape time, to be perennially contemporary.'' Readers learn about his adolescence, a pivotal journey to Italy during which Milton met Galileo, and his later years, along with Milton's own influence on the author.

'Mothers, Fathers and Others: Essays,' by Siri Hustvedt (Simon & Schuster, Dec. 7)

This new collection draws on Hustvedt's ancestors, both literary and familial. (The opening selection begins: ''My paternal grandmother was ornery, fat, and formidable.'') She touches on her intellectual forebears, ruminates on the allure of mentorship and perhaps above all, wrestles with the peculiarities of motherhood.

'Twenty Years Later,' by Charlie Donlea (Kensington, Dec. 28)

Victoria, the mysterious character at the center of this literary thriller, was killed on Sept. 11 while meeting with her lawyer in one of the towers. She had been accused of killing her lover, and her case was essentially forgotten until some of her remains are discovered decades later. But the discovery forces a new reckoning with the truth, leading a journalist and a retired F.B.I. agent to reconsider the mystery.

'White on White,' by Aysegül Savas (Riverhead, Dec. 7)

A graduate student moves to a new city to study Gothic nudes, ''an ambiguous topic, whose greatest challenge would be one of consciousness: to view the naked human form as medievals did.'' Her conversations with her landlord, a painter named Agnes, veer from artistic meditations to personal history, and the student's original area of study takes on a deeper dimension.

Read our review

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/24/books/new-books-december.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/24/books/new-books-december.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO

**Load-Date:** November 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Academic Literary Criticism: What Is It Good For?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67GN-C8W1-DXY4-X25X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 6, 2023 Monday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2023 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1754 words

**Byline:** By Jennifer Schuessler

**Body**

John Guillory's ''Cultural Capital,'' published amid the 1990s canon wars, became a classic. In a follow-up, ''Professing Criticism,'' he takes on his field's deep funk.

Thirty years ago, it was common to pick up a newspaper or a magazine and read about high drama in university literature departments. Star professors were either master thinkers introducing new rigor and glamour into a tweedy profession gone stale, or theory-addled tenured radicals taking a hatchet to the masterpieces of Western culture.

These days, though, the news out of literature departments -- and the humanities writ large -- tends to be less about juicy faculty-lounge flame wars than about declining majors, shrinking budgets and the collapsing job market for Ph.D.s.

Enter another professor, with a big book that aims to shift the conversation. In 1993, John Guillory published ''Cultural Capital,'' a dense study of the then-raging canon wars that has become a stealth classic. Now, in a follow-up, ''Professing Criticism,'' he takes on an even bigger question: What is literary criticism -- specifically, the kind of highly specialized, theoretically sophisticated textual readings generated by academic critics -- really for?

Guillory's answer (if it's even an answer) is complex. But what literary criticism is not for, he argues, is what many of his colleagues think it is for: changing the world.

''When people read the book, I suspect they're going to be upset,'' he said in an interview. ''They're going to say, 'You're saying we don't do anything, we accomplish nothing.' That's not what I'm saying.''

''Professing Criticism,'' published last month by the University of Chicago Press, is no throaty defense of the Great Books in the manner of Harold Bloom. Readers seeking culture-war red meat will be disappointed. Still, it has stirred unusually wide response for an exhaustively researched, intricately argued book by an author largely unknown outside the academy.

There have been long, admiring reviews in The New Yorker and London Review of Books, as well as a more mixed one in Public Books, and (this being the 21st century) a full-blown fracas on Twitter.

Writing in Inside Higher Ed, Steven Mintz, a historian at the University of Texas at Austin, called it ''truly a landmark work'' that should be read across the humanities.

''Consider it a red alert, a cautionary tale, a fire bell in the night and an omen and admonition about how professionalization, specialization and bureaucratization can damage a field of study, even as it has benefited those with tenure,'' Mintz wrote.

In an interview last month in a Brooklyn coffee shop, Guillory hardly seemed like an academic Paul Revere. Genial and slightly rumpled, he was also a far cry from stereotypical notions of the master critic, whether glowering in emo portraits à la Derrida or lobbing gleefully Zizekian outrage bombs.

Guillory's style may be muted, but his message is blunt. He wants scholars to get real and acknowledge the field's genuine strengths, which don't necessarily lie in direct response to today's political issues.

''We have this sense of urgency in the classroom: We've got to get in there and make our political points!'' he said. ''And that's fine.''

''But the other things we are doing that we don't even see we are doing are just as important,'' he continued, ''and have just as significant a political effect.''

Guillory, 70, grew up in New Orleans in a ***working-class*** Catholic family, and attended Jesuit schools. For a kid like him -- ''socially awkward, intellectually inclined, loves to read books, gay'' -- there were two options: professor or priest. ''I would have made an unconvincing priest,'' he said.

After college at Tulane, he enrolled in graduate school in English at Yale in 1974, when the tide of high theory was rising in the academy. The English department housed some of the last heirs of the midcentury New Critics, while the Belgian critic Paul de Man, a principal exponent of deconstruction, held court in comparative literature.

The era of high theory brought a dizzying and contentious parade of new approaches and isms, including deconstruction, Marxism, psychoanalysis, feminism, semiotics and reader-response theory. Guillory, who taught at Yale, Johns Hopkins and Harvard before arriving at New York University in 1999, gravitated toward a more sociological approach.

''Cultural Capital'' was published in the thick of the so-called canon wars, which pitted traditionalist defenders of ''Western civilization'' against those who called for adding women, people of color and other excluded voices -- if they didn't want to blow up the canon entirely.

His argument questioned the premises shared by both sides. The canon, he argued, wasn't an impregnable monument, but an imaginary construct that had always been contested. And the big question wasn't which groups were excluded or included, but the university's role in the unequal creation and transmission of ''cultural capital.''

''It threw a really interesting wrench into the whole canon debate,'' said Michael Bérubé, a professor of English at Penn State and a former president of the Modern Language Association. The book's arguments and detached tone weren't universally appreciated, he noted, including by those who saw Guillory as dismissive of marginalized groups' desires to see themselves in the canon. But 30 years later, Bérubé said, ''it looks like a much more foundational text.''

And to some younger scholars who weren't around for those canon wars, it also looks prophetic.

''It's interesting to me how many of the governing assumptions of the canon wars have re-emerged, whether in calls to 'decolonize' the curriculum and various D.E.I. initiatives,'' Merve Emre, an associate professor of English at the University of Oxford, said, referring to diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.

Emre, who has written an introduction for a forthcoming 30th-anniversary edition of ''Cultural Capital,'' said the book remains ''very useful for understanding both the possibilities and limits of those initiatives, and for placing them in a longer history.''

In ''Professing Criticism,'' Guillory does not posit some lost golden age of literary criticism, from which today's scholars have fallen.

In the 19th century, critics commanded a wide audience in periodicals, creating their own authority as they wrote. But as the study of modern, vernacular literature (that is, not just the Greek and Latin classics) was institutionalized in the university, it defined itself against journalistic criticism, without clearly articulating a positive justification for itself.

The mid-20th century brought the rise of New Criticism, which emphasized the close readings of texts, which were seen as self-contained aesthetic objects, shorn of historical context. But by the 1960s, it was increasingly challenged by more politically inflected approaches, which saw everything as a ''text,'' and equated literary criticism with critique of society itself.

Criticism, Guillory writes, has long wanted ''to wield an Archimedean lever,'' and ''move the world.''

And today, as academic literary criticism has become increasingly marginalized in the academy and distant from general readers, he writes, its claims for its own political potential have only become more and more ''overstated.''

In recent years, some critics have looked for a way out of the cul-de-sac, by urging a shift away from debunking, deconstructing and unmasking to focus on the positive meanings and attachments that literary works provide.

But Guillory is sharply critical of this ''postcritical'' turn, which elevates and idealizes ''lay reading,'' he argues, while still leaving the role of professional criticisms unspecified.

In the long history of academic criticism, ''professional reading defines itself over and against lay reading,'' Guillory said. ''I feel very strongly you have to have both things. But how do you make connections between the two?''

Some of Guillory's readers have expressed frustration with the vagueness of his solutions. In a review in Public Books, Sarah Brouillette, a professor of English at Carleton University in Canada, criticized his ''fatalist view of literary criticism's absent future,'' including the bleak job market.

Guillory, who devotes a chapter to graduate education, said the current system -- tenure-track jobs for the few, poorly paid adjunct work for the many -- is ''exploitative,'' but also deeply entrenched in the economics of the university.

As for literary study's political effect, it is nestled within the broader sociological effects of higher education, he argues, and lies more in teaching than in research.

One of the crucial effects of higher education, according to Guillory, is the creation of ''the professional profile'' -- the habits, attitudes, vocabulary and mores broadly shared by the professional-managerial class.

No matter what you study or where, he said, ''you come out the other end and you belong to a college demographic, which is a real thing'' -- and an important component of the electorate.

Literary study ''has a contribution to make'' to that process, which happens ''unintentionally and collectively in the university,'' he said. But it can't take most of the credit (or blame).

Which isn't to say that academic writing has zero effect on the real world. Guillory cited the example of queer theory, whose concepts and vocabulary -- like the philosopher Judith Butler's ideas of gender and ''performativity'' -- have entered popular discourse (and, recently, become the target of conservative activists).

But he also said the profession needs to face up to a broader reality: the declining cultural capital of literature in a wildly expanded media universe.

Not that he sees only gloom and doom. He's encouraged by the growing ranks of younger scholars who straddle the line between academia and journalism, via magazines like the The Point and The Drift.

As for himself, Guillory retired from teaching last summer. That has left him more time for pleasure reading, if not exactly the unmediated ''lay reading'' exalted by his postcritical colleagues. ''I'll never find my way back to that paradisiacal, innocent state,'' he said, laughing.

But he's plugging holes in his education, and recently started ''Tristram Shandy.''

''To be frank, I thought it was going to be boring,'' he said of the novel, which consists almost entirely of digressions. ''But it's wonderful.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/03/arts/john-guillory-literary-criticism.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/03/arts/john-guillory-literary-criticism.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Thirty years after shaking up academia by challenging the cultural canon, John Guillory takes on his field's deep funk in a new book. (C1)

John Guillory, top, at home in Brooklyn. He published ''Cultural Capital'' in 1993 and is the author of the newly released ''Professing Criticism.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIMOTHY O'CONNELL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C2) This article appeared in print on page C1, C2.

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2023

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[***Supreme Court Won’t Hear Case on Limit to State and Local Tax Deductions***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6584-TFM1-JBG3-62TV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 18, 2022 Monday 23:20 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 713 words

**Byline:** Ed Shanahan

**Highlight:** New York and three other states had argued that the so-called SALT cap imposed as part of a sweeping tax law in 2017 infringed on their sovereignty.

**Body**

New York and three other states had argued that the so-called SALT cap imposed as part of a sweeping tax law in 2017 infringed on their sovereignty.

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday rejected a bid by New York and three other states to overturn a $10,000 cap on federal tax deductions for state and local taxes that [*Congress imposed as part of the Trump administration’s sweeping tax overhaul in 2017*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/12/01/us/politics/senate-tax-bill-vote.html?rref=collection%2Fnewseventcollection%2FThe%20Republican%20Tax%20Plan&amp;action=click&amp;contentCollection=Politics&amp;module=Collection&amp;region=Marginalia&amp;src=me&amp;version=newsevent&amp;pgtype=article).

The court’s decision not to consider the matter, one of dozens of cases the justices said they would not hear, left intact [*a lower court’s ruling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/30/business/economy/state-local-tax.html). That ruling rejected the states’ argument that, as Democratic bastions, they had been targeted by Republican lawmakers and [*that the deduction cap was an unconstitutional infringement on their sovereignty*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/17/nyregion/salt-taxes-deduction-lawsuit-trump-cuomo.html).

In affirming that ruling in October, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit found that it was within Congress’s broad authority over tax policy to impose the so-called SALT cap. The cap limits to $10,000 the amount of state and local taxes people may deduct on their federal income tax return. The appeals court ruled that the SALT cap was like other laws that have different effects from place to place.

“It is obviously true that members of Congress were aware that the SALT deduction cap would adversely affect some states more than others,” the Second Circuit wrote. “But the SALT deduction cap is not unlike the countless federal laws whose benefits and burdens are unevenly distributed across the country.”

The cap on deductions was among the more contentious provisions in the 2017 tax legislation, which slashed the country’s corporate tax rate and [*offered an overall income tax cut for individuals*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/12/05/us/politics/tax-bill-salt.html). Critics and some tax policy experts said the tax law mainly helped rich Americans.

The deduction limit — which hits high-tax, often Democratic-led states disproportionately — was one way for Republicans to try to help offset the roughly $1.5 trillion cost of the tax cuts over 10 years. The Joint Committee on Taxation, Congress’s nonpartisan scorekeeper on tax matters, estimated that the cap and related provisions would raise close to $700 billion in revenue over that period.

New York officials estimated that the cap would cause the state’s taxpayers to pay $121 billion in added federal taxes from 2018 through 2025, after which the cap, like many of the 2017 law’s provisions, is set to expire.

Gov. Kathy Hochul of New York expressed disappointment in the Supreme Court’s decision not to hear the case, which the state — joined by Connecticut, Maryland and New Jersey — brought in 2018.

In a statement, Ms. Hochul called the SALT cap “an economic attack” on “middle-class families” by President Donald J. Trump and a Republican Congress. She called on President Biden, whose administration opposed the states’ appeal, and congressional Democrats “to undo the damage caused by the Republican tax plan and restore the full SALT deduction.”

But eliminating the deduction limit has become a [*matter of dispute among Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/18/us/politics/salt-tax-deduction-democrats.html), to the point that the disagreement may have contributed to the failure to approve Mr. Biden’s ambitious Build Back Better social-policy spending package.

[*Many of the more progressive Democrats in Congress have balked at scrapping the cap*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/01/business/salt-tax-cap-repeal.html), which they argue benefits wealthy taxpayers at the expense of the ***working-class*** families whom the party should be focused on.

[*Moderate Democrats in Congress*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/us/politics/salt-cap-tax-deduction.html), many of them representing suburban areas that swing between parties, insist that eliminating the cap would provide much-needed relief to their financially overburdened constituents.

One such Democrat, Representative Thomas Suozzi, who represents parts of Long Island and Queens and who is challenging Ms. Hochul in the primary for governor, echoed her response to the court’s decision not to hear the case.

“Now it is more essential than ever that we lift the SALT cap and reduce taxes in New York,” he said via text on Monday. “With the highest state and local taxes in America, we have an affordability problem in New York State.”

Nicholas Fandos contributed reporting.

PHOTO: The Supreme Court’s decision not to consider the case affirmed a lower court ruling endorsing Congress’s broad authority over U.S. tax policy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Pete Marovich for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 18, 2022

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[***How Miami Does Christmas***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:674W-3521-DXY4-X1BT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 22, 2022 Thursday 14:10 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1315 words

**Byline:** Patricia Mazzei and Scott McIntyre

**Highlight:** Miles from South Beach and most of the city’s tourist haunts, Santa’s Enchanted Forest has endeared locals for decades with a little tradition and a lot of glitz.

**Body**

How Miami Does Christmas

We’re exploring how America defines itself one place at a time. In Miami, a holiday theme park has for decades embodied the city’s distinct mix of cultures.

MEDLEY, Fla. — Fake snow blows on a gravel lot to greet visitors at one of South Florida’s most enduring Christmas traditions. Past a tunnel of blinding colored lights, dioramas celebrate the holiday with a subtropical twist: Santa on a Jet Ski. Santa on a fishing boat. Surfing Santa.

Food vendors hawk Brazilian picanha steak and dulce de leche churros. “All I Want for Christmas Is You” blares over loudspeakers in Spanish. A 100-foot artificial tree lights up in sync to reggaeton and Latin trap tunes.

This is Santa’s Enchanted Forest, Miami’s interpretation of an American Christmas.

For 39 years, miles from South Beach and most of Miami’s tourist haunts, the seasonal theme park known simply as Santa’s has been a mainstay of the holiday season. Though it is now in its third location in four years after its longtime lease expired — and the enchanted forest now consists of trees that [*had to be trucked in*](https://www.miamiherald.com/miami-com/things-to-do/article265051134.html) — its garish lights and throwback kitsch continue to symbolize Christmas for many of the region’s ***working-class*** people. Many are immigrants; some have never seen real snow or been able to afford a Disney vacation.

“There was no Christmas in Cuba,” said GiGi Diaz, 37, who immigrated to Miami as a child and has visited Santa’s most years since. “I had never seen a Christmas tree. I learned the concept of Santa Claus when I was 10 years old.”

While in high school, she and other girls in a dance group recorded [*a jingle for Santa’s*](https://www.miamiherald.com/news/curious305/article255444431.html) that still plays on the radio during the holiday season. She now brings students from the dance academy she owns to perform at the theme park. “It’s a place where you can be a kid again,” Ms. Diaz said.

In a city with [*little interest in tradition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/17/us/deauville-hotel-miami-beach.html), Santa’s has become a touchstone where adults who came as teenagers now bring their children, and vendors run booths once operated by their parents.

“I remember being 3 years old and running in to get my face painted,” said Karly Calvo, 28, whose father, Carlos, ran the Santa photo booth and several food stands for 37 years. After his death in April, she took charge.

“People I don’t know come up to me all the time: ‘Your dad was here when I was a kid!’” she said. “Sometimes I do feel he’s with me in spirit.”

She still gets her face painted almost every day over the roughly two months a year that Santa’s is open.

“All right, darling,” Jackie Jorge, a makeup artist, told Ms. Calvo as she put the finishing touches of glitter on her face with a Q-Tip on a recent Friday evening. “One, two, three: Beautiful!”

At a nearby picnic table, the Leon family, which had arrived early to beat the crowds, was getting ready to head home.

Jendry Leon, 33, had come with his wife, mother and 12-year-old son, David, a fan of corn dogs and the Ferris wheel. “We come every year,” Mr. Leon said.

“We used to come when he was a boy,” Mr. Leon’s mother, Milagros Rumbaut, 55, chimed in.

“We’d say, ‘OK, it’s Christmas. Time to go to Santa’s!’” Mr. Leon recalled.

I braved the traffic on the Palmetto Expressway to visit Santa’s recently — I confess, for the first time, having somehow dodged it as an undergraduate at the University of Miami. I wanted to understand why it was so beloved by friends and acquaintances who rarely miss a year of attendance, and what that loyalty said about Miami culture.

“It sounds insane to call Santa’s Enchanted Forest ‘culture,’” said Alex Fumero, 40, a film and television producer from Miami who a decade ago referenced the theme park in a video titled, [*“12 Days of Miami Christmas.”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-kktlyP1mrY) (“On the 10th day of Christmas, Abuela gave to me / 10 bucks off at Santa’s.”)

“People know that there’s Cubans and Latinos,” said Mr. Fumero, who now lives in Los Angeles. “But they don’t really know that there’s also this second-generation culture that’s native to Miami that’s the result of all this Latin American immigration.”

Like others who were raised in Miami, Mr. Fumero grew up speaking English at least half the time but frequently slips into Spanish — “I didn’t know I had an accent till I left,” he said — and has embraced both traditional American holiday customs and more brash South Florida flair.

Santa’s encapsulates that, he said: “There’s Santa Claus and Christmas trees and lights, but there’s also an Avalanche ride that goes backwards really fast, and they’re just blaring booty music on it.”

“I looked for Santa’s here in L.A.,” he added, a little forlorn. “And it does not exist.”

I had planned to go to Santa’s in Decembers past, but it had never panned out. Then, in early 2020, [*Santa’s lease at its longtime location, Tropical Park*](https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/miami-dade/article239181218.html), first signed in 1992, expired. Its landlord, Miami-Dade County, did not renew it. The coronavirus pandemic kept Santa’s closed, and I worried I had missed my chance.

Santa’s returned last year, but its new home in the heavily Cuban city of Hialeah, just northwest of Miami, was so cramped that [*entrance lines*](https://www.miaminewtimes.com/arts/santas-enchanted-forest-at-hialeah-park-plagued-by-long-lines-disorganization-13341298) were two hours long. Parking, of utmost concern to South Floridians, was a nightmare.

The theme park finds itself in yet another setting this year:a 40-acre lot in Medley, an industrial town near Miami International Airport. Parking is not a problem, but the namesake “forest,” a reference to Tropical Park’s many tall trees, is gone.

“You walked through there and it was like Miami’s version of magic,” said Billy Corben, a documentary filmmaker whose Jewish grandparents were friends with Santa’s Jewish founder, Jerry A. Shechtman. Mr. Shechtman died in 1995; his son Steven now owns the operation and runs it with his brother, Brian.

When Mr. Corben’s cousins would visit over the holidays, three generations would caravan in multiple cars to Santa’s, where they had devised a strategic route to hit favorite food vendors and rides.

“I’m not going because it’s in Medley now,” Mr. Corben declared at one point in our interview.

Then he kept reminiscing.

“We don’t really have a lot of common culture anymore,” he said, pointing to South Florida’s transient population and lack of institutional memory. “With all the tribalism of Miami, Santa’s very much felt like Switzerland. Like kind of neutral territory.”

“There’s just great memories there, and I think that’s probably true for any Jew you ask, any Cuban you ask, any Haitian you ask,” he continued. “And how many of those things do we have?”

The fajitas at Santa’s were so good, Mr. Corben said, that he once tried to buy some from the side of the highway, through the Tropical Park fence. Ward Deal, who runs the Viva la Fajita stand, told me that many of his devoted customers tried to do that at Santa’s previous location.

“People email me to find out if I’m here and figure out if they should get a season pass,” he said. “I see generations of kids that were here in strollers and are now here with their own families.” (The chicken fajita with guacamole did not disappoint.)

Mr. Corben said going to Santa’s “felt kind of pure.”

“It was naked capitalism,” he conceded. (Tickets for ages 9-64 are $42.99 a pop.) “But it also felt like this sort of benevolent thing. They gave us this Christmas gift.”

He paused.

“Maybe we’ll go this year,” he said.

Susan C. Beachy and Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

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PHOTOS: Fake snow blows on a gravel lot to greet visitors to Santa’s Enchanted Forest in Medley, Fla., an industrial town near Miami International Airport.; Below, clockwise from upper left, holiday mirth without the mistletoe at Santa’s Enchanted Forest; students from GiGi Diaz’s dance school performing a Christmas number; one of several dioramas showing Santa engaged in subtropical pastimes; celebrating a winning ball toss at a game booth. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SCOTT MCINTYRE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A11.

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2023

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[***Justice Dept. Begins an Environmental Racism Inquiry in Houston***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:660F-0F81-DXY4-X1D1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Glenn Thrush

**Body**

The inquiry, part of an administration-wide racial justice initiative, came amid claims that the city has ignored illegal dumping in Black and Latino areas.

WASHINGTON -- The Justice Department opened a wide-ranging investigation on Friday into the City of Houston's failure to address environmental racism, including the rampant dumping of garbage -- and even bodies -- in predominantly Black and Latino neighborhoods, officials said.

The investigation, prompted by hundreds of resident complaints logged by a local legal aid group, is likely to be one of the most ambitious environmental justice reviews undertaken by the department in recent years.

The inquiry will be led by the civil rights division in coordination with the department's new environmental justice office. It will look into whether officials in Houston, the nation's fourth-largest city, systematically discriminated against residents by allowing 11 of 13 incinerators and landfills to be placed in the city's northeast section over the past several decades.

The announcement is part of the Biden administration's wider effort to address racial disparities that have relegated people of color to areas where they face far greater risk of exposure to carcinogens and other harmful pollutants, flooding and an array of environmental blights that decrease life spans, quality of life and property values.

Many of the problems outlined on Friday by Kristen Clarke, the assistant attorney general who leads the civil rights division, stem from a decades-long history of injustice rooted in racism and malign neglect, historically at the hands of white local officials.

But some issues are more recent: The Justice Department plans to pay particular attention to reports that residents who call Houston's 311 system to complain about dumping and other environmental violations have been routinely ignored, Ms. Clarke said during a call with reporters.

Illegal dump sites in low-lying Houston ''not only attract rodents, mosquitoes and other vermin that pose health risks, but they can also contaminate surface water and impact proper drainage, making areas more susceptible to flooding,'' Ms. Clarke said.

Mayor Sylvester Turner, a Democrat, criticized the investigation, saying that his administration had increased fines for illegal dumping and taken steps to improve conditions in the city's Black and Latino neighborhoods.

''The City of Houston was stunned and disappointed to learn about the investigation into illegal dumping by third parties launched by the U.S. Department of Justice,'' Mr. Turner said in a statement. ''Despite the D.O.J.'s pronouncements, my office received no advanced notice. This investigation is absurd, baseless and without merit.''

The mayor, who is Black, added that he had ''prioritized the needs of communities of color that are historically under-resourced and underserved.''

The Justice Department's investigation was prompted by a complaint from Lone Star Legal Aid, which has monitored resident complaints in Houston's northeast section. The area has become a dumping ground for ''household furniture, mattresses, tires, medical waste, trash, dead bodies and vandalized A.T.M. machines,'' Ms. Clarke said.

Amy Catherine Dinn, the managing attorney for the legal aid group's environmental justice division, said, ''This is all part of the city's legacy of environmental racism, but that problem has gotten worse as the city has grown -- and these neighborhoods have been deprived of the resources that wealthier white neighborhoods receive.''

Ms. Dinn said neighborhood residents had carefully documented hundreds of incidents of illegal dumping in the residential streets around a local garbage dump. They have registered their complaints through the city's 311 system, only to wait months for help while similar problems have been addressed far more quickly in more affluent neighborhoods, she said.

''This is not a one-off problem,'' she added. ''The city has basically allowed this community to be used as a landfill.''

The environmental disparities described by the Justice Department on Friday are woven into the city's urban fabric, a patchwork of commercial and residential buildings. Houston has some of the nation's least restrictive zoning laws; as a result, many of the city's petroleum processing facilities, petrochemical plants, dumps and transportation lots have been placed alongside low-income or ***working-class*** residential neighborhoods.

A 2016 study by the Union of Concerned Scientists and Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services found that people living in Houston's Harrisburg/Manchester neighborhood, a predominantly Latino area bordered by industrial facilities, suffered significantly higher cancer and asthma rates than people in other, whiter parts of the city further removed from grit-and-garbage industry.

In May, Attorney General Merrick B. Garland announced a series of policies intended to elevate the department's environmental justice efforts from the symbolic to the substantive -- including the creation of an office inside the department responsible for addressing the ''harm caused by environmental crime, pollution and climate change.''

Even before then, the department had begun to explore criminal and civil cases under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, starting with an investigation into the sanitation and flood management system of Lowndes County, Ala., one of the country's poorest and most environmentally blighted areas.

In most of these investigations, including the Houston inquiry, the department aims to negotiate settlements with localities to address the problems that are found, Ms. Clarke said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/22/us/politics/houston-environmental-racism.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/22/us/politics/houston-environmental-racism.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The investigation is likely to be one of the most ambitious environmental justice reviews undertaken by the Justice Department in recent years. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sergio Flores for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Radical Ideas Need Quiet Spaces***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SB-PJK1-JBG3-60XC-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Gal Beckerman

**Body**

Consider the Black Lives Matter lawn sign.

I still see a few in my neighborhood, but these days, they appear vestigial, remnants of a moment. And every time I pass one, my feelings are mixed: There's pride that a movement turned the country toward the festering truth of racism's persistence, but then there's another thought, about the ease with which that sign was planted and the similar ease with which it was then ignored.

So many social movements, from Occupy Wall Street to #MeToo, can feel like this now: They streak through, trailing fire and leaving an aura of heightened sensitivity in the places they burned before vanishing almost as suddenly as they appeared.

Visibility and attention, and even a lively cultural conversation, are one thing. Actually mustering the power to fundamentally rearrange society or politics -- that is something else. And though activists are good at achieving the former, they often seem stuck when it comes to the latter.

Saul Alinsky, the famed community organizer who wrote ''Rules for Radicals,'' had a useful metaphor: For a revolution to be successful, he argued, it has to follow the three-act structure of a play. The first act establishes the characters and the plot, the second act sharpens the conflict, and in the third act, ''good and evil have their dramatic confrontation and resolution.'' From women's suffrage to the midcentury civil rights struggle, movements mastered this narrative, leaving a permanent mark on society. But by the early 1970s, Alinsky had started to worry that overeager revolutionaries were jumping straight to that third act -- a losing proposition.

Those first acts matter because that's where activists hammer out ideology, define goals, set strategy and build lasting identity and solidarity. It's also where the essential work of organizing occurs.

If skipping over these steps seems especially tempting today, it's because the tools are available to do so. Social media has given everyone extremely effective bullhorns that can call people to the streets for that presumed final battle. As a result, it has also set the metabolism of the movements that are supposed to reshape our world, making them quick and loud and full of emotional release.

The question is how to create the conditions those first two acts demand: the closeness and heat and passionate whispering. I've spent the past few years scavenging through the predigital past for the tools social movements used when they weren't able to amplify their messages, when they had only their ideas and goals, and needed to both expand their reach and refine their strategy. History is not monolithic, of course, but I emerged from this search with a deeper understanding of what sort of medium helps a radical idea grow.

The seemingly boring pen-and-paper petition is a perfect example.

Almost 200 years ago, in England, the right to vote was the domain of property owners and the landed gentry -- about one in six men. (No one was even talking about women yet.) At the same time, the ***working class*** was increasingly frustrated with the horrid living conditions brought on by industrialization. With no political recourse, workers built a movement that became known as Chartism and had a simple objective: using the right to petition the crown and Parliament to demand representation.

Chartism encouraged the ***working class*** to direct its energy toward gathering as many signatures as possible. This was a medium with almost zero cost. ''Wherever there is a halfpenny sheet of paper, a pen and a few drops of ink, there are the materials for a petition,'' wrote one Chartist. But the act of picking up these materials inspired solidarity -- among those who worked with rulers to draw up the sheets by hand, went door to door to canvass, sneaked onto factory floors or set up tables in busy marketplaces.

When a Chartist activist had to argue his case, he was reinforcing his own beliefs, talking himself into deeper commitment while convincing others. And for the deliberating worker who finally signed, this was a pledge taken.

In the summer of 1839, more than 1.25 million signatures had been gathered on a scroll that stretched some three miles long and was delivered to the government, where the Chartists were quite literally laughed out the door. But by then, a new constituency had been born. A whole world of associations and a new politics spun out from the talking and signing. More petitions followed, until, 30 years later, working men were finally allowed to begin participating in democracy.

The history of social and political change is full of such analog but nevertheless interactive media, like petitions, that helped guide new ideas and identities into existence -- from the letters that helped ferment the scientific revolution in the 17th century to samizdat in the Soviet underground, which kept alive a shadow civil society, to the staple-bound zines of the early 1990s, where the style and sentiment of third-wave feminism first flourished. A favorite story of mine comes from the British colony of the Gold Coast (today's Ghana) in the 1930s.

Educated Africans living in the colony, incensed at their subjugated status, needed a place to express their desire for independence and to begin hashing out what a national identity freed of British rule might even look like. The African Morning Post became such a forum. This was more of a message board than the one-way conveyor of information we think of as a newspaper. The pages were mostly filled with contributions from readers. Nnamdi Azikiwe, a Nigerian recently returned to the continent who became its editor, imagined it as a place for conversation, where Accra's literate population could come together.

At the center of the paper was ''Grumblers' Row,'' letters from readers, intended for debate and complaint. The quality of the writing here was loose and unguarded. Almost all submissions were anonymous or pseudonymous (attributed to portentous names like A. Native or ridiculous ones like Lobster). This gave people a chance to speak their mind and to test out higher degrees of daring. The arguing allowed them to peek over the dividers of tribe and establish new allegiances -- they expressed their difference but did so on the same page, creating a new sort of African public sphere and helping lay the groundwork for independence.

What connects these newspapers to petitions to samizdat to zines is the way each helped shape the movement that was incubating.

On first glance, these may seem to resemble pre-internet social media. But they were different in fundamental ways: These forms of communication demanded patience, took time to produce and time to transmit. They slowed things down, favoring an incremental accumulation of knowledge and connection. They also lent coherence, a way for scattered ideologies and feelings to be shaped into a single compellingly new perspective. They led to the sorts of conversations that strengthened identity and solidarity, that allowed for both imagining and arguing together, moving toward shared objectives. And, maybe most important, the activists and dissidents and thinkers who used these tools were in control of them. They created the platforms -- and by creating them, they could set their parameters and make sure they served their ends.

Intensity and intimacy and privacy can, of course, be found online today. Just peek into a Signal group or a Discord chat room. But we need to recognize the importance of this sort of huddling rather than reflexively assuming it is always put to nefarious ends -- imagining, as some do, that only pornographers and white supremacists would see value in seclusion.

There is no switching off the internet. But we can better appreciate, as we increasingly do in our personal lives, that where we talk can affect how we talk. This is doubly true for the making of change, which needs solid foundations to avoid eventual crumbling. For the vanguards of the present dreaming up new ways to fight global warming or Black Lives Matter activists seeking alternatives to policing as we know it, this is an essential point: that the shape and extent of the change they seek depend as much on what tools they use as it does on their own will and hunger.

These activists need spaces to come together in the quiet when revolutions are only impassioned conversations among the aggrieved and dreaming. Because without those spaces, we risk a future in which the possibility of new realities will remain just beyond our grasp.

Gal Beckerman (@galbeckerman) is the author of ''The Quiet Before: On the Unexpected Origins of Radical Ideas,'' from which this essay is adapted.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dalbert B. Vilarino FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Their Crypto Fund Collapsed Overnight. They Went to Bali.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68FB-FNV1-DXY4-X490-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

The implosion of Three Arrows Capital, a cryptocurrency hedge fund, devastated the industry. Its two founders spent the next year surfing, meditating and traveling the world.

Not long after his cryptocurrency hedge fund collapsed last year, spawning a market meltdown that devastated the industry, Kyle Davies got on a plane and left his troubles behind.

He flew to Bali. As his company was liquidated and law enforcement authorities opened investigations on two continents, Mr. Davies spent his days painting in cafes and reading Hemingway on the beach.

He also went sightseeing. He traveled in Thailand, where the fried oysters cost only a few dollars, and admired the local architecture in Malaysia. He posted a photo from a private zoo in Dubai, showing him stroking a tiger chained to a pole. In Bahrain, he attended a Formula 1 event in the run-up to the Grand Prix.

One clear evening, on a rooftop in Bali, Mr. Davies took shrooms with a group of crypto colleagues. ''You look at the stars, and the stars are just, like, moving,'' he recalled over dinner last month at a seafood restaurant in Barcelona, Spain, where he was vacationing with his wife and two young daughters. ''You touch the grass, and it feels, like, not like normal grass.''

Life as a crypto industry pariah, it turned out, wasn't so bad.

A year ago, Three Arrows Capital, the hedge fund founded by Mr. Davies and Su Zhu, both now 36, imploded almost overnight. Worshiped by their hundreds of thousands of Twitter followers, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu had been crypto superstars, known for their trading acumen and bold predictions about the market. They were fixtures on the crypto podcast circuit whose influence allowed them to borrow hundreds of millions of dollars from leading firms and make big bets on the future of the industry.

When their hedge fund failed, a large swath of the industry was dragged down with it. The ensuing crisis drained the savings of millions of amateur investors and plunged other companies into bankruptcy.

But by their own account, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu have been thriving. They left Singapore, where Three Arrows was based, and traveled around Asia, effectively taking the summer off. Mr. Davies started meditating. Mr. Zhu played video games and found a surf instructor. His old crypto associates were bad-mouthing him in the press, but he made new friends, a mix of surfer types and UFC fighters.

''They had a lot of empathy and sympathy for me,'' Mr. Zhu said from his luxury home in Singapore. ''They get defeated in a big fight, lose sponsorships or whatever, and everyone's crying. But then the fighter himself -- his mind has already passed to the next fight.''

After the crypto industry crashed last year, erasing more than $1 trillion from the market, some of the business's leading figures were held to account. Changpeng Zhao, the chief executive of Binance, the world's largest crypto exchange, is under criminal investigation and facing a lawsuit from the Securities and Exchange Commission. Sam Bankman-Fried, the founder of the FTX exchange, is under house arrest at his childhood home in Palo Alto, Calif., awaiting trial on fraud charges. Do Kwon, the South Korean entrepreneur who created the failed Luna cryptocurrency, was apprehended in Montenegro this spring after dodging the authorities for months.

Yet many other top executives who gained wealth and status by marketing crypto to the masses have avoided serious repercussions. They had cashed out early, invested in real estate or holed up in tax havens.

The Three Arrows founders are two of the most prominent examples. They are still living comfortably, after managing a fund that oversaw more than $4 billion at its peak. Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu declined to provide an estimate of their total wealth, but said they had saved enough over the years that they didn't need to work again.

Neither was willing to apologize for the collapse. Three Arrows owes its creditors $3.3 billion; the firm was registered in the British Virgin Islands, and its court-appointed liquidators there claim that Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu have refused to cooperate in the recovery process. In October, Bloomberg reported that federal regulators in the United States were investigating whether Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu had misrepresented their finances to Three Arrows investors.

Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu maintain that they did nothing wrong. They said they had faced death threats, but pointed out that no government agency had sued them or sought their arrests.

A friend recently asked Mr. Davies whether he felt any remorse. ''Remorse for what?'' he said he had replied.

For the past few months, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu have been planning a comeback. In April, they unveiled Open Exchange, a marketplace for traders who lost money in last year's crypto implosions. Customers will be able to buy and sell claims to the bankruptcy estates of defunct crypto firms like FTX and possibly Three Arrows itself.

In pitch documents sent to investors in January, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu code-named their new company ''GTX,'' an alphabetical successor to Mr. Bankman-Fried's failed exchange.

''I just thought it was very funny,'' Mr. Zhu said.

A crypto 'supercycle'

Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu have lived parallel lives. They grew up in the Northeastern United States and went to high school together at Phillips Academy in Andover, Mass. They became business partners in the mid-2000s, while undergraduates at Columbia University. The summer after their freshman year, they traveled to Buenos Aires and set up shop in a cafe, offering to teach local workers how to play online poker and then stake them some money in return for a cut of their winnings.

But their plan to create an army of South American cardsharps had a fatal flaw: Neither of them spoke Spanish. They had wrongly assumed that ***working-class*** Argentines would understand English.

After graduating from Columbia, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu worked overlapping stints at Credit Suisse before founding Three Arrows in 2012 when they were in their mid-20s. They started out trading financial products tied to foreign currencies but switched to crypto around 2019, as the market was emerging from a major slump.

By 2021, as crypto prices surged to record levels, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu were managing billions of dollars, investing in crypto start-ups and borrowing hundreds of millions to fuel even bigger bets. Mr. Zhu amassed 500,000 followers on Twitter, promoting his theory of a crypto ''supercycle'' destined to send the price of Bitcoin north of $1 million.

Mr. Davies said he viewed the whole enterprise as little different from an online game. ''If you're very good at the game, you make a lot of money,'' he said.

For a while, the bets paid off. According to media reports, Mr. Zhu spent $35 million on a good-class bungalow, a type of mansion popular among Singapore's financial elite, and settled in a quiet, tree-lined neighborhood of the island.

Mr. Davies pursued an even more extravagant prize. ''I just told Su: 'I'm going to get a boat. I need it,''' he recalled. ''Su was like, 'Well, I need it, too.' And I was like, 'Well, we need it together then.'''

They picked out a superyacht, designed by the Italian shipbuilder Sanlorenzo, with five decks, two retractable terraces and a swimming pool. They christened the boat Much Wow, a reference to a meme popularized by investors in the joke cryptocurrency Dogecoin.

The yacht became Mr. Davies's pet project. Inside, he planned to display a collection of nonfungible tokens, the unique digital collectibles known as NFTs. One floor was set to house a hydroponic garden -- an addition requested by Mr. Zhu's wife, who is a biologist and an avid gardener.

It was a heady time. ''I actually was looking at some islands as well,'' Mr. Davies said. But as he put the finishing touches on the boat, the crypto market was veering toward a crisis. In Singapore, Mr. Zhu and Mr. Davies had started socializing with Mr. Kwon, the creator of Luna. In February 2022, they bought $200 million of Luna tokens.

Three months later, Luna lost all its value in a matter of days. The crash sent the price of every major crypto token plummeting. Many of Three Arrows' other bets started souring fast.

As the market cratered, the founders' lenders ordered them to pay back hundreds of millions of dollars -- money that Three Arrows no longer had.

Behind the scenes, it was chaos. At one point, Three Arrows tried to borrow 5,000 Bitcoin, worth $125 million at the time, from the crypto lending firm Genesis to pay back a separate loan to a different creditor, according to documents filed in court in the British Virgin Islands. (Mr. Zhu said that account of their financial maneuvering was inaccurate.) As the company's fate became clear, its lenders complained that Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu weren't responding to messages.

The impact of the firm's implosion was immediate and sweeping. One of Three Arrows' largest creditors was Voyager Digital, a crypto bank that had lent it about $700 million. After Three Arrows defaulted on that loan, Voyager became insolvent, and the savings of millions of its customers vanished.

In letters to the judge overseeing Voyager's bankruptcy, its customers described the impact of those life-changing losses. ''Losing this money with no end in sight has been unbearable for my family,'' wrote one investor who had $30,000 stored on Voyager. ''I wake up most nights and just walk up and down the stairs contemplating on my own mistakes.''

On Twitter, furious crypto investors blamed Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu for accelerating the market crash. Singapore's financial regulator reprimanded Three Arrows, saying the firm had provided ''misleading'' information to the government. In the media, one creditor accused the founders of lying about their finances and compared them to Bernie Madoff, the notorious Ponzi schemer.

Mr. Zhu said his lawyers had assured him that Three Arrows' actions were ''whiter than white.'' By the time the firm was liquidated last June, he and Mr. Davies were in Bali. Mr. Zhu was learning to surf. Mr. Davies bought a paint set and started experimenting with still lifes.

''You eat very fatty pork dishes, and you drink a lot of alcohol, and you go to the beach and you just meditate,'' Mr. Davies said as he recounted his travels. ''You have these magical experiences.''

In late June, a court in the British Virgin Islands appointed liquidators at the consulting firm Teneo to take over the fund and recover the more than $3 billion that creditors were owed. For weeks, the founders' whereabouts were not publicly known. The liquidators complained in court that Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu were withholding crucial records.

During a conference call in July, the founders appeared on Zoom with their cameras turned off, and stayed silent as Three Arrows' new overseers repeatedly questioned them, according to an account that the liquidators gave in court.

Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu say they've cooperated with the legal process. But in December, a lawyer for the liquidators, Adam Goldberg, told a bankruptcy judge that the two men had ''failed to engage in delivery of information and assets required by their duties to creditors.''

''The founders' behavior shows they have something to hide,'' Mr. Goldberg said.

Making a comeback

After traveling in Bali and Dubai, Mr. Zhu returned to Singapore, where he has been living with his wife and two young daughters in the good-class bungalow he bought at the height of Three Arrows' success. Last year, the couple converted their yard into a permaculture farm -- an elaborate system of lakes and gardens meant to replicate self-sustaining ecosystems in nature. It's home to ducks, chickens and numerous types of dragonflies.

One afternoon in May, a shirtless man wandered the rows of vegetation, snapping photos. ''One of the foremost experts on insects in Singapore,'' Mr. Zhu explained.

Like many crypto evangelists, Mr. Zhu has a propensity for audacious pronouncements. He once predicted that disputes over crypto could cause a civil war in the United States, and he often frames his observations about the market in world-historical terms.

''We're entering the age of chivalry,'' he said over dinner last month. An hour or two later, he added: ''We're in the golden age of slander.''

As Mr. Zhu led a tour of the grounds, he stopped by the chicken enclosure to offer a disquisition on economic history. ''I've always been quite anticapitalist,'' he said. He also insisted he was ''actually against yachts personally.''

His wife, Evelyn, gave him a skeptical look. ''You did have that dream of traveling around the world,'' she said.

The Much Wow never set sail. The shipbuilder canceled its contract with Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu after they missed a final payment, according to court records; the yacht was sold to a new buyer, and Three Arrows' liquidators are seeking $30 million from that transaction. The liquidators are also raising money through other avenues: Last month, Sotheby's auctioned a collection of Three Arrows' NFTs for about $2.5 million.

Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu insist they have handed over records to the firm's new management. But the liquidators say that they are still missing crucial material, and that the founders' lack of cooperation has doubled the cost of the recovery process.

''On the date of a recent hearing where they were supposed to appear, one of them seemed to be tweeting from a boat in Dubai,'' said Russell Crumpler, a senior managing director at Teneo who has led the liquidation in the British Virgin Islands.

So far, none of the government inquiries into Three Arrows have led to charges. A spokeswoman for the Monetary Authority of Singapore, the agency that reprimanded Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu last year, said it had been ''assessing if there were further breaches.'' Representatives for the S.E.C. and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission declined to comment.

Mr. Davies said he was ready to move on from Three Arrows by the end of last summer. ''I really spent so much time meditating in Bali that I'm really just pretty zenned out,'' he said.

Within a few months of seeing their company implode, he and Mr. Zhu were discussing new business ventures, including a co-living scheme in Bali, possibly involving a crypto token.

''The waves -- they just keep coming,'' Mr. Zhu said, reaching for a surfing metaphor. ''You can crash on a big wave. It doesn't matter. You can injure yourself and just heal, and get the next one.''

Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu started to re-establish a strong public presence in November, around the time FTX failed. Suddenly, there was an even bigger villain in town.

Mr. Davies went on CNBC, where he argued, without citing much evidence, that Mr. Bankman-Fried of FTX had manipulated the crypto markets in an intentional effort to hurt Three Arrows. (Mr. Bankman-Fried denied the claim.) A presenter asked Mr. Davies if he had moved to Bali because Indonesia has no extradition treaty with the United States.

''No,'' he replied. ''It's just a good place to be.''

Late last year, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu started their new company, Open Exchange, with Mark Lamb and Sudhu Arumugam, founders of CoinFLEX, a crypto firm that went under last year.

The business has had a rough start. Some companies listed as investors on Open Exchange's Twitter account have denied any involvement. A financial regulator in Dubai said Open Exchange was operating without a license.

Mr. Zhu said he was tuning out the criticism. On Twitter, he responded to a negative article in The Wall Street Journal by quoting John F. Kennedy: ''We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things not because they are easy, but because they are hard.''

''I've already created 75 jobs,'' he said over dinner in Singapore. ''At least these people like me.''

This month, Open Exchange unveiled its own cryptocurrency, called OX, like the animal. The price shot up over a couple of days. ''I'm getting early 3AC vibes all over again,'' Mr. Davies wrote on Twitter on Tuesday. ''Nothing compares to the energy of a startup.''

Privately, Mr. Davies has been encouraging Three Arrows' creditors to trade their bankruptcy claims on Open Exchange. In January, he invited creditors to an ''ad hoc 3AC creditor meeting.'' But on the call, Mr. Davies spoke the entire time, according to two people familiar with the matter; he ended the session just as someone was trying to ask a question.

In Barcelona last month, Mr. Davies seemed relaxed, and spoke glowingly of the ''amazing cafes'' on Las Ramblas, a busy thoroughfare that cuts across the heart of the city. One Saturday night, he ate a late dinner at Els Pescadors, a seafood restaurant near the beach, ordering oysters, croquettes, local wine and three rounds of whiskey.

By the end of the meal, Mr. Davies was rattling off business ideas. In Dubai, he said, he has made inquiries about opening a chicken restaurant, possibly in the form of a cloud kitchen, with no storefront. For a while, he and Mr. Zhu considered making a film about Do Kwon and the collapse of Luna. ''Our idea was basically that we would do an empathy piece,'' he said. ''We had a whole team that was going to produce it at Sundance or whatever.''

Mr. Davies has also thought about getting into the artificial intelligence industry. ''I would like to believe that I can create two more businesses,'' he said. ''But I'm also OK with the idea that I'm fully retired at this point.''

He left the restaurant at midnight, strolling down a busy street lined with outdoor bars, where murmurs of late-night conversation echoed in the distance. He was beaming.

''If anyone has any problems,'' Mr. Davies declared, ''just go to Bali.'' Then he turned, swaying slightly, and walked into the night.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/09/technology/three-arrows-cryto-bali.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/09/technology/three-arrows-cryto-bali.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, after traveling in Bali and Dubai, Su Zhu returned to Singapore, where he lives in a home he bought at the height of Three Arrows' success. Above, Kyle Davies had ''these magical experiences'' involving ''fatty pork dishes'' and ''a lot of alcohol'' after the fund collapsed. Above right, Sam Bankman-Fried (right), the founder of the FTX exchange, is awaiting trial on fraud charges. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ORE HUIYING FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ANNA HUIX FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

DESIREE RIOS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BU6-BU7) This article appeared in print on page BU6, BU7.

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[***Why the Joys of Parenting Can Be So Difficult to Express; Jessica Grose***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:674N-SCJ1-DXY4-X0FR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1343 words

**Byline:** Jessica Grose

**Highlight:** They brush up against our greatest fears.

**Body**

I’ve been thinking about a piece of feedback I get from readers every so often, which is that I don’t write about the joys of parenting enough — that I focus too much on the hurdles and pitfalls. While I’m not sure I agree entirely, as we get to the end of the year and I’m in the mood to reflect, I want to reckon with this good-faith criticism.

Sometimes this observation comes from more politically conservative readers. That point of view is well encapsulated in a 2021 [*article*](https://www.deseret.com/2021/6/11/22528243/culture-winning-the-smear-campaign-against-pro-family-parenting-social-media-motherhood) by the Deseret magazine contributing writer Bethany Mandel. In it, Mandel argues that modern motherhood has a “PR problem,” where negativity reigns and the joys are muted, that this is exacerbated by social media, and it ultimately has “deleterious effects” on both the fertility rate and “the well-being of our souls.” Mandel describes herself as [*pro-life*](https://forward.com/opinion/368694/what-does-it-mean-to-be-jewish-and-pro-life/), and earlier this year argued that more [*government spending*](https://www.deseret.com/2022/7/13/23196165/perspective-big-government-still-isnt-the-answer-even-after-roe-mitt-romney-child-tax-credit) on families isn’t the way, even in a post-Roe world.

Obviously, we disagree on the politics. I believe people should only become parents if they really want to, and not everyone wants to — that includes reproductive choice. I also believe people are having fewer babies than they might otherwise want to in part because the economics don’t always make sense — not because parenthood has taken a public relations hit.

Because I love being a mom, in a way it makes me sad when some families choose to forgo having children, but families are often making rational decisions to limit the number of kids they have in a country whose government [*spends less on early child care*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/06/upshot/child-care-biden.html) than just about all of our peer nations do. In 2018, when The Times asked younger adults why they were having [*fewer than their “ideal” number of children*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/05/upshot/americans-are-having-fewer-babies-they-told-us-why.html), seven of the top eight responses were financial, including: “child care is too expensive,” “worried about the economy,” “can’t afford more children,” “waited because of financial instability,” “not enough paid family leave” and “no paid family leave.” One woman said: “I’m just apprehensive about going back to poverty. I know how it goes, I know the effects of it, and I’m thinking, ‘Can I ever break this curse?’”

So: I don’t think being honest about the financial realities American parents are facing — which I write about often — means being a Debbie Downer about parenthood. I’d love it if this were a problem the free market had solved, but the market clearly hasn’t [*solved child care in the past four decades*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/07/opinion/child-care.html). And it seems to me that the proof of concept for at least some government intervention is in [*the expiration, about a year ago, of the expanded child tax credit*](https://www.povertycenter.columbia.edu/news-internal/monthly-poverty-january-2022). Per the Center on Poverty and Social Policy at Columbia University: “the monthly child poverty rate increased from 12.1 percent in December 2021 to 17 percent in January 2022, the highest rate since the end of 2020. The 4.9 percentage point (41 percent) increase in poverty represents 3.7 million more children in poverty due to the expiration of the monthly Child Tax Credit payments.”

Where Mandel and I agree: It’s time for bipartisan work on this front.

I’m still thinking about a woman [*I interviewed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/02/opinion/sandwich-generation.html) earlier this year about the difficulties of caring for young children and aging parents at the same time who said she discovered “there’s no safety net for the elder ***working class***. That was really so devastating.” I’ve read a barrage of headlines about how[*America’s retirement crisis is getting worse*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-08-16/do-i-have-enough-money-to-retire-americans-face-massive-retirement-shorfall), for example, and I remember a lesson from Barbara Ehrenreich’s excellent 2009 book, “Bright-Sided: How the Relentless Promotion of Positive Thinking Has Undermined America.” To be unduly positive in the face of injustice is reaffirming the status quo, “with all its inequalities and abuses of power.” You can’t extol the blessings of parenthood without addressing the serious challenges that caregivers will face throughout their lifetimes.

Further, I strongly believe that it’s important for parents, mothers in particular, to acknowledge [*a range of emotions around motherhood*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/09/opinion/tiktok-parenting-philosophy.html). Parenting, of course, isn’t all sunshine and lollipops, so if you only accentuate the positives, that winds up doing everyone a disservice — making it harder to parent through the difficult moments if you’re crushed by guilt over every worry.

And yet.

I have to admit I do sometimes find it harder to express the existential pleasure of having children — the deep and unending satisfaction, laughter and wellspring of love that being a mother has provided me. Part of that is cultural: I grew up with [*the Jewish superstition*](https://www.jstor.org/stable/535237) about attracting the “evil eye” — to boast or express too much pride is to invite bad luck to your doorstep.

But part of it is that sitting with the overwhelming, all-encompassing love for your children can be frightening, because it brushes up against a parent’s greatest fear — that something awful could happen. I was reminded of this crush of emotions when reading Rob Delaney’s excellent, gutting new book, “[*A Heart That Works*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/27/books/review/a-heart-that-works-rob-delaney.html),” which chronicles his son’s illness and ultimate death from brain cancer at age 2. Delaney, who moved to London from Los Angeles before his son got sick, frequently mentions England’s superior safety net and national health care system. He has a few choice words for American health insurance that my editor tells me are unprintable in this family publication.

What I appreciated so much about Delaney’s book is that he perfectly juxtaposes that crush — the agony of a sick child with the terrifying beauty of being a parent. Even within a single paragraph, he will ricochet from grief and anger to gorgeousness. He describes his son’s hair, which, after chemo was over, was long and blond, “like a gorgeous little bank robber in ‘Point Break,’” and he talks about how he loved putting his fingers through it. Delaney continues:

I get mad when I think about how beautiful he was, and it’s offensive to me. His hair, his face, his eyes, which were such a bright blue. It makes me angry that people won’t get to look at them. Those eyes were two of the most glorious things I’ve ever seen and it offends me that they’re not there for people to gaze into.

Though I found Delaney’s book difficult to read, I&#39;m so glad that I read it, and that he wrote it. It reminded me to be grateful for every day that I get to spend with my kids, even the hard ones. That doesn’t mean ignoring the complicated feelings each day brings, merely to recognize that there are always profound, lovely and even mysterious feelings alongside them. Sometimes I can’t put these feelings into words and other times I just don’t want to share them, I want to hoard them as my private delights.

Occasionally I’ll wish that I’d had my children even earlier, because I would get more days with them, and their four grandparents and two great-grandmas would get more days with them, too. But then I remember that if I’d had them at any other time, they wouldn’t be these specific, marvelous children. I’m not an especially religious person, but having these particular girls, and this family, can feel like a miracle. And I never want to lose sight of that, even when I’m focused on pointing out the things that I hope will change.

Tiny Victories

Parenting can be a grind. Let’s celebrate the tiny victories.

My 5-year-old hates Covid tests, and the other day we both needed one before she could go to school. As a desperate measure to avoid an epic battle, I grabbed my used swab and stuck it up my nose while I swabbed her. She was so confused/mesmerized that she let me do it without a fight for once.

— Jennifer Danenberg, Newtown, Conn.

If you want a chance to get your Tiny Victory published, 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.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Eleanor Davis FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Michigan Has Resisted Political Extremism Against All Odds***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66BN-K161-DXY4-X4F3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1034 words

**Byline:** By Barbara McQuade

**Body**

ANN ARBOR, Mich. -- A brutal plot to abduct the governor. An armed protest in the galleries of the State Capitol. A candidate for governor who stormed the halls of Congress -- only to see his popularity rise.

In Michigan, you can feel extremism creeping into civic life.

Michigan is far from the only state in the grip of politicians who peddle disinformation and demonize their opponents. But it may also be the one best positioned to beat back the threat of political violence.

Unlike, say, Arizona and Pennsylvania, two purple states where Republicans have also embraced a toxic brew of political violence and denialism, Michigan is home to voters who, to date, have avoided succumbing to the new conservative dogma, thanks in large part to its Democratic politicians, who have remained relentlessly focused on kitchen table issues. In that sense, Michigan may hold lessons for residents of other states looking to withstand the tide of authoritarianism and violence, restoring faith in the American institutions under siege from the right.

Certainly, recent history is concerning. Although a jury last month convicted two men who plotted to kidnap Gov. Gretchen Whitmer over her Covid shutdown orders, that verdict came only after a jury in an earlier trial could not reach a unanimous verdict on the charges against them and acquitted two other co-defendants, despite chilling evidence that members of a militia group known as the Wolverine Watchmen had been building homemade bombs, photographing the underside of a bridge to determine how best to destroy it to slow a police pursuit and using night-vision goggles to surveil Ms. Whitmer's vacation home.

In that first trial, the defense argued that the F.B.I.'s informants had egged on the men, and it was persuasive enough to deadlock the jury. But I doubt the jurors would have been so receptive to that line of argument without Donald Trump persistently blasting government employees as ''the deep state'' and calling the conduct of the F.B.I. ''a disgrace.''

For the upcoming November elections, the G.O.P. nominees for attorney general and secretary of state are election deniers, and the candidate for governor has also cast doubt on the results of the 2020 vote for president. And not only are Republican candidates consumed with signaling an allegiance to Mr. Trump, but we are also seeing an alarming rise in political extremism in Michigan.

In spring 2020, armed protesters demonstrated against Covid shutdown orders by occupying the galleries over the Senate chamber in the State Capitol while brandishing assault rifles. After the 2020 election, Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson faced a deluge of threats and harassment from election deniers, including an armed protest at her home, where a mob chanted ''stop the steal'' while she was inside with her 4-year-old son. Ryan Kelley, who sought the Republican nomination for governor, was charged with four misdemeanor offenses for his alleged role in the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol. After his involvement in the attack became well known, his polling numbers actually went up.

Still, there is reason for some cautious optimism. In the Republican primary, voters rejected Mr. Kelley. An independent citizens redistricting commission has been created by a voter initiative to end the gerrymandering that has led to a Republican-controlled State Legislature. Recent polling shows Ms. Whitmer, Ms. Benson and Attorney General Dana Nessel, who are all Democrats, with comfortable leads as the general election approaches, and their resilience in the face of threats has only strengthened their political stock. And the convictions in the Whitmer kidnapping case show that 12 random people can still be found who will set aside their biases and decide a case based on the law and the facts they hear in court. My hunch is that there are more fair-minded people out there who will go to the polls in November.

Pragmatic problem-solving still seems to appeal to Michigan voters. Many families' fortunes are tied inextricably to the auto industry, the health of which can swing sharply with every economic trend. Ms. Whitmer has championed economic development legislation that has helped create 25,000 auto jobs during her administration. She recently made a pitch to leverage federal legislation to lure companies to manufacture semiconductors in Michigan.

In a state sometimes referred to as the birthplace of the middle class, labor unions carry more influence with ***working-class*** voters than the MAGA movement. From the rebirth of Detroit to the expansion of tourism Up North, Michigan is also a place that has long welcomed newcomers. Whether they be laborers on the assembly lines of Henry Ford or engineers for autonomous vehicles, workers from all over the world have always been needed and accepted as part of the work force, making it more difficult to demonize outsiders as ''other.'' As a result, voters tend to be less susceptible to the politics of fear that are driving the culture wars. Indeed, Ms. Whitmer was elected with a slogan to ''Fix the Damn Roads.''

Maybe it is a Midwestern sensibility, but Michiganders seem more interested in candidates who will help advance their financial bottom lines than those who traffic in conspiracy theories. And, four years later, Ms. Whitmer has fixed a lot of the damn roads.

By focusing on economic outcomes of working families, Democrats in Michigan have managed to clinch not only the top state offices, but also the state's two U.S. Senate seats.

And while every state is different, politicians in other states could learn from Michigan to ignore the bait Republicans use to demonize them and focus on the bottom line issues that matter to voters.

Barbara McQuade (@BarbMcQuade) is a professor of law at the University of Michigan. She served as the U.S. attorney for Michigan's Eastern District from 2010 to 2017.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY SETH HERALD/REUTERS)

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[***Eastern Europe Was the Crucible of Modern Football. Now It’s a Wasteland.; Sidelines***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66XF-98T1-JBG3-647H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1339 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Wilson

**Highlight:** The region has a story to tell about sporting destiny.

**Body**

There is a theory that, other than Uruguay at the inaugural tournament in 1930, every World Cup winner has been in some way influenced by the wave of great Hungarian coaches scattered across the globe in the aftermath of World War I.

It’s not entirely tenuous, even if some are skeptical. Nobody, by contrast, truly doubts that [*gegenpressing*](https://spielverlagerung.com/2014/10/07/counter-or-gegenpressing/), perhaps the dominant mode of the modern game, has its origins in the Soviet Union — and was kindled from a [*friendly*](https://www.independent.ie/sport/soccer/tactical-evolution-made-defence-the-new-attack-38917478.html) in 1983 between the German side Viktoria Backnang and Dynamo Kyiv, who were managed by the great Ukrainian coach [*Valery Lobanovsky*](https://www.theguardian.com/football/blog/2011/may/12/valeriy-lobanovskyi-dynamo-kyiv). Pressing itself, whose introduction in the ’60s can be said to mark the birth of modern football, was developed by [*Viktor Maslov*](https://www.90min.com/posts/6400358-viktor-maslov-soviet-pioneer-of-the-4-4-2-formation-the-inventor-of-pressing), a Russian coach who enjoyed great success at Torpedo Moscow and Dynamo Kyiv.

These are no isolated instances of influence. For the best part of the 20th century, football looked east for inspiration. In two very different periods, before and after World War II, Eastern Europe was a beacon of modernity and progressive thought in football. Yet at the World Cup in Qatar this year only three of the 32 qualifiers are from the former Communist bloc, while it is 23 years since a club team from the region last reached the semifinal of the Champions League. The region, its highest-profile coaches nowhere near the game’s summit, is now just another producer of talent for the wealthy leagues of Western Europe.

From crucible to wasteland, Eastern Europe has a story to tell about the power of politics and economics to define sporting destiny.

Even as the brightest thinkers were leaving Hungary in the ’20s and ’30s, the flow of Hungarian talent was maintained by the rivalry between two Budapest giants: MTK, the club of the assimilated Jewish middle class, and Ferencvaros, whose support was largely ***working class*** and ethnically German. Yet politics intruded.

MTK was shut down by Miklos Horthy’s far-right regime in 1942 and Ferencvaros was deliberately run down by the Communist government that took power in 1947. Although nationalization brought short-term success — most famously lifting Hungary to the final of the [*1954 World Cup*](https://www.theguardian.com/football/blog/2014/may/06/world-cup-stunning-moments-miracle-of-bern) — the two great wellsprings of Budapest’s football culture, damaged by the mass defections that followed Soviet repression of the 1956 uprising, soon ran dry. The Hungarian game has never recovered.

After Hungary’s eclipse, the center of Eastern European football shifted to the Soviet Union itself. Maslov, an avuncular Muscovite, prepared the ground in the ’60s. But it was Lobanovsky, a trained mathematician, who really moved things forward. An advocate of pressing, he also pioneered — in conjunction with the computer scientist Anatoly Zelentsov — the use of computer analysis in match preparation. In the process, he inspired Dynamo Kyiv to two European Cup Winners’ Cups and led the Soviet Union to second at the 1988 European Championship.

But this period came to an end with the collapse of Communism. As the region suffered economic ruin, the most gifted players and coaches left — and state funding that maintained the clubs and academies was turned off. The infrastructure of club football was hollowed out, just as the advent of the Champions League increased revenues for the elite.

The impact was devastating. At the 1990 World Cup, four of the 24 sides were from the East. Four years earlier, Steaua Bucharest, the club of the Romanian army, had [*won the European Cup*](https://www.uefa.com/uefachampionsleague/news/022d-0e9c68778f21-316dc56ce8fd-1000--steaua-s-miracle-of-1986-30-years-on/) (the forerunner of the Champions League), and reached the final again in 1989. Two years later, as Yugoslavia tipped into civil war, [*Red Star Belgrade*](https://thesefootballtimes.co/2015/08/17/red-star-triumph-of-1991/) triumphed. Since then, no side from Serbia or Romania has even made it through the group stage of the Champions League, while an arduous ownership dispute means there are currently two different clubs, both claiming continuity from the original Steaua.

Steaua represents an extreme example, but corruption, disorganization and diminished resources dog football in the East. Even in the former East Germany there is a stark disparity with the West. When Germany won the World Cup in 2014, its squad included only one player from the East. The Bundesliga, Germany’s top league, features [*only two clubs*](https://www.dw.com/en/german-reunification-what-happened-to-east-germanys-top-football-clubs/a-55134253) from the East, each in their own way isolated from the economic difficulties of the region.

For a time, Russia had seemed the great hope. There were successes in the UEFA Cup (European football’s second-most prestigious tournament) for CSKA Moscow in 2005 and Zenit St Petersburg in 2008, while the national team, playing thrilling football, reached the semifinal of the European Championship in 2008. When in 2011 Suleiman Kerimov, an ally of Vladimir Putin, bought Anzhi, a previously unheralded club from the Dagestani capital of Makhachkala, and signed [*eye-catching stars*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/31/sports/soccer/31iht-soccer31.html), the potential reach of Russia’s oligarchs on the game became clear.

But UEFA’s Financial Fair Play regulations, introduced that year, restricted just how much could be invested. Some preferred to invest abroad anyway, such as [*Roman Abramovich*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/sports/soccer/roman-abramovich-chelsea.html) at Chelsea or [*Dmitry Rybolovlev*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/21/sports/soccer/as-monaco-vadim-vasilyev-.html) at Monaco. Were they seeking to raise their profile and so secure a degree of protection from machinations in the Kremlin? Were they tying their assets into Western economies, gaining a degree of influence? It remains uncertain.

In any case, a collapse in the price of potash forced Mr. Kerimov to [*slash budgets*](https://www.bbc.com/sport/football/23603167) at Anzhi. Then in 2014 came Russia’s invasion of Crimea and parts of the Donbas. Even the limited sanctions that followed had an effect, particularly on the long-term president of CSKA, who has significant business interests in Ukraine. Sanctions imposed after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February have effectively ended Russian investment in foreign clubs.

Within Russia, the consequences have been profound. There has been an exodus of foreigners from the Russian league: The German coaches of Lokomotiv Moscow and Krasnodar, for example, quit almost immediately. The country is [*cut off*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/02/sports/soccer/russia-ban-euros-world-cup.html), expelled from the World Cup and its clubs suspended from UEFA competitions. Perhaps Gazprom, the state energy company that used to sponsor the Champions League, will instead invest its resources at home. Yet more likely, Russian football will wither in isolation.

Which leaves what, exactly? Ukraine, despite the invasion, was one game from qualifying for the World Cup, and the restart of its [*domestic league*](https://www.theguardian.com/football/2022/aug/23/ukraine-football-restarts-flags-message-from-zelenskiy-no-crowd) in August, albeit with air-raid protocols, was proudly presented as evidence of returning normality. Great individuals can emerge anywhere: One of the brightest prospects in the modern game is Napoli’s 21-year-old Georgian winger [*Khvicha Kvaratskhelia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/26/sports/soccer/napoli-khvicha-kvaratskhelia-kvaradona.html). The Balkans and Ukraine continue to produce talent in bulk: A CIES Football Observatory report this year [*ranked the academies*](https://www.football-observatory.com/IMG/sites/b5wp/2022/wp394/en/) of five Eastern European clubs among the top eight in Europe. But they are essentially producing to sell to the West.

Hungary has seen a mini-revival recently, thanks to a series of [*tax breaks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/26/world/europe/viktor-orban-soccer-health-care.html) Viktor Orban, a huge football fan, has provided for clubs. With investment, some achievement is possible, at the national level at least. Without it, the result is Bulgaria or Romania, whose national teams lit up the 1994 World Cup but are currently footballing deserts.

In this year’s tournament, Poland, Serbia and Croatia — a consistent high achiever, against the odds — will do their best. But their performance mostly underscores how far the region has fallen. Football may be the universal sport, accessible to anybody with a rough ball. But, as the Eastern European experience sadly shows, it can’t escape the vagaries of history.

Jonathan Wilson ([*@jonawils*](https://twitter.com/jonawils)) is a football writer and the author of many books, including “The Names Heard Long Ago: How the Golden Age of Hungarian Football Shaped the Modern Game.”

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**End of Document**



[***Justice Dept. Will Investigate Environmental Racism in Houston***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6609-DTW1-JBG3-64K8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 22, 2022 Friday 23:01 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 975 words

**Byline:** Glenn Thrush

**Highlight:** The inquiry, part of an administration-wide racial justice initiative, came amid claims that the city has ignored illegal dumping in Black and Latino areas.

**Body**

The inquiry, part of an administration-wide racial justice initiative, came amid claims that the city has ignored illegal dumping in Black and Latino areas.

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department opened a wide-ranging investigation on Friday into the City of Houston’s failure to address environmental racism, including the rampant dumping of garbage — and even bodies — in predominantly Black and Latino neighborhoods, officials said.

The investigation, prompted by hundreds of resident complaints logged by a local legal aid group, is likely to be one of the most ambitious environmental justice reviews undertaken by the department in recent years.

The inquiry will be led by the civil rights division in coordination with the department’s new environmental justice office. It will look into whether officials in Houston, the nation’s fourth-largest city, systematically discriminated against residents by allowing 11 of 13 incinerators and landfills to be placed in the city’s northeast section over the past several decades.

The announcement is part of the Biden administration’s wider effort to address racial disparities that have relegated people of color to areas where they face far greater risk of exposure to carcinogens and other harmful pollutants, flooding and an array of environmental blights that decrease life spans, quality of life and property values.

Many of the problems outlined on Friday by Kristen Clarke, the assistant attorney general who leads the civil rights division, stem from a decades-long history of injustice rooted in racism and malign neglect, historically at the hands of white local officials.

But some issues are more recent: The Justice Department plans to pay particular attention to reports that residents who call Houston’s 311 system to complain about dumping and other environmental violations have been routinely ignored, Ms. Clarke said during a call with reporters.

Illegal dump sites in low-lying Houston “not only attract rodents, mosquitoes and other vermin that pose health risks, but they can also contaminate surface water and impact proper drainage, making areas more susceptible to flooding,” Ms. Clarke said.

Mayor Sylvester Turner, a Democrat, criticized the investigation, saying that his administration had increased fines for illegal dumping and taken steps to improve conditions in the city’s Black and Latino neighborhoods.

“The City of Houston was stunned and disappointed to learn about the investigation into illegal dumping by third parties launched by the U.S. Department of Justice,” Mr. Turner said in a statement. “Despite the D.O.J.’s pronouncements, my office received no advanced notice. This investigation is absurd, baseless and without merit.”

The mayor, who is Black, added that he had “prioritized the needs of communities of color that are historically under-resourced and underserved.”

The Justice Department’s investigation was prompted by a complaint from Lone Star Legal Aid, which has monitored resident complaints in Houston’s northeast section. The area has become a dumping ground for “household furniture, mattresses, tires, medical waste, trash, dead bodies and vandalized A.T.M. machines,” Ms. Clarke said.

Amy Catherine Dinn, the managing attorney for the legal aid group’s environmental justice division, said, “This is all part of the city’s legacy of environmental racism, but that problem has gotten worse as the city has grown — and these neighborhoods have been deprived of the resources that wealthier white neighborhoods receive.”

Ms. Dinn said neighborhood residents had carefully documented hundreds of incidents of illegal dumping in the residential streets around a local garbage dump. They have registered their complaints through the city’s 311 system, only to wait months for help while similar problems have been addressed far more quickly in more affluent neighborhoods, she said.

“This is not a one-off problem,” she added. “The city has basically allowed this community to be used as a landfill.”

The environmental disparities described by the Justice Department on Friday are woven into the city’s urban fabric, a patchwork of commercial and residential buildings. Houston has some of the nation’s least restrictive zoning laws; as a result, many of the city’s petroleum processing facilities, petrochemical plants, dumps and transportation lots have been placed alongside low-income or ***working-class*** residential neighborhoods.

[*A 2016 study*](https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/attach/2016/10/ucs-double-jeopardy-in-houston-full-report-2016.pdf) by the Union of Concerned Scientists and Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services found that people living in Houston’s Harrisburg/Manchester neighborhood, a predominantly Latino area bordered by industrial facilities, suffered significantly higher cancer and asthma rates than people in other, whiter parts of the city further removed from grit-and-garbage industry.

In May, Attorney General Merrick B. Garland announced a [*series of policies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/12/us/politics/justice-department-environmental-justice.html) intended to elevate the department’s environmental justice efforts from the symbolic to the substantive — including the creation of an office inside the department responsible for addressing the “harm caused by environmental crime, pollution and climate change.”

Even before then, the department had begun to explore criminal and civil cases under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, starting with an investigation into the sanitation and flood management system of [*Lowndes County, Ala.,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/12/us/politics/infrastructure-environmental-racism-alabama-black-belt.html) one of the country’s poorest and most environmentally blighted areas.

In most of these investigations, including the Houston inquiry, the department aims to negotiate settlements with localities to address the problems that are found, Ms. Clarke said.

PHOTO: The investigation is likely to be one of the most ambitious environmental justice reviews undertaken by the Justice Department in recent years. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sergio Flores for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 22, 2022

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[***Radical Ideas Need Quiet Spaces; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64RP-DWT1-JBG3-652X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 10, 2022 Thursday 11:32 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1500 words

**Byline:** Gal Beckerman

**Highlight:** Visibility is one thing. Actually mustering the power to fundamentally rearrange society — that is something else.

**Body**

Consider the Black Lives Matter lawn sign.

I still see a few in my neighborhood, but these days, they appear vestigial, remnants of a moment. And every time I pass one, my feelings are mixed: There’s pride that a movement turned the country toward the festering truth of racism’s persistence, but then there’s another thought, about the ease with which that sign was planted and the similar ease with which it was then ignored.

So many social movements, from Occupy Wall Street to #MeToo, can feel like this now: They streak through, trailing fire and leaving an aura of heightened sensitivity in the places they burned before vanishing almost as suddenly as they appeared.

Visibility and attention, and even a lively cultural conversation, are one thing. Actually mustering the power to fundamentally rearrange society or politics — that is something else. And though activists are good at achieving the former, they often seem stuck when it comes to the latter.

Saul Alinsky, the famed community organizer who wrote “Rules for Radicals,” had a useful metaphor: For a revolution to be successful, he argued, it has to follow the three-act structure of a play. The first act establishes the characters and the plot, the second act sharpens the conflict, and in the third act, “good and evil have their dramatic confrontation and resolution.” From women’s suffrage to the midcentury civil rights struggle, movements mastered this narrative, leaving a permanent mark on society. But by the early 1970s, Alinsky had started to worry that overeager revolutionaries were jumping straight to that third act — a losing proposition.

Those first acts matter because that’s where activists hammer out ideology, define goals, set strategy and build lasting identity and solidarity. It’s also where the essential work of organizing occurs.

If skipping over these steps seems especially tempting today, it’s because the tools are available to do so. Social media has given everyone extremely effective bullhorns that can call people to the streets for that presumed final battle. As a result, it has also set the metabolism of the movements that are supposed to reshape our world, making them quick and loud and full of emotional release.

The question is how to create the conditions those first two acts demand: the closeness and heat and passionate whispering. I’ve spent the past few years scavenging through the predigital past for the tools social movements used when they weren’t able to amplify their messages, when they had only their ideas and goals, and needed to both expand their reach and refine their strategy. History is not monolithic, of course, but I emerged from this search with a deeper understanding of what sort of medium helps a radical idea grow.

The seemingly boring pen-and-paper petition is a perfect example.

Almost 200 years ago, in England, the right to vote was the domain of property owners and the landed gentry — about one in six men. (No one was even talking about women yet.) At the same time, the ***working class*** was increasingly frustrated with the horrid living conditions brought on by industrialization. With no political recourse, workers built a movement that became known as [*Chartism*](https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/chartism) and had a simple objective: using the right to petition the crown and Parliament to demand representation.

Chartism encouraged the ***working class*** to direct its energy toward gathering as many signatures as possible. This was a medium with almost zero cost. “Wherever there is a halfpenny sheet of paper, a pen and a few drops of ink, there are the materials for a petition,” wrote one Chartist. But the act of picking up these materials inspired solidarity — among those who worked with rulers to draw up the sheets by hand, went door to door to canvass, sneaked onto factory floors or set up tables in busy marketplaces.

When a Chartist activist had to argue his case, he was reinforcing his own beliefs, talking himself into deeper commitment while convincing others. And for the deliberating worker who finally signed, this was a pledge taken.

In the summer of 1839, more than 1.25 million signatures had been gathered on a scroll that stretched some three miles long and was delivered to the government, where the Chartists were quite literally laughed out the door. But by then, a new constituency had been born. A whole world of associations and a new politics spun out from the talking and signing. More petitions followed, until, 30 years later, working men were finally allowed to begin participating in democracy.

The history of social and political change is full of such analog but nevertheless interactive media, like petitions, that helped guide new ideas and identities into existence — from the letters that helped ferment the scientific revolution in the 17th century to samizdat in the Soviet underground, which kept alive a shadow civil society, to the staple-bound zines of the early 1990s, where the style and sentiment of third-wave feminism first flourished. A favorite story of mine comes from the British colony of the Gold Coast (today’s Ghana) in the 1930s.

Educated Africans living in the colony, incensed at their subjugated status, needed a place to express their desire for independence and to begin hashing out what a national identity freed of British rule might even look like. The African Morning Post became such a forum. This was more of a message board than the one-way conveyor of information we think of as a newspaper. The pages were mostly filled with contributions from readers. [*Nnamdi Azikiwe*](https://www.ascleiden.nl/content/library-weekly/nnamdi-azikiwe), a Nigerian recently returned to the continent who became its editor, imagined it as a place for conversation, where Accra’s literate population could come together.

At the center of the paper was “Grumblers’ Row,” letters from readers, intended for debate and complaint. The quality of the writing here was loose and unguarded. Almost all submissions were anonymous or pseudonymous (attributed to portentous names like A. Native or ridiculous ones like Lobster). This gave people a chance to speak their mind and to test out higher degrees of daring. The arguing allowed them to peek over the dividers of tribe and establish new allegiances — they expressed their difference but did so on the same page, creating a new sort of African public sphere and helping lay the groundwork for independence.

What connects these newspapers to petitions to samizdat to zines is the way each helped shape the movement that was incubating.

On first glance, these may seem to resemble pre-internet social media. But they were different in fundamental ways: These forms of communication demanded patience, took time to produce and time to transmit. They slowed things down, favoring an incremental accumulation of knowledge and connection. They also lent coherence, a way for scattered ideologies and feelings to be shaped into a single compellingly new perspective. They led to the sorts of conversations that strengthened identity and solidarity, that allowed for both imagining and arguing together, moving toward shared objectives. And, maybe most important, the activists and dissidents and thinkers who used these tools were in control of them. They created the platforms — and by creating them, they could set their parameters and make sure they served their ends.

Intensity and intimacy and privacy can, of course, be found online today. Just peek into a Signal group or a Discord chat room. But we need to recognize the importance of this sort of huddling rather than reflexively assuming it is always put to nefarious ends — imagining, as some do, that only pornographers and white supremacists would see value in seclusion.

There is no switching off the internet. But we can better appreciate, as we increasingly do in our personal lives, that where we talk can affect how we talk. This is doubly true for the making of change, which needs solid foundations to avoid eventual crumbling. For the vanguards of the present dreaming up new ways to fight global warming or Black Lives Matter activists seeking alternatives to policing as we know it, this is an essential point: that the shape and extent of the change they seek depend as much on what tools they use as it does on their own will and hunger.

These activists need spaces to come together in the quiet when revolutions are only impassioned conversations among the aggrieved and dreaming. Because without those spaces, we risk a future in which the possibility of new realities will remain just beyond our grasp.

Gal Beckerman ([*@galbeckerman*](https://twitter.com/galbeckerman)) is the author of “The Quiet Before: On the Unexpected Origins of Radical Ideas,” from which this essay is adapted.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dalbert B. Vilarino FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 12, 2022

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[***What Is Literary Criticism For?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67G2-N661-JBG3-61B6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 3, 2023 Friday 13:15 EST

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**Section:** ARTS

**Length:** 1790 words

**Highlight:** John Guillory’s “Cultural Capital,” published amid the 1990s canon wars, became a classic. In a follow-up, “Professing Criticism,” he takes on his field’s deep funk.

**Body**

John Guillory’s “Cultural Capital,” published amid the 1990s canon wars, became a classic. In a follow-up, “Professing Criticism,” he takes on his field’s deep funk.

Thirty years ago, it was common to pick up a newspaper or a magazine and read about high drama in university literature departments. Star professors were either master thinkers introducing new rigor and glamour into a tweedy profession gone stale, or theory-addled tenured radicals taking a hatchet to the masterpieces of Western culture.

These days, though, the news out of literature departments — and the humanities writ large — tends to be less about juicy [*faculty-lounge flame wars*](https://www.nytimes.com/1988/06/05/magazine/on-campus-the-battle-of-the-books.html) than about [*declining majors*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2019/10/19/worlds-top-economists-just-made-case-why-we-still-need-english-majors/), shrinking budgets and the collapsing job market for Ph.D.s.

Enter another professor, with a big book that aims to shift the conversation. In 1993, John Guillory published “Cultural Capital,” a dense study of the then-raging canon wars that has become a stealth classic. Now, in a follow-up, [*“Professing Criticism,”*](https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/P/bo181442592.html) he takes on an even bigger question: What is literary criticism — specifically, the kind of highly specialized, theoretically sophisticated textual readings generated by academic critics — really for

Guillory’s answer (if it’s even an answer) is complex. But what literary criticism is not for, he argues, is what many of his colleagues think it is for: changing the world.

“When people read the book, I suspect they’re going to be upset,” he said in an interview. “They’re going to say, ‘You’re saying we don’t do anything, we accomplish nothing.’ That’s not what I’m saying.”

“Professing Criticism,” published last month by the University of Chicago Press, is no throaty defense of the Great Books in the manner of [*Harold Bloom*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/14/books/harold-bloom-dead.html). Readers seeking culture-war red meat will be disappointed. Still, it has stirred unusually wide response for an exhaustively researched, intricately argued book by an author largely unknown outside the academy.

There have been long, admiring reviews in [*The New Yorker*](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2023/01/23/has-academia-ruined-literary-criticism-professing-criticism-john-guillory) and [*London Review of Books*](https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v44/n23/stefan-collini/exaggerated-ambitions), as well as a more mixed one in [*Public Books*](https://www.publicbooks.org/reading-after-the-university-english-departments/), and (this being the 21st century) a full-blown [*fracas*](https://www.chronicle.com/newsletter/the-review/2023-01-23) on Twitter.

Writing in Inside Higher Ed, Steven Mintz, a historian at the University of Texas at Austin, [*called it*](https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/higher-ed-gamma/can-english-major-be-saved) “truly a landmark work” that should be read across the humanities.

“Consider it a red alert, a cautionary tale, a fire bell in the night and an omen and admonition about how professionalization, specialization and bureaucratization can damage a field of study, even as it has benefited those with tenure,” Mintz wrote.

In an interview last month in a Brooklyn coffee shop, Guillory hardly seemed like an academic Paul Revere. Genial and slightly rumpled, he was also a far cry from stereotypical notions of the master critic, whether glowering in [*emo portraits*](https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/jacques-derrida-philosopher-not-overrated) à la Derrida or lobbing gleefully Zizekian [*outrage bombs*](https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2012/jun/10/slavoj-zizek-humanity-ok-people-boring).

Guillory’s style may be muted, but his message is blunt. He wants scholars to get real and acknowledge the field’s genuine strengths, which don’t necessarily lie in direct response to today’s political issues.

“We have this sense of urgency in the classroom: We’ve got to get in there and make our political points!” he said. “And that’s fine.”

“But the other things we are doing that we don’t even see we are doing are just as important,” he continued, “and have just as significant a political effect.”

Guillory, 70, grew up in New Orleans in a ***working-class*** Catholic family, and attended Jesuit schools. For a kid like him — “socially awkward, intellectually inclined, loves to read books, gay” — there were two options: professor or priest. “I would have made an unconvincing priest,” he said.

After college at Tulane, he enrolled in graduate school in English at Yale in 1974, when the tide of high theory was rising in the academy. The English department housed some of the last heirs of the midcentury New Critics, while the Belgian critic [*Paul de Man*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/10/books/revisiting-a-scholar-unmasked-by-scandal.html?searchResultPosition=1), a principal exponent of deconstruction, held court in comparative literature.

The era of high theory brought a dizzying and contentious parade of new approaches and isms, including deconstruction, Marxism, psychoanalysis, feminism, semiotics and reader-response theory. Guillory, who taught at Yale, Johns Hopkins and Harvard before arriving at New York University in 1999, gravitated toward a more sociological approach.

“Cultural Capital” was published in the thick of the so-called [*canon wars*](https://www.nytimes.com/1988/06/05/magazine/on-campus-the-battle-of-the-books.html), which pitted traditionalist defenders of [*“Western civilization”*](https://www.nytimes.com/1988/01/19/us/in-dispute-on-bias-stanford-is-likely-to-alter-western-culture-program.html) against those who called for adding women, people of color and other excluded voices — if they didn’t want to blow up the canon entirely.

His argument questioned the premises shared by both sides. The canon, he argued, wasn’t an impregnable monument, but an imaginary construct that had always been contested. And the big question wasn’t which groups were excluded or included, but the university’s role in the unequal creation and transmission of “cultural capital.”

“It threw a really interesting wrench into the whole canon debate,” said Michael Bérubé, a professor of English at Penn State and a former president of the Modern Language Association. The book’s arguments and detached tone weren’t universally appreciated, he noted, including by those who saw Guillory as dismissive of marginalized groups’ desires to see themselves in the canon. But 30 years later, Bérubé said, “it looks like a much more foundational text.”

And to some younger scholars who weren’t around for those canon wars, it also looks prophetic.

“It’s interesting to me how many of the governing assumptions of the canon wars have re-emerged, whether in calls to ‘decolonize’ the curriculum and various D.E.I. initiatives,” [*Merve Emre*](https://www.merveemre.com/), an associate professor of English at the University of Oxford, said, referring to diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.

Emre, who has written an introduction for a forthcoming 30th-anniversary edition of “Cultural Capital,” said the book remains “very useful for understanding both the possibilities and limits of those initiatives, and for placing them in a longer history.”

In “Professing Criticism,” Guillory does not posit some lost golden age of literary criticism, from which today’s scholars have fallen.

In the 19th century, critics commanded a wide audience in periodicals, creating their own authority as they wrote. But as the study of modern, vernacular literature (that is, not just the Greek and Latin classics) was institutionalized in the university, it defined itself against journalistic criticism, without clearly articulating a positive justification for itself.

The mid-20th century brought the rise of [*New Criticism*](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms/new-criticism), which emphasized the close readings of texts, which were seen as self-contained aesthetic objects, shorn of historical context. But by the 1960s, it was increasingly challenged by more politically inflected approaches, which saw everything as a “text,” and equated literary criticism with critique of society itself.

Criticism, Guillory writes, has long wanted “to wield an Archimedean lever,” and “move the world.”

And today, as academic literary criticism has become increasingly marginalized in the academy and distant from general readers, he writes, its claims for its own political potential have only become more and more “overstated.”

In recent years, some critics have looked for a way out of the cul-de-sac, by [*urging*](https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/L/bo21386290.html) a shift away from debunking, deconstructing and unmasking to focus on the positive meanings and attachments that literary works provide.

But Guillory is sharply critical of this “[*postcritical*](https://www.chronicle.com/article/whats-wrong-with-literary-studies/?cid2=gen_login_refresh&amp;cid=gen_sign_in)” turn, which elevates and idealizes “lay reading,” he argues, while still leaving the role of professional criticisms unspecified.

In the long history of academic criticism, “professional reading defines itself over and against lay reading,” Guillory said. “I feel very strongly you have to have both things. But how do you make connections between the two?”

Some of Guillory’s readers have expressed frustration with the vagueness of his solutions. In a [*review*](https://www.publicbooks.org/reading-after-the-university-english-departments/) in Public Books, Sarah Brouillette, a professor of English at Carleton University in Canada, criticized his “fatalist view of literary criticism’s absent future,” including the bleak job market.

Guillory, who devotes a chapter to graduate education, said the current system — tenure-track jobs for the few, poorly paid adjunct work for the many — is “exploitative,” but also deeply entrenched in the economics of the university.

As for literary study’s political effect, it is nestled within the broader sociological effects of higher education, he argues, and lies more in teaching than in research.

One of the crucial effects of higher education, according to Guillory, is the creation of “the professional profile” — the habits, attitudes, vocabulary and mores broadly shared by the professional-managerial class.

No matter what you study or where, he said, “you come out the other end and you belong to a college demographic, which is a real thing” — and an important [*component*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/08/us/politics/how-college-graduates-vote.html) of the electorate.

Literary study “has a contribution to make” to that process, which happens “unintentionally and collectively in the university,” he said. But it can’t take most of the credit (or blame).

Which isn’t to say that academic writing has zero effect on the real world. Guillory cited the example of [*queer theory*](https://www.chronicle.com/article/queer-theory-and-literary-criticisms-melodramas), whose concepts and vocabulary — like the philosopher [*Judith Butler*](https://www.thecut.com/2016/06/judith-butler-c-v-r.html)’s ideas of gender and “[*performativity*](https://aeon.co/ideas/gender-is-dead-long-live-gender-just-what-is-performativity)” — have entered popular discourse (and, recently, become the target of [*conservative activists*](https://www.thenation.com/article/society/christopher-rufo-queer-theory/)).

But he also said the profession needs to face up to a broader reality: the declining cultural capital of literature in a wildly expanded media universe.

Not that he sees only gloom and doom. He’s encouraged by the growing ranks of younger scholars who straddle the line between academia and journalism, via magazines like the [*The Point*](https://thepointmag.com/) and [*The Drift*](https://www.thedriftmag.com/).

As for himself, Guillory retired from teaching last summer. That has left him more time for pleasure reading, if not exactly the unmediated “lay reading” exalted by his postcritical colleagues. “I’ll never find my way back to that paradisiacal, innocent state,” he said, laughing.

But he’s plugging holes in his education, and recently started [*“Tristram Shandy.”*](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/oct/28/100-best-novels-tristram-shandy-sterne)

“To be frank, I thought it was going to be boring,” he said of the novel, which consists almost entirely of digressions. “But it’s wonderful.”

PHOTOS: Thirty years after shaking up academia by challenging the cultural canon, John Guillory takes on his field’s deep funk in a new book. (C1); John Guillory, top, at home in Brooklyn. He published “Cultural Capital” in 1993 and is the author of the newly released “Professing Criticism.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIMOTHY O’CONNELL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C2) This article appeared in print on page C1, C2.

**Load-Date:** January 30, 2024

**End of Document**



[***Do Handouts Work?; Peter coy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67G3-G1X1-DXY4-X02F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 3, 2023 Friday 06:15 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1674 words

**Byline:** Peter Coy

**Highlight:** A debate rages over how much the poor benefit from straight cash donations.

**Body**

Josephy Amosi Kamanga, who lives in Malawi, couldn’t afford to pay the examination fee for his eldest child, so she dropped out of school two years ago. She later got pregnant and is living at home. The fee that changed his daughter’s life? Just $4.98.

[*That story*](https://app.miniextensions.com/preview-record/s4fMqSsjLeFZHo7n338c/recdDrjr6S4qYEdJW) comes from GiveDirectly Inc., an American charity that offers a simple proposition: Give poor people cash, with no strings attached, and good things will tend to happen. It certainly did to Kamanga and his family. GiveDirectly gave him $51.75 a month for a year. That enabled him to reopen a shop that sells soap, drinks, body lotion, sugar, eggs and cooking oil, and to buy a secondhand phone to operate the business. With the profits from the grocery he covered school expenses for three other children. He told a GiveDirectly interviewer that the news he’d been selected to receive the money “brought joy in my heart.”

Traditional aid, however well intentioned, can be insensitive to the needs of the poor. Massive donations of grain can put local farmers out of business, and donations of tons of used clothing can [*hurt*](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-44951670) the recipient nations’ cotton farmers, textile factories and apparel makers. A donated toilet may be [*repurposed*](https://www.globalcitizen.org/es/content/12-crazy-examples-of-what-happens-to-unused-toilet/) inefficiently as a vegetable peeling bin. Trusting recipients to know what to do with the money can appear to be an attractive alternative to top-down programs that may strike some people as colonialist.

For this newsletter I looked into what research shows about the effectiveness of unconditional cash transfers, as the no-strings-attached gifts are called. Unlike a universal basic income, unconditional cash transfers go only to the poor. It’s super clear from the research that the gifts help alleviate poverty at the time they’re given. By and large recipients aren’t blowing the money on alcohol and cigarettes, or feeling they don’t need to work anymore. That’s a welcome finding. Better yet, transfers require little operational overhead, so a higher percentage of the money gets into the right hands.

“Small, frequent and reliable cash payments to poor households have been shown to cause contemporaneous improvements in multiple domains, such as per capita consumption, savings, nutrition, mental health, teen pregnancies, child marriages and intimate partner violence,” three World Bank staff members, John Loeser, Berk Özler and Patrick Premand, wrote in 2021.

What’s less clear is whether the transfers get people unstuck from poverty for good. Studies point in different directions. I’ll cite some of them in a minute.

Michael Faye, Jeremy Shapiro, Rohit Wanchoo and Paul Niehaus co-founded GiveDirectly in 2009 while studying economic development at Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. From the start they wanted GiveDirectly to use the smartest ideas from economics and to be judged by randomized controlled trials, the gold standard of assessment, in which some people are randomly assigned to receive the treatment — in this case, money — and others serve as the control group.

GiveDirectly has given out more than $580 million in cash to about 1.4 million people and currently operates in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda and Yemen, as well as its home country, the United States. During the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic, GiveDirectly gave $1,000 gifts to nearly 200,000 people in the United States, drawing on donations from the likes of MacKenzie Scott, Andrew Yang, Stephen Colbert, Stacey Abrams, Rihanna and Ariana Grande.

While unconditional cash transfers by charities remain unusual, government programs are common. A 2018 [*report*](https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/29115/9781464812545.pdf?sequence=5&amp;isAllowed=y) by the World Bank found that of 142 countries studied, 70 percent gave unconditional cash transfers of various kinds. Lately, unconditional cash transfers have been a key means by which the U.S. Agency for International Development and other donors have thrown a lifeline to Ukrainians.

Giving cash has become more practical in recent years because of technology such as mobile payment systems, which can be used even by people who don’t have bank accounts, Rema Hanna, the chair of international development at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, told me.

I asked Niehaus in an interview why no-strings-attached donations aren’t even more popular. One reason is that they’re still not widely known, and another is that “there is a lot that’s deep in human psychology that wants to be in control and wants to be the solution to the problem,” he said. “We like to think our ideas and problem-solving capabilities are important.”

“Members of Congress don’t love this. They don’t love, ‘We’re going to write checks,’” Steven Radelet, a professor at Georgetown University’s Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service who was chief economist of U.S.A.I.D., told me. Congress loves AIDS prevention because the benefits are clear and immediate, but “this stuff is a little more ambiguous. You need an econometric study to show it works,” Radelet said. (As it happens, he and three co-authors have done one of those. It [*appeared*](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1468-0297.2011.02482.x) in The Economic Journal in 2011.)

The desire to shape outcomes is why a lot of aid programs do come with strings attached. They’re called “conditional cash transfers” in the industry. Examples are Brazil’s former Bolsa Familia and its Auxílio Brasil as well as Mexico’s Progresa, which insist that participants meet certain criteria — such as keeping their kids in school or getting them vaccinated — to get the money. Conditional aid is usually more popular with voters. One downside is that it can be too complex for some extremely poor nations to manage. Another is that it excludes people who need the most help but whose lives are too chaotic to meet the qualifying criteria, Hanna said.

I interviewed Özler, one of the three authors of that 2021 World Bank assessment. He is the lead economist and research manager of the Poverty and Inequality Research Program in the bank’s Development Research Group. He has his doubts about the long-term effectiveness of cash transfers, whether unconditional or conditional. “The short-term positive effects on a multitude of outcomes can dissipate after the cessation of transfers,” he and his co-authors wrote in their 2021 assessment.

In a video call, Özler said advocates of unconditional cash transfers once hoped that when people got the money they needed, all their other problems would be solved. That hasn’t been the case, he said. If you want kids to be better educated, for example, the most effective way is to offer aid that’s conditioned on making sure they’re in school, not just hand out money. He recommends layering some strings-attached aid to achieve particular social objectives on top of some no-strings-attached aid as a safety net for the poorest of the poor.

I won’t try to sort out the academic debate over whether unconditional cash transfers create lasting change. Niehaus pointed me to several studies, including one in Uganda and one in Sri Lanka, that showed long-term benefits from unconditional cash transfers. Niehaus also pointed to a study he co-authored from Kenya showing benefits after two years that [*appeared*](https://www.econometricsociety.org/publications/econometrica/2022/11/01/General-Equilibrium-Effects-of-Cash-Transfers-Experimental-Evidence-From-Kenya) last year in the prestigious journal Econometrica. A 2021 [*study*](https://www.parisschoolofeconomics.eu/docs/macours-karen/mexico_v100421.pdf) found that decades after receiving aid, beneficiaries of Mexico’s strings-attached Progresa had “larger labor incomes, more geographical mobility including through international migration, and later family formation.”

On the other hand, a study on the Philippines that [*appeared*](https://direct.mit.edu/rest/article-abstract/doi/10.1162/rest_a_01061/100989/Cash-Transfers-Food-Prices-and-Nutrition-Impacts?redirectedFrom=fulltext) last month in The Review of Economics and Statistics found that cash transfers raised prices of perishable foods in some markets (presumably by increasing demand) and increased stunting by 34 percent among children whose families didn’t get the money. Niehaus said GiveDirectly doesn’t operate in extremely isolated communities where cash transfers would be most likely to raise prices of food or other essentials.

This just scratches the surface of a huge and inconclusive literature. But even if you decide that handing out cash to the poor isn’t a panacea, you may conclude that it deserves a place in the anti-poverty toolbox. I’m guessing Josephy Amosi Kamanga would agree.

The Readers Write

I just read your [*newsletter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/01/opinion/worker-overtime-protection-pay.html) about overtime and the abuse thereof. When I worked in agriculture as a truck driver I never got paid overtime. I was paid by the hour, and I regularly worked 12-13 hours a day. One season I worked 25 days in a row. It seems that ag is exempt from the overtime rules. I also had a job working for a military contractor-type company. One time I worked 45 days in a row, eight hours a day, but I was only paid time and a half on the weekends that I worked. Each Monday was considered the start of a new week, so my pay went back to straight time until Saturday came around again. The little guy doesn’t have much of a chance these days.

Ray Charlton

Corvallis, Ore.

During my 35 years in human resources, I was often stunned by those who sought managerial status and exempt titles rather than overtime paying roles. Status and credentials for a résumé were often more important. During my tenure at a large pharma company in R&amp;D, I had to contend with six levels of title that held the word “director” in it. People wanted to be called manager for managing a “process” or a relationship.

Dan Welch

Old Saybrook, Conn.

I saw this problem during my management career as I heard reports from other organizations about this type of abuse. Changing the dollar amount threshold would be one of the most far-ranging improvements that President Biden could make for all those ***working-class*** Americans that Republicans inaccurately claim to be representing.

Kyle Sonnenberg

Southern Pines, N.C.

Quote of the Day

“The path to one’s own heaven always leads through the voluptuousness of one’s own hell.”

— Friedrich Nietzsche, “The Gay Science,” second edition (1887), translated, with commentary, by Walter Kaufmann (1974)

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by The New York Times; images by CSA Images and photomaru/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 21, 2023

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[***How One State Resisted Political Extremism — Against All Odds; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66B8-14N1-DXY4-X0WH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 7, 2022 Wednesday 21:57 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1033 words

**Byline:** Barbara McQuade

**Highlight:** Michigan may hold lessons for residents of other states looking to withstand the tide of authoritarianism and violence.

**Body**

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — A brutal plot to abduct the governor. An armed protest in the galleries of the State Capitol. A candidate for governor who stormed the halls of Congress — only to see his popularity rise.

In Michigan, you can feel extremism creeping into civic life.

Michigan is far from the only state in the grip of politicians who peddle disinformation and demonize their opponents. But it may also be the one best positioned to beat back the threat of political violence.

Unlike, say, Arizona and Pennsylvania, two purple states where Republicans have also embraced a toxic brew of political violence and denialism, Michigan is home to voters who, to date, have avoided succumbing to the new conservative dogma, thanks in large part to its Democratic politicians, who have remained relentlessly focused on kitchen table issues. In that sense, Michigan may hold lessons for residents of other states looking to withstand the tide of authoritarianism and violence, restoring faith in the American institutions under siege from the right.

Certainly, recent history is concerning. Although a jury last month [*convicted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/23/us/verdict-trial-gretchen-whitmer-kidnap.html) two men who plotted to kidnap Gov. Gretchen Whitmer over her Covid shutdown orders, that verdict came only after a jury in an earlier trial could not reach a unanimous verdict on the charges against them and acquitted two other co-defendants, despite [*chilling evidence*](https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2022/08/22/closing-arguments-whitmer-kidnap-case-barry-croft-adam-fox/7863485001/) that members of a militia group known as the Wolverine Watchmen had been building homemade bombs, photographing the underside of a bridge to determine how best to destroy it to slow a police pursuit and using night-vision goggles to surveil Ms. Whitmer’s vacation home.

In that first trial, the defense argued that the F.B.I.’s informants had egged on the men, and it was persuasive enough to deadlock the jury. But I doubt the jurors would have been so receptive to that line of argument without Donald Trump persistently blasting government employees as “the [*deep state*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/06/us/politics/deep-state-trump.html)” and calling the conduct of the F.B.I. “[*a disgrace*](https://abcnews.go.com/amp/Politics/trump-ramps-war-words-fbi-doj-word-mccain/story?id=57517747).”

For the upcoming November elections, the G.O.P. nominees for attorney general and secretary of state are [*election deniers*](https://www.npr.org/2022/04/23/1094474805/michigan-gop-karamo-secretary-of-state), and the candidate for governor has also cast doubt on the results of the 2020 vote for president. And not only are Republican candidates consumed with signaling an allegiance to Mr. Trump, but we are also seeing an alarming rise in political extremism in Michigan.

In spring 2020, [*armed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/01/us/michigan-protests-capitol-virus-armed.html) protesters demonstrated against Covid shutdown orders by occupying the galleries over the Senate chamber in the State Capitol while brandishing assault rifles. After the 2020 election, Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson faced a [*deluge of threats and harassment*](https://www.npr.org/2022/04/23/1094474805/michigan-gop-karamo-secretary-of-state) from election deniers, including an [*armed protest*](https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2020/12/06/protesters-jocelyn-bensons-home-after-dark-oppose-certification/3850654001/) at her home, where a mob chanted “stop the steal” while she was inside with her 4-year-old son. [*Ryan Kelley*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/09/us/politics/ryan-kelley-michigan-governor-arrest-jan-6.html), who sought the Republican nomination for governor, was charged with four misdemeanor offenses for his alleged role in the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol. After his involvement in the attack became well known, his [*polling numbers*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2022-election/ryan-kelley-was-arrested-role-jan-6-now-front-runner-michigans-gop-pri-rcna34817) actually went up.

Still, there is reason for some cautious optimism. In the Republican primary, voters rejected Mr. Kelley. An [*independent citizens redistricting commission*](https://www.michigan.gov/micrc) has been created by a voter initiative to end the gerrymandering that [*has led to*](https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-government/maps-show-how-gerrymandering-benefitted-michigan-republicans) a Republican-controlled State Legislature. Recent polling shows Ms. Whitmer, Ms. Benson and Attorney General Dana Nessel, who are all Democrats, with [*comfortable*](https://www.freep.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/08/26/poll-whitmer-leading-dixon-by-double-digits-for-michigan-governor/65419492007/) [*leads*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2022/07/13/nessel-benson-lead-gop-foes-but-many-voters-still-undecided-poll-says/10034201002/) as the general election approaches, and their resilience in the face of threats has only strengthened their political stock. And the convictions in the Whitmer kidnapping case show that 12 random people can still be found who will set aside their biases and decide a case based on the law and the facts they hear in court. My hunch is that there are more fair-minded people out there who will go to the polls in November.

Pragmatic problem-solving still seems to appeal to Michigan voters. Many families’ fortunes are tied inextricably to the auto industry, the health of which can swing sharply with every economic trend. Ms. Whitmer has championed [*economic development legislation*](https://www.michiganbusiness.org/press-releases/2022/06/whitmer-ford-invest-$2-billion-create-more-than-3200-manufacturing-jobs-secure-critical-ev-production-michigan/) that has helped create 25,000 auto jobs during her administration. She recently made a pitch to [*leverage federal legislation*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-08-01/michigan-s-whitmer-woos-chip-plants-after-us-passes-incentives?leadSource=uverify%20wall) to lure companies to manufacture semiconductors in Michigan.

In a state sometimes referred to as the birthplace of the middle class, labor unions carry more influence with ***working-class*** voters than the MAGA movement. From the rebirth of Detroit to the expansion of tourism Up North, Michigan is also a place that has long welcomed newcomers. Whether they be laborers on the assembly lines of Henry Ford or engineers for autonomous vehicles, workers from all over the world have always been needed and accepted as part of the work force, making it more difficult to demonize outsiders as “other.” As a result, voters tend to be less susceptible to the politics of fear that are driving the culture wars. Indeed, Ms. Whitmer was elected with a slogan to “Fix the Damn Roads.”

Maybe it is a Midwestern sensibility, but Michiganders seem more interested in candidates who will help advance their financial bottom lines than those who traffic in conspiracy theories. And, four years later, Ms. Whitmer has fixed a lot of the damn roads.

By focusing on economic outcomes of working families, Democrats in Michigan have managed to clinch not only the top state offices, but also the state’s two U.S. Senate seats.

And while every state is different, politicians in other states could learn from Michigan to ignore the bait Republicans use to demonize them and focus on the bottom line issues that matter to voters.

Barbara McQuade ([*@BarbMcQuade*](https://twitter.com/BarbMcQuade)) is a professor of law at the University of Michigan. She served as the U.S. attorney for Michigan’s Eastern District from 2010 to 2017.

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY SETH HERALD/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** September 8, 2022

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[***Their Crypto Company Collapsed. They Went to Bali.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68DY-0591-DXY4-X2X1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 9, 2023 Friday 12:42 EST

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**Section:** TECHNOLOGY

**Length:** 3033 words

**Byline:** David Yaffe-Bellany

**Highlight:** The implosion of Three Arrows Capital, a cryptocurrency hedge fund, devastated the industry. Its two founders spent the next year surfing, meditating and traveling the world.

**Body**

The implosion of Three Arrows Capital, a cryptocurrency hedge fund, devastated the industry. Its two founders spent the next year surfing, meditating and traveling the world.

Not long after his cryptocurrency hedge fund collapsed last year, spawning [*a market meltdown*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/12/technology/cryptocurrencies-crash-bitcoin.html) that devastated the industry, Kyle Davies got on a plane and left his troubles behind.

He flew to Bali. As his company was liquidated and law enforcement authorities opened investigations on two continents, Mr. Davies spent his days painting in cafes and reading Hemingway on the beach.

He also went sightseeing. He traveled in Thailand, where the fried oysters cost only a few dollars, and [*admired the local architecture*](https://twitter.com/KyleLDavies/status/1652941701684551680) in Malaysia. He posted a photo from a private zoo in Dubai, [*showing him stroking*](https://twitter.com/KyleLDavies/status/1644649595358593026) a tiger chained to a pole. In Bahrain, he attended a Formula 1 event in the run-up to the Grand Prix.

One clear evening, on a rooftop in Bali, Mr. Davies took shrooms with a group of crypto colleagues. “You look at the stars, and the stars are just, like, moving,” he recalled over dinner last month at a seafood restaurant in Barcelona, Spain, where he was vacationing with his wife and two young daughters. “You touch the grass, and it feels, like, not like normal grass.”

Life as a crypto industry pariah, it turned out, wasn’t so bad.

A year ago, Three Arrows Capital, the hedge fund founded by Mr. Davies and Su Zhu, both now 36, [*imploded almost overnight*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/three-arrows-capital-kyle-davies-su-zhu-crash.html). Worshiped by their hundreds of thousands of Twitter followers, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu had been crypto superstars, known for their trading acumen and bold predictions about the market. They were fixtures on the crypto podcast circuit whose influence allowed them to borrow hundreds of millions of dollars from leading firms and make big bets on the future of the industry.

When their hedge fund failed, a large swath of the industry was dragged down with it. [*The ensuing crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/05/technology/crypto-future-ftx.html) drained the savings of millions of amateur investors and plunged [*other*](https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/voyager-digital-commences-financial-restructuring-process-to-maximize-value-for-all-stakeholders-301581177.html) companies into bankruptcy.

But by their own account, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu have been thriving. They left Singapore, where Three Arrows was based, and traveled around Asia, effectively taking the summer off. Mr. Davies started meditating. Mr. Zhu played [*video games*](https://twitter.com/zhusu/status/1602108789687484416) and found a surf instructor. His old crypto associates were bad-mouthing him in the press, but he made new friends, a mix of surfer types and UFC fighters.

“They had a lot of empathy and sympathy for me,” Mr. Zhu said from his luxury home in Singapore. “They get defeated in a big fight, lose sponsorships or whatever, and everyone’s crying. But then the fighter himself — his mind has already passed to the next fight.”

After the crypto industry crashed last year, erasing more than $1 trillion from the market, some of the business’s leading figures were held to account. Changpeng Zhao, the chief executive of Binance, the world’s largest crypto exchange, is under criminal investigation and [*facing a lawsuit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/05/business/sec-binance-charges.html) from the Securities and Exchange Commission. [*Sam Bankman-Fried*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/ftx-sbf-crypto), the founder of the FTX exchange, is under house arrest at his childhood home in Palo Alto, Calif., awaiting trial on fraud charges. [*Do Kwon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/18/technology/terra-luna-cryptocurrency-do-kwon.html), the South Korean entrepreneur who created the failed Luna cryptocurrency, was [*apprehended*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/24/business/crypto-do-kwon-terraform-labs.html) in Montenegro this spring after dodging the authorities for months.

Yet many other top executives who gained wealth and status by marketing crypto to the masses have avoided serious repercussions. They had [*cashed out early*](https://www.theinformation.com/articles/moonpay-ceo-other-executives-cashed-out-before-crypto-business-dropped?utm_campaign=Automated+Fallback+R&amp;utm_content=89&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_source=cio&amp;utm_term=19), [*invested in real estate*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/crypto-ceo-brian-armstrong-buys-los-angeles-home-for-133-million-11641249787) or [*holed up in tax havens*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-01-19/tax-breaks-for-crypto-millionaires-stir-outrage-in-puerto-rico?sref=zVYYYI5e).

The Three Arrows founders are two of the most prominent examples. They are still living comfortably, after managing a fund that oversaw more than $4 billion at its peak. Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu declined to provide an estimate of their total wealth, but said they had saved enough over the years that they didn’t need to work again.

Neither was willing to apologize for the collapse. Three Arrows owes its creditors $3.3 billion; the firm was registered in the British Virgin Islands, and its court-appointed liquidators there claim that Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu have refused to cooperate in the recovery process. In October, Bloomberg [*reported*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-10-17/us-investigating-bankrupt-crypto-hedge-fund-three-arrows-capital?sref=zVYYYI5e) that federal regulators in the United States were investigating whether Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu had misrepresented their finances to Three Arrows investors.

Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu maintain that they did nothing wrong. They said they had faced death threats, but pointed out that no government agency had sued them or sought their arrests.

A friend recently asked Mr. Davies whether he felt any remorse. “Remorse for what?” he said he had replied.

For the past few months, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu have been planning a comeback. In April, they [*unveiled*](https://www.coindesk.com/markets/2023/04/04/opnx-exchange-which-offers-ftx-claims-trading-led-by-three-arrows-founders-is-now-live/) Open Exchange, a marketplace for traders who lost money in last year’s crypto implosions. Customers will be able to buy and sell claims to the bankruptcy estates of defunct crypto firms like FTX and possibly Three Arrows itself.

In pitch documents sent to investors in January, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu code-named their new company “GTX,” an alphabetical successor to Mr. Bankman-Fried’s failed exchange.

“I just thought it was very funny,” Mr. Zhu said.

A crypto ‘supercycle’

Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu have lived parallel lives. They grew up in the Northeastern United States and went to high school together at Phillips Academy in Andover, Mass. They became business partners in the mid-2000s, while undergraduates at Columbia University. The summer after their freshman year, they traveled to Buenos Aires and set up shop in a cafe, offering to teach local workers how to play online poker and then stake them some money in return for a cut of their winnings.

But their plan to create an army of South American cardsharps had a fatal flaw: Neither of them spoke Spanish. They had wrongly assumed that ***working-class*** Argentines would understand English.

After graduating from Columbia, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu worked overlapping stints at Credit Suisse before founding Three Arrows in 2012 when they were in their mid-20s. They started out trading financial products tied to foreign currencies but switched to crypto around 2019, as the market was emerging from a major slump.

By 2021, as [*crypto prices surged*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/technology/bitcoin-record-price.html) to record levels, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu were managing billions of dollars, investing in crypto start-ups and borrowing hundreds of millions to fuel even bigger bets. Mr. Zhu amassed 500,000 followers on Twitter, promoting his theory of a crypto “supercycle” destined to send the price of Bitcoin north of $1 million.

Mr. Davies said he viewed the whole enterprise as little different from an online game. “If you’re very good at the game, you make a lot of money,” he said.

For a while, the bets paid off. According to [*media reports*](https://www.coindesk.com/business/2022/07/01/three-arrows-capitals-su-zhu-looks-to-sell-35m-singapore-house/), Mr. Zhu spent $35 million on a good-class bungalow, a type of mansion popular among Singapore’s financial elite, and settled in a quiet, tree-lined neighborhood of the island.

Mr. Davies pursued an even more extravagant prize. “I just told Su: ‘I’m going to get a boat. I need it,’” he recalled. “Su was like, ‘Well, I need it, too.’ And I was like, ‘Well, we need it together then.’”

They picked out a [*superyacht*](https://www.superyachts.com/news/story/simpson-marine-sells-largest-sanlorenzo-into-asia-15855/), designed by the Italian shipbuilder Sanlorenzo, with five decks, two retractable terraces and a swimming pool. They christened the boat Much Wow, a reference to a meme popularized by investors in the joke cryptocurrency Dogecoin.

The yacht became Mr. Davies’s pet project. Inside, he planned to display a collection of nonfungible tokens, the unique digital collectibles [*known as NFTs*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/03/18/technology/nft-guide.html). One floor was set to house a hydroponic garden — an addition requested by Mr. Zhu’s wife, who is a biologist and an avid gardener.

It was a heady time. “I actually was looking at some islands as well,” Mr. Davies said. But as he put the finishing touches on the boat, the crypto market was veering toward a crisis. In Singapore, Mr. Zhu and Mr. Davies had started socializing with Mr. Kwon, the creator of Luna. In February 2022, they bought $200 million of Luna tokens.

Three months later, Luna lost all its value in a matter of days. The crash sent the price of every major crypto token plummeting. Many of Three Arrows’ other bets started souring fast.

As the market cratered, the founders’ lenders ordered them to pay back hundreds of millions of dollars — money that Three Arrows no longer had.

Behind the scenes, it was chaos. At one point, Three Arrows tried to borrow 5,000 Bitcoin, worth $125 million at the time, from the crypto lending firm Genesis to pay back a separate loan to a different creditor, according to documents filed in court in the British Virgin Islands. (Mr. Zhu said that account of their financial maneuvering was inaccurate.) As the company’s fate became clear, its lenders complained that Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu weren’t responding to messages.

The impact of the firm’s implosion was immediate and sweeping. One of Three Arrows’ largest creditors was Voyager Digital, a crypto bank that had lent it about $700 million. After Three Arrows defaulted on that loan, Voyager became insolvent, and the [*savings of millions of its customers vanished*](https://blog.mollywhite.net/voyager-letters/).

In letters to the judge overseeing Voyager’s bankruptcy, its customers described the impact of those life-changing losses. “Losing this money with no end in sight has been unbearable for my family,” [*wrote*](https://cases.stretto.com/public/x193/11753/PLEADINGS/1175307262280000000021.pdf) one investor who had $30,000 stored on Voyager. “I wake up most nights and just walk up and down the stairs contemplating on my own mistakes.”

On Twitter, furious crypto investors blamed Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu for accelerating the market crash. Singapore’s financial regulator [*reprimanded*](https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/singapore-regulator-rebukes-crypto-fund-three-arrows-capital-2022-06-30/) Three Arrows, saying the firm had provided “misleading” information to the government. In the media, one creditor [*accused*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/three-arrows-capital-kyle-davies-su-zhu-crash.html) the founders of lying about their finances and compared them to Bernie Madoff, the notorious Ponzi schemer.

Mr. Zhu said his lawyers had assured him that Three Arrows’ actions were “whiter than white.” By the time the firm was liquidated last June, he and Mr. Davies were in Bali. Mr. Zhu was learning to surf. Mr. Davies bought a paint set and started experimenting with still lifes.

“You eat very fatty pork dishes, and you drink a lot of alcohol, and you go to the beach and you just meditate,” Mr. Davies said as he recounted his travels. “You have these magical experiences.”

In late June, a court in the British Virgin Islands appointed liquidators at the consulting firm Teneo to take over the fund and recover the more than $3 billion that creditors were owed. For weeks, the founders’ whereabouts were not publicly known. The liquidators complained in court that Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu were withholding crucial records.

During a conference call in July, the founders appeared on Zoom with their cameras turned off, and stayed silent as Three Arrows’ new overseers repeatedly questioned them, according to an account that the liquidators gave in court.

Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu say they’ve cooperated with the legal process. But in December, a lawyer for the liquidators, Adam Goldberg, told a bankruptcy judge that the two men had “failed to engage in delivery of information and assets required by their duties to creditors.”

“The founders’ behavior shows they have something to hide,” Mr. Goldberg said.

Making a comeback

After traveling in Bali and Dubai, Mr. Zhu returned to Singapore, where he has been living with his wife and two young daughters in the good-class bungalow he bought at the height of Three Arrows’ success. Last year, the couple converted their yard into a permaculture farm — an elaborate system of lakes and gardens meant to replicate self-sustaining ecosystems in nature. It’s home to ducks, chickens and numerous types of dragonflies.

One afternoon in May, a shirtless man wandered the rows of vegetation, snapping photos. “One of the foremost experts on insects in Singapore,” Mr. Zhu explained.

Like many crypto evangelists, Mr. Zhu has a propensity for audacious pronouncements. He once [*predicted*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-U7JWz8dR4) that disputes over crypto could cause a civil war in the United States, and he often frames his observations about the market in world-historical terms.

“We’re entering the age of chivalry,” he said over dinner last month. An hour or two later, he added: “We’re in the golden age of slander.”

As Mr. Zhu led a tour of the grounds, he stopped by the chicken enclosure to offer a disquisition on economic history. “I’ve always been quite anticapitalist,” he said. He also insisted he was “actually against yachts personally.”

His wife, Evelyn, gave him a skeptical look. “You did have that dream of traveling around the world,” she said.

The Much Wow never set sail. The shipbuilder canceled its contract with Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu after they missed a final payment, according to court records; the yacht was sold to a new buyer, and Three Arrows’ liquidators are [*seeking $30 million*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-12-02/three-arrows-crypto-hedge-fund-liquidators-seek-30-million-from-superyacht-sale?sref=zVYYYI5e) from that transaction. The liquidators are also raising money through other avenues: Last month, Sotheby’s [*auctioned*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-04-19/nfts-tied-up-in-three-arrows-collapse-to-be-sold-by-sotheby-s?sref=zVYYYI5e) a collection of Three Arrows’ NFTs [*for about*](https://www.reuters.com/technology/nfts-belonging-bankrupt-crypto-firm-fetch-nearly-25-mln-auction-2023-05-20/) $2.5 million.

Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu insist they have handed over records to the firm’s new management. But the liquidators say that they are still missing crucial material, and that the founders’ lack of cooperation has doubled the cost of the recovery process.

“On the date of a recent hearing where they were supposed to appear, one of them seemed to be tweeting from a boat in Dubai,” said Russell Crumpler, a senior managing director at Teneo who has led the liquidation in the British Virgin Islands.

So far, none of the government inquiries into Three Arrows have led to charges. A spokeswoman for the Monetary Authority of Singapore, the agency that reprimanded Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu last year, said it had been “assessing if there were further breaches.” Representatives for the S.E.C. and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission declined to comment.

Mr. Davies said he was ready to move on from Three Arrows by the end of last summer. “I really spent so much time meditating in Bali that I’m really just pretty zenned out,” he said.

Within a few months of seeing their company implode, he and Mr. Zhu were discussing new business ventures, including a co-living scheme in Bali, possibly involving a crypto token.

“The waves — they just keep coming,” Mr. Zhu said, reaching for a surfing metaphor. “You can crash on a big wave. It doesn’t matter. You can injure yourself and just heal, and get the next one.”

Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu started to re-establish a strong public presence in November, around the time [*FTX failed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/11/business/ftx-bankruptcy.html). Suddenly, there was an even bigger villain in town.

Mr. Davies went on [*CNBC*](https://www.cnbc.com/video/2022/11/16/three-arrows-capitals-kyle-davies-blasts-ftx-over-the-collapse-of-the-crypto-hedge-fund.html), where he argued, without citing much evidence, that Mr. Bankman-Fried of FTX had manipulated the crypto markets in an intentional effort to hurt Three Arrows. (Mr. Bankman-Fried denied the claim.) A presenter asked Mr. Davies if he had moved to Bali because Indonesia has no extradition treaty with the United States.

“No,” he replied. “It’s just a good place to be.”

Late last year, Mr. Davies and Mr. Zhu started their new company, Open Exchange, with Mark Lamb and Sudhu Arumugam, founders of CoinFLEX, a crypto firm that [*went under*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/crypto-exchange-coinflex-files-for-restructuring-in-seychelles-11660151657) last year.

The business has had a rough start. Some companies listed as investors on Open Exchange’s Twitter account have [*denied*](https://www.wsj.com/livecoverage/stock-market-news-today-04-21-2023/card/big-investors-disavow-ties-with-venture-linked-to-three-arrows-capital-EeuMFWaUwlFHSarwWJU4?mod=article_inline) any involvement. A financial regulator in Dubai [*said*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-05-02/dubai-reprimands-three-arrows-founders-over-new-crypto-project?srnd=cryptocurrencies-v2&amp;sref=zVYYYI5e) Open Exchange was operating without a license.

Mr. Zhu said he was tuning out the criticism. On Twitter, he responded to a [*negative article*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-crypto-hedge-fund-imploded-the-comeback-isnt-going-so-well-40341175) in The Wall Street Journal by [*quoting*](https://twitter.com/zhusu/status/1659507977941024768) John F. Kennedy: “We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things not because they are easy, but because they are hard.”

“I’ve already created 75 jobs,” he said over dinner in Singapore. “At least these people like me.”

This month, Open Exchange unveiled its own cryptocurrency, called OX, like the animal. The price shot up over a couple of days. “I’m getting early 3AC vibes all over again,” Mr. Davies wrote on Twitter on Tuesday. “Nothing compares to the energy of a startup.”

Privately, Mr. Davies has been encouraging Three Arrows’ creditors to trade their bankruptcy claims on Open Exchange. In January, he [*invited creditors*](https://twitter.com/KyleLDavies/status/1613179993055719425?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1613179993055719425%7Ctwgr%5Ec5b8be4ce01a377a55ee8225833f35151d8a71ff%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&amp;ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fcointelegraph.com%2Fnews%2Fthree-arrows-capital-creditors-express-frustration-with-bankruptcy-process-during-call) to an “ad hoc 3AC creditor meeting.” But on the call, Mr. Davies spoke the entire time, according to two people familiar with the matter; he ended the session just as someone was trying to ask a question.

In Barcelona last month, Mr. Davies seemed relaxed, and spoke glowingly of the “amazing cafes” on Las Ramblas, a busy thoroughfare that cuts across the heart of the city. One Saturday night, he ate a late dinner at Els Pescadors, a seafood restaurant near the beach, ordering oysters, croquettes, local wine and three rounds of whiskey.

By the end of the meal, Mr. Davies was rattling off business ideas. In Dubai, he said, he has made inquiries about opening a chicken restaurant, possibly in the form of a cloud kitchen, with no storefront. For a while, he and Mr. Zhu considered making a film about Do Kwon and the collapse of Luna. “Our idea was basically that we would do an empathy piece,” he said. “We had a whole team that was going to produce it at Sundance or whatever.”

Mr. Davies has also thought about getting into the artificial intelligence industry. “I would like to believe that I can create two more businesses,” he said. “But I’m also OK with the idea that I’m fully retired at this point.”

He left the restaurant at midnight, strolling down a busy street lined with outdoor bars, where murmurs of late-night conversation echoed in the distance. He was beaming.

“If anyone has any problems,” Mr. Davies declared, “just go to Bali.” Then he turned, swaying slightly, and walked into the night.

PHOTOS: Top, after traveling in Bali and Dubai, Su Zhu returned to Singapore, where he lives in a home he bought at the height of Three Arrows’ success. Above, Kyle Davies had “these magical experiences” involving “fatty pork dishes” and “a lot of alcohol” after the fund collapsed. Above right, Sam Bankman-Fried (right), the founder of the FTX exchange, is awaiting trial on fraud charges. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ORE HUIYING FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ANNA HUIX FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DESIREE RIOS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BU6-BU7) This article appeared in print on page BU6, BU7.

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[***The Art of Telling Forbidden Stories in China***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68VM-CSK1-DXY4-X0W0-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 4906 words

**Byline:** Han Zhang

**Highlight:** Many writers are looking for ways to capture the everyday realities that the government keeps hidden — sometimes at their own peril.

**Body**

On an August evening in 2021, the best-selling Chinese novelist Hao Qun, who writes under the name Murong Xuecun, was procrastinating in his one-bedroom apartment. He needed to be at Beijing Capital International Airport around 6 the next morning to catch a flight to London, but he found it hard to pack. Though Hao had a valid tourist visa to Britain, the [*Chinese government had kept tabs on him*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/09/world/asia/chinese-author-is-detained-by-beijing-police.html) for years, and it was possible that he would be prevented from leaving; other public intellectuals had tried to travel abroad only to discover that [*they were*](https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/07/23/chinas-dissidents-cant-leave/) [*under exit bans.*](https://www.reuters.com/world/china/chinas-exit-bans-multiply-political-control-tightens-under-xi-2023-05-02/) Hao might have been packing for a life of exile or a futile trip to the airport.

His forthcoming book, “Deadly Quiet City,” would be published soon, and Hao’s editors were worried for his safety. A collection of nonfiction, it was about the terrifying, Kafkaesque early days of the Covid-19 outbreak in Wuhan, where residents had been subjected to an unrelenting [*information-suppression campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/19/technology/china-coronavirus-censorship.html). The Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market was considered the pandemic’s origin point, but the state had strangled reporting on daily life there. When Hao arrived at the shuttered market in April 2020, he was met by tired guards, who, to discourage him from taking photos, presented coercion as patriotic duty. “You know, the Americans are exhausting their ways to frame our country,” one of them said. “It’d be no good if your photos were used by foreign media. Please cooperate.”

Hao was not deterred. Square-faced and of average height, he has the look of a Chinese everyman. You can picture him striking up conversations with ease, and over the course of his reporting trip he talked to people from all walks of life — office employees, store owners, taxi drivers and migrant workers. Some introductions were made by reporters, who were forbidden to cover many aspects of the pandemic. These meetings were often hourslong affairs. “At the time, people had a strong desire to talk,” Hao recalls. One interview with a citizen journalist named Zhang Zhan lasted from noon until after dusk. All the while, he tried to shake off the eerie suspicion that he was being watched. It was a paranoid hunch, but it wasn’t an irrational one. After all, the guobao, or [*Chinese secret police, had shadowed him*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/18/opinion/murong-xuecun-inside-a-beijing-interrogation-room.html) for the better part of a decade. In Wuhan, he conducted conversations at odd locations: on a street lined with office buildings abandoned during the pandemic, or by the windy bank of the Yangtze River.

In his hotel room, he sometimes made phone calls under a blanket to ensure privacy. One night, the sound of two men speaking in hushed voices outside his door left him thinking of citizen journalists who had disappeared after posting reports from the city. A distant memory flashed: Five or six years ago in Beijing, Hao was invited to a celebration at the Swedish Embassy. A couple of guobao officers showed up at his home a day before the event. “You won’t be able to go,” one of them informed Hao, hinting that they would physically stop him if he tried. Feeling rebellious, Hao insisted that he would go, but the guobao taunted him. “Look at yourself,” one of them said. “How many blows would you be able to withstand?” The men in the hallway eventually left, but Hao was covered in cold sweat. Days after he departed from Wuhan, he got word that [*Zhang had been arrested.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/28/world/asia/china-Zhang-Zhan-covid-convicted.html)

“Deadly Quiet City,” which was published in the United States in March by the New Press, captures how such state-enforced silence, combined with [*inadequate access to medical care,*](https://www.nytimes.com/video/world/asia/100000006936419/coronavirus-china-wuhan.html) intensified ordinary people’s despair during the crisis. Reading these stories, you not only feel for Hao’s subjects but also fear for the political trouble Hao’s unflinching clarity invites. After Hao submitted the manuscript to Hardie Grant Books, his Australian publisher, in spring 2021, his editors urged him to leave China out of concern for his safety. He equivocated. A few years in prison was a price he was willing to pay for the book’s publication.

His editors continued to press him, and by midsummer he had decided to flee. He boarded the flight to London successfully and, after a spell, moved on to Melbourne. When he spoke to me in late January, he seemed to be in a bit of disbelief at where his life ended up. Exile in Australia was worlds away from the circumstances in which he first rose to prominence. As China strove for a larger role on the international stage at the turn of the century, the arrival of the internet and a relatively relaxed political environment sparked an unprecedented boom in self-expression. Afforded new license, many writers of Hao’s generation tested the boundaries of Chinese literary culture, writing stories that portrayed the lives of the rapidly growing middle class and the opulent nouveau riche while revealing the ethical toll an increasingly materialistic worldview took on their nation. These writers experimented with subjects that were quotidian but taboo on the page — corruption, sexual desire and evolving gender roles — often wielding confession to upend convention.

There is a Chinese idiom: “Spilled water will not flow backward.” This period opened a floodgate of creation that forever altered contemporary Chinese literary culture. Where the government once vetted all writing for its conformity to state values, the internet provided a marketplace of ideas where writers could independently attract tremendous audiences. In today’s China, though, the pursuit of free expression requires writers to weather new political pressures and operate under the ever-watchful eye of a complex state surveillance system. This can resemble a high-stakes game of Whac-a-Mole in which writers, editors and online publishers try to outmaneuver the Chinese Communist Party’s apparatus, using any opportunity and resource at their disposal to chronicle life as they see it.

In 1978, as China emerged from Mao Zedong’s Cultural Revolution and decades of isolation, the Chinese leader [*Deng Xiaoping*](https://www.nytimes.com/1997/02/20/world/deng-xiaoping-a-political-wizard-who-put-china-on-the-capitalist-road.html) inaugurated his Opening Up policy. This was both an overture to foreign business and a kind of domestic glasnost. Over the next few decades, “openness” became a political buzzword. By 2001, that ethos had borne its most symbolic fruits: After campaigning for more than a decade, China became [*a member of the World Trade Organization*](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/12/12/world/china-joins-wto-ranks.html) and was selected to [*host the 2008 Summer Olympic Games.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/07/13/sports/beijing-is-selected-as-2008-host-city.html#:~:text=MOSCOW%2C%20July%2013%20%2D%2D%20Saying,Summer%20Games%20to%20Beijing%20today.)

Jiang Zemin, Deng’s successor, applied the old man’s vision to cultural work, which, as he said at the 2002 national party congress, should be “geared toward modernization, the world and the future.” Soon the government introduced policies, like tax relief for companies that transitioned from state-owned bureaucracies to market-driven enterprises, that equipped creative industries to produce dynamic and competitive work.

This general openness coincided with the popularization of the internet, which was new enough that it largely eluded outmoded print-era censorship. For much of the first decade of the new millennium, the Great Firewall — the infrastructure that bans an ever-growing list of foreign websites — hadn’t yet been erected. Chinese citizens could access Facebook, Wikipedia and Google somewhat freely, and the state had yet to develop a robust mechanism to track sensitive words as a way to curb the spread of inconvenient information. By the end of the decade, scholars and writers debated public affairs on Weibo, a Twitter-like platform. Elsewhere, vibrant communities emerged around niche passions. The poet who writes under the name Xiaoyin remembers the new poetry websites of that era as chaotic and fun spaces. On sites like Poetry Life, his peers quarreled daily over matters like the possibilities of colloquial poetry writing. “Anyone could start their own bulletin boards,” he told me. “It was like bandits occupying hills and claiming to be kings.”

This internet-based community constituted a sea change for Chinese literature. Until the mid-1990s, jobs were assigned by the government. For generations of writers, membership in the state-sponsored writers’ association and staff jobs at party publications or state news agencies were more or less the only path to a career in letters. Some of China’s most prestigious novelists — like Yan Lianke and Mo Yan, known for their realist novels about the village life of their youth — published their debuts while serving in the People’s Liberation Army. But by the 2000s, such formal affiliations were no longer a prerequisite. Anyone with a computer and an internet connection could share his or her work on literary forums, where censorship was nascent and piecemeal. Free from the scrutiny of editors and censors, writers had a more direct relationship with their readers, who relished their refreshingly unabashed accounts of their historical moment.

Explaining the differences between these generations to me over the phone, the celebrated novelist who writes under the name A Yi borrowed concepts from classic martial-arts stories: Traditional writers, he told me, inhabited miaotang, or temples and courts, whereas writers of the internet age inhabited jianghu, or the unkempt natural world. Unburdened from the institutional gaze, they explored subjects and feelings that didn’t align with the state’s values. One essayist, writing under the name Muzimei, earned her reputation by publishing sex journals detailing her one-night stands and flirtatious encounters with rock stars and other public figures. If the era’s cosmopolitanism was thrilling, it was also morally ambiguous. Sometimes, upward mobility could engender a spiritual hollowness.

Without the relative freedom that the open internet provided, Hao might never have started writing. After testing into a university in Beijing and studying law, in 2000 he got a job in H.R. at a cosmetics company and moved to the southern metropolis Shenzhen — the heartland of Deng’s reforms. When Hao became a writer, he was an untethered man: His parents, who had been farmers in his rural home village, had both died by the time he was in college. He was briefly married in the late 1990s, but that relationship ended in divorce in 2000. Browsing one of the literature bulletin boards, he came across a serialized novel titled “My Beijing,” published under the pseudonym Drunken Fish. The story of a group of friends finding their way in the rapidly growing and suddenly wealthy capital inspired Hao to try his hand at a story that reflected his own time in China’s urban environments. “We wrote about the stories happening around us, our own anxieties, expectations and sense of rootlessness,” he told me.

Soon he had begun a novel about a recent university graduate in the southwestern city Chengdu navigating office politics and questioning his marriage. By April 2002, he was posting chapters to several bulletin boards under his new pseudonym: Murong Xuecun, a name reminiscent of a hero in a martial-arts novel. Eventually titled “Leave Me Alone,” the novel captured the hopes and delusions of recent college graduates who, like Hao, grew up in modest circumstances and now found themselves surrounded by temptations of fast cash and meaningless sex. Hao’s depiction of Chengdu’s seedy underbelly became a sensation on forums like Tianya, one of the period’s largest blogging platforms. Once, a colleague recommended the novel to Hao without knowing that he was Murong Xuecun. Within two months, he was approached by booksellers and publishers, and the novel came out that December. He enjoyed the spoils of success, frequently treating friends to fancy dinners and letting them borrow money when they needed it. Beijing is divided into six concentric rings radiating from downtown; generally speaking, the closer to downtown, the more prosperous the neighborhood. By 2010, Hao lived in a penthouse in the third ring.

Hao’s fiction tended to explore imperfect protagonists, abuse of power and the moral corrosion of city life. In his 2008 best-selling novel, “Dancing Through Red Dust,” the narrator, Wei Da, is a well-connected partner at a law firm who moves with confidence through gambling dens and corporate offices alike. Wei comes from a simple family, but in a world where money keeps everything in motion and compassion is weakness, his survival instincts and desire for influence overwhelm his better nature. In one scene, Wei runs over a poor farmer while driving drunk; in the end, the farmer is forced to pay Wei for damaging his car. Hao’s transition from a pulp-fiction writer to a daring documentarian and critic of the government was a natural progression. “From the get-go, he has been completely obsessed with how people are corrupted by the environment in which they live,” says Megan Walsh, author of [*“The Subplot,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/22/books/review/nathan-law-freedom-gulbahar-haitiwaji-rozenn-morgat-megan-walsh-the-subplot-i-survived-a-chinese-reeducation-camp.html) a book about contemporary Chinese literature. In reading his work, she says, you come to believe that people can exist in and perpetuate “horrendous cycles of injustice.”

Authorities mostly viewed Hao and other newcomers with suspicion. At National Writers’ Association conferences, leaders urged “literature workers” to fight against “diversification of thought” — ideas that subverted authoritarian, patriarchal norms. Later, at a propaganda meeting, the deputy party secretary of Chengdu criticized Hao’s fiction for damaging the city’s image. A more “correct” local performance artist, Li Boqing, accused Hao of failing to present the city’s “mainstream features.” To him, Li said in an interview, Chengdu was “a beautiful, kind and tolerant mother, who also has a graceful figure.” Disgusted by the lust and greed portrayed in Hao’s work, Li insisted that writers should focus on the city’s relaxing atmosphere, famed history of brocade production and beautiful Chinese hibiscus.

As Hao went through a political awakening, that distrust turned into persecution. In 2011, Hao learned that his close friend [*Ran Yunfei, a scholar of classical Chinese, was arrested*](https://www.nybooks.com/online/2012/03/02/learning-how-argue-interview-ran-yunfei/) and charged with subversion after he warned that if China didn’t make reforms, it risked an upheaval like the Jasmine Revolution protests in North Africa. On Weibo, where Hao had millions of followers, he denounced the arrest and called Ran “the conscience of the country.” [*Ran was released*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/11/world/asia/11blogger.html) from detention that same year, but Hao’s encounter with state repression radicalized him. “Until that point, I had enjoyed my life as a best-selling author and avoided getting into trouble,” he says. “But when their hands reached those close to me, I had to step up.” Hao’s writing steered to social commentary, and he [*began contributing to The International New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/by/murong-xuecun).

The repercussions were swift. Hao was banned from Weibo, and before long it became clear that he was blacklisted. In 2014, he started to receive invitations to tea — slang for informal police questioning. In the next few years, he had tea about 40 times, as often as once a month. Sometimes, as if they were old friends, officers would ask what Hao had been up to or what he had been thinking about. His writing career essentially came to an end: He never published another book in China, and he made his living by ghostwriting screenplays for movies and TV shows. When, out of habit, he reached for the bill while out at dinner, friends dissuaded him and insisted that he needed to think about his future. By the time he left China, he had rented a studio apartment outside Beijing’s fifth ring. Thirty-six of his friends — writers, scholars, activists and lawyers — had been detained or sentenced to prison. Late at night, as he fell asleep, he wondered when his turn would come. “I didn’t have long-term plans,” he says, “because I felt that I had one foot in prison already.”

Under [*President Xi*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/15/world/asia/chinas-new-leader-xi-jinping-takes-full-power.html) [*Jinping, who took office in 2013,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/15/world/asia/chinas-new-leader-xi-jinping-takes-full-power.html) the Communist Party has sought to assert China’s position as a rising global power. Domestically, Xi’s government has shown less tolerance for the kind of writing that Deng’s reforms fostered and has been keen on creating a centralized discourse that nurtures national pride through an emphasis on [*“telling China’s story well”*](https://chinamediaproject.org/the_ccp_dictionary/telling-chinas-story-well/) — a piece of ubiquitous political boilerplate that Xi introduced into the national consciousness. In the spring of 2013, less than two months after Xi became president, state outlets reported on a party central document that instructed cadres to prioritize “the struggles in the ideological sphere” and to “reinforce our management of propaganda on the cultural front” and “cut off channels of erroneous ideologies and speech at their headwaters.” This course correction was a tacit admission that Deng’s Opening Up policy stoked growing conversation about notions like feminism, queerness and civil rights — and that their discussion needed to be curbed.

To that end, the state has developed a robust surveillance and censorship apparatus. The guobao, local police officers, publishing authorities and digital surveillance tools are all mobilized into a multifaceted operation whose purpose is to control “China’s story.” That machinery has transformed the internet from a place of experimentation into Exhibit A of the state’s power. This often takes the form of a 404 error page — a notice that the state has deemed an article or a piece of social media content unfit for public consumption. No one is immune: In 2021, former [*Prime Minister Wen Jiabao published an essay remembering his mother,*](https://www.ft.com/content/1d848ffe-94db-4f2c-b94e-8e9dbeb4cc33) writing that China “should be a country full of justice and fairness.” On the popular social media app WeChat, users couldn’t share Wen’s essay on their timelines or private chats.

Xi’s approach has strangled free expression. [*According to Freedom House,*](https://freedomhouse.org/country/china/freedom-net/2022) which surveys internet freedom around the world by tracking control measures, the freedom of the Chinese internet has dropped by 40 percent since 2011, and for the last eight years, China has earned the ignominious distinction of being the “most repressive” among the countries that the organization monitors. In publishing, each new title requires individual approval, which can result in an exhausting process: Once a publisher decides to pursue a book proposal, it will be reviewed by in-house editors before they submit a request to the National Administration of Press and Publication, which decides whether the idea will materialize. In the last decade, the publication of new titles categorized as “literary” has decreased by 15 percent. Seven out of 10 literary titles published in 2013 were new works. By 2021, reprints made up half of publications.

In this environment of intense censorship and fractured cultural infrastructure, writers must be flexible, willing to forgo old forms and move fluidly among genres if they want to continue making meaningful work. Journalists become serial entrepreneurs who dream up new ways of creating to fill the lacunae they see. When one project becomes infeasible, they move on to another.

Zhang Wenmin, a veteran journalist who writes under the name Jiang Xue, became known for her coverage of a 2002 civil rights case in which four policemen showed up at a newlywed couple’s home because they were watching porn. Among many colleagues, there had been the consensus that no matter what, they had to try to say a little more, Zhang recalls. Sensing increasing pressure, she quit institutional journalism in 2015 to become a self-publishing blogger. With long, straight hair, Zhang dresses simply. In contrast to the steely insistence on common sense in her writing, there is a vulnerable shyness in her physical presence. “I’ve never been cool,” she joked softly, her arms draped in front of her body. On WeChat, she wrote stories about dissidents, something no news outlet would allow, she said, because it’s like violating a tiantiao — a statute sent from heaven. She was uninvited from journalism events. She lost her Weibo and WeChat accounts, becoming virtually invisible. “Friends and family think I went too far,” Zhang said. When her city, [*Xi’an, went into lockdown,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/30/world/asia/china-xian-lockdown-covid.html) a friend offered her own WeChat account to publish Zhang’s journals. They went viral but also drew attacks. “The worsening media environment in the last 10 years makes people see things upside down,” she said. “When you do the most normal thing, it appears abnormal.”

Elsewhere, an even more bottom-up kind of writing community appeared. Its participants are assisted by affordable technology — three-quarters of the Chinese population are smartphone owners — allowing a wider swath of people to publish more varieties of writing. While Hao’s generation of writers was predominantly middle class and upwardly mobile, the spread of internet-enabled technology has allowed ***working-class*** people without degrees to pursue literature. On social media platforms like Kuaishou, where users post short video clips, factory workers, masseuses and truck drivers started to compose poems. In 2017, a 44-year-old single mother, [*Fan Yusu,*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/may/03/i-am-fan-yusu-china-gripped-by-dickensian-tale-of-a-migrant-workers-struggle) became a literary star almost overnight after her autobiographical essay, “I Am Fan Yusu,” went viral on WeChat. Beginning with a striking line — “My life is a hard-to-read book: Destiny bound me poorly” — it narrates her rural youth and eventual employment by an uber-rich Beijing businessman who hires her to take care of the child he shares with a mistress. Six days a week, she leaves her own daughters behind and attends to the love child. She started writing in her free time because, she thought, “to live, you have to do something besides eating.”

The journalist and editor Yang Ying has been a champion for overlooked stories and the platforms that host them. She has managed to build a successful career despite cycles of setback and rebirth: A former reporter for a business weekly, she left that magazine in 2014 after growing dissatisfied with conventional media. Along with a couple of other editors, she started a popular digital outlet whose name translates to Curiosity Daily that covered subjects like the Shanghai Pride Parade, a Texan who moved into a dumpster for a year to explore sustainable living and the work of the Japanese auteur Hirokazu Kore-eda, who once commented that creators should keep influence of the state at bay. After the authorities suspended the outlet twice for “illegally building a news gathering and editing team,” the outfit dissolved in 2019. Yang persisted, following that project with a digital magazine called Xiaoniao, or Little Birds, in which she published literary writing on subjects that could no longer be explored in journalism. “Literature is our last refuge,” Yang told me.

“In stories, people can communicate with one another,” Zhang Jieping, a journalist turned media entrepreneur and founder of the fellowship Zaichang, or “On the Scene,” told me. “Their joys and sadness become relatable. With today’s news outlets, it’s increasingly hard to achieve that.” As journalism institutions collapsed, Zhang built Zaichang to create a community and a ladder for aspiring journalists to learn to tell such stories. Editors like Yang and Zhang want to correct that dearth of connection by normalizing what Yang called “everyday messiness” — topics that the state considers counterproductive, like disappearing traditional villages and the rising diagnosis of anxiety in the aftermath of disasters. In Xi’s China, though, publishing this work means courting unwanted attention. During Shanghai’s Covid lockdown, Xiaoniao published a special edition that collected haunting real stories, including one about a young woman who evaded the rules to cross the city to see her critically ill father. Soon, Yang was treated to tea by her local police. Apparently swamped with tea appointments, they asked her to remove the entire issue from the publication’s mobile app. She complied.

Without public distribution channels, the special issue of Xiaoniao lives as a PDF passed around among friends. “I have no idea how far it has reached,” Yang said. “There is something samizdat-like to it,” she said, referring to the underground literature of 20th-century Eastern Europe, which circulated hand to hand. In today’s China, people create knowing that publishing is transient in nature — online articles can be taken down; books can be removed from the shelves; writers can be blacklisted; bloggers can be “disappeared.” (One of the websites Xiaoyin frequented, Poetry Life, announced its shutdown on July 13. “Poetry Life was born on the internet where it will dissipate,” the announcement read. “It has been a mirage as well as our real land.”)

Yet many people go on writing in whatever capacity they can manage. “If the goal was to escape censorship, then we wouldn’t be in this business,” Yang said. They focus, instead, on creating a new possibility of public writing: a vibrant, breathing thing. “Here, people are quick to forget,” she said. “Sometimes they are forced to forget. Other times, new events overwrite the old before you know it. It’s like we live in an environment where people can’t keep going if they don’t learn to forget.” She paused to search for the precise words. “Literature is a good way to help people remember things.”

Earlier this year, Zhang Wenmin and Hao were introduced by mutual friends and met while they were each traveling. Pondering her future, Zhang was both curious about and daunted by the examples of Hao and other expatriate writers. At a dinner with other Chinese writers, she spoke almost to herself. “How does a writer come to accept their status of exile?”

In Melbourne, Hao is curious about his new surroundings. Every experience presents opportunities for discoveries: After contracting Covid and speaking with a public-health official on the phone, he was prescribed free medication. “Isn’t this socialism?” he wondered. He went to observe a local election and chatted with people outside. “It’s eye-opening,” he says. “There is a party representing sex workers. There is also a party for animal rights.”

Hao is eager to master his new language but is baffled by the choice of other exiled writers, like the late Milan Kundera, to abandon their mother tongues in their work. The act of writing — of making sense of one’s experiences — is so bound up in the language a person speaks, along with all the little intricacies and inexplicable imagery within it. To abandon it is almost like abandoning yourself. He told me the story behind his favorite Chinese phrase: huangliang yimeng, or “a fleeting dream as the golden millet cooks.” It refers to a story in which a young man falls asleep at an inn as the innkeeper steams a pot of millet. In his dream, the man marries a beautiful woman from a wealthy family, rises to power in court politics and narrowly escapes death after jealous rivals set him up. After a lifetime, he wakes up. The millet isn’t done yet. Which is the reality: eventless destitution or surreal splendor punctuated by viciousness?

Hao has readily joined a growing community of Chinese activists and writers in exile. “As the environment grows dire,” he wrote to Zhang on Signal, the encrypted messaging service, “we are a generation that’s destined to be uprooted and scattered, to drift through the world.” Privately, though, Hao is still processing the past. Since self-exiling, Hao has experienced a measure of survivor’s guilt. His tally of arrested friends has risen to 41. Last fall, when thousands of citizens [*protested the arbitrary Covid policies,*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/china-covid-protests.html) Hao had an intense feeling of missing out. One day, perhaps, he thought, he would decide to return home as abruptly as he left. In his early essays, Hao depicted himself to be a somewhat feeble man. When he encountered physical conflict in the streets, he tended to avert his eyes and avoid getting involved. It’s different, however, when the conflict is intellectual. He finds himself oscillating between wary caution and reckless bravery. He cannot stomach the government’s authoritarian grip on China’s literary culture and public life. “Who gives you the right to rule this way?” he wondered aloud.

Last year, Hao began writing fiction again at the age of 48. He is in the middle of a new novel he is calling “Homeless Dog.” The working title is inspired by a friend’s experience during a tea session when a guobao officer scolded him: “Don’t fancy yourself to be some kind of big figure. To me, you are merely a homeless dog.” Seen in this light, the title poses a question: Who gets to define writers like Hao? “I had to make many difficult choices, but I’m proud of the life I lived,” Hao says. In May, he was touring for his Wuhan book in Norway. In drizzling rain, on a train passing through unfamiliar cities, he dozed. A dream came: He was 18 again and about to take the college entrance exam. He was feeling unprepared. He woke up feeling jittery, then remembered that the old days are long gone. He is far from home.

Han Zhang is a journalist on The New Yorker’s editorial staff. She has written about the political and literary narratives that have shaped Chinese culture and identities. She is also the editor at large for Riverhead Books, where she is working to introduce contemporary Chinese-language literary works to English readers.

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY TOMMY KHA) (MM38); Hao Qun (right) with the citizen journalist Zhang Zhan in a Wuhan hotel room. Opening pages: Hao and an unnamed writer. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM MELANIE WANG) (MM41); Hao in June. ‘‘I had to make many difficult choices, but I’m proud of the life I lived,’’ he says. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TOMMY KHA) (MM42) This article appeared in print on page MM38, MM39, MM40, MM41, MM42, MM43.

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[***Biden '24 Plans Familiar Pitch: Opt for Stability***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67KM-YPS1-JBG3-63KK-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Peter Baker, Reid J. Epstein and Lisa Lerer

**Body**

President Biden's strategy is to frame the race as a contest between a seasoned leader and a conspiracy-minded opposition, while batting away concerns about his age.

WASHINGTON -- Forget the Wilmington basement. This time he will have a Rose Garden. And Air Force One and a big white mansion and all the other advantages of incumbency in a year when he is not forced by a pandemic to stick to streaming from downstairs.

But as President Biden prepares to run for a second term, his team is mapping out a strategy for 2024 that in many other ways resembles that of 2020. Whether he ultimately faces Donald J. Trump again or another Republican trying to be like Mr. Trump, the president plans a campaign message that still boils down to three words: Competent beats crazy.

Whether he can sell that theme again represents a singular challenge given surveys showing that the public has not exactly rallied behind him and harbors deep doubts about his age. When Mr. Biden kicks off his re-election campaign this spring, as is widely expected, he will be the oldest president in history but one of the lowest-rated in the modern period, presiding over an economy that is improving but unsettled and leading a party publicly behind him but privately angst-ridden. And rather than Mr. Trump, he may yet face a Republican challenger closer to the age of his son.

The goal, according to interviews with White House officials, outside advisers, key allies and party strategists, is to frame the race as a contest, not a referendum on Mr. Biden. On one side, in this narrative, will be a mature, seasoned leader with a raft of legislation on his record aimed at winning back ***working-class*** Democrats. On the other will be an ideologically driven, conspiracy-minded opposition consumed by its own internal power struggles and tethered to a leader facing multiple investigations for trying to overturn a democratic election.

''It's incumbent on the president and his team to make sure the election is a choice,'' said Lis Smith, a senior adviser to Pete Buttigieg during the 2020 Democratic primary campaign. ''It's not going to be Joe Biden versus some mythical Democratic candidate. It's going to be between Joe Biden and whoever the Republican nominee is.''

Whit Ayres, a veteran Republican pollster, said a rematch between Mr. Biden and Mr. Trump would be the best scenario for the president. ''At this point, President Biden just needs to seem like he is still very much with it and able to do the job and at that point his fate is largely out of his hands,'' Mr. Ayres said. ''He's got to pray the Republicans blow themselves up again.''

Mr. Biden previewed his approach in his State of the Union address this month when he baited Republicans into a debate over Social Security and Medicare, then pressed his argument during appearances in Wisconsin and Florida. He used the nationally televised speech before Congress to highlight his legislative successes while focusing on pocketbook issues to reach out to voters upset at him over inflation.

The trips that followed illustrated one important difference from 2020. No longer tied to the basement of his home in Delaware, the way he was by Covid-19 in 2020, Mr. Biden will travel frequently this year to deliver his message, aides said. As projects from the 2021 infrastructure package break ground, the president intends to cut a lot of ribbons around the country to take credit.

Republican strategists are gambling that the physical toll of a full-scale, nonpandemic campaign effort will wear on an 80-year-old president. They plan to portray him as an aging, failed leader and a big-spending captive of the political left who drove up inflation and did little to defend the border against a record wave of illegal immigration.

''Joe Biden's campaign team doesn't have a strategic problem; they have a candidate problem,'' said Chris LaCivita, a Trump campaign consultant. ''Americans have now watched Joe Biden wreck our economy, and he'll have to answer for it. Biden won't be able to hide in his basement like last time.''

While Mr. Biden seems eager for a rematch, it is hardly certain that he can replicate the 2020 outcome. Not only is his approval rating hovering at an anemic 43 percent, but two recent surveys, the Washington Post-ABC News poll and the Harvard CAPS-Harris Poll, found Mr. Trump leading by several points. Moreover, despite Mr. Biden's legislative victories, 62 percent told The Post and ABC that he had accomplished ''not very much'' or ''little or nothing.''

Biden aides scorn such surveys, saying that the polling system is broken, as proved by the midterm elections when Democrats did better than expected.

Although Mr. Biden has yet to formally announce his campaign, the decision is taken as a given within his circle. The next step, advisers said, will come in March when Democrats announce which city will host their nominating convention next year; the finalists are Atlanta, Chicago and New York.

Democrats expect Mr. Biden to make his bid official no earlier than April to put off scrutiny of his fund-raising until the next reporting deadline in July. While Mr. Biden has appeared at fund-raising events for the Democratic National Committee, he has yet to mount a major effort to raise cash for his re-election bid. But aides said the president was driven less by such considerations and as a tested incumbent had the luxury of time. They say that his fund-raising list is bigger than any of his Democratic predecessors and that their campaign apparatus remains intact whenever Mr. Biden is ready.

An April kickoff would be consistent with Mr. Biden's 2020 campaign, which formally got underway in April 2019, and President Barack Obama's re-election bid, which formally began in April 2011. (Mr. Trump, by contrast, filed for re-election on the day of his inauguration.)

No leadership for the campaign has been chosen yet. Biden advisers have spoken with top Democratic campaign strategists, but at least three have indicated they are not interested in running the campaign and declined to have additional conversations about the post for a mix of personal and professional reasons, according to people informed about the discussions.

Among other things, there is a sense from younger campaign strategists that the crucial decisions will be made by Mr. Biden's longtime aides in the White House, meaning that the official manager may not have a lot of control but will still take much of the blame for tactical and strategic mistakes.

Some of Mr. Biden's most trusted political strategists are expected to remain at their posts in the White House and coordinate with the campaign from there, including Anita Dunn, Jennifer O'Malley Dillon, Steven J. Ricchetti and Bruce Reed. Mike Donilon, a senior adviser who has long been at Mr. Biden's side, may switch over to the campaign but no decision has been made, according to Democrats close to the situation. Ron Klain, who just stepped down as White House chief of staff, and Kate Bedingfield, who is leaving as White House communications director, may help with the campaign in some capacity.

No decision has been made about where the campaign's headquarters will be. The president has pushed for Wilmington, his hometown, according to people briefed on internal discussions. But some advisers fear that such a location would make recruitment harder, with younger campaign aides not eager to spend a year in a sleepy, small town. They are pressing instead for Philadelphia, where Mr. Biden's 2020 effort was based.

In seeking a second term, Mr. Biden is pushing history where it has never gone before, asking voters to keep him in power until he is 86. Surveys and focus groups have consistently identified that as a major concern of voters, and even a majority of Democrats tell pollsters they would prefer the party nominate someone else.

In conversations, Democratic voters regularly mention Mr. Biden's octogenarian status without being asked. During a lunch this month at the Riverfront Market food hall in Wilmington, Kate Watson, 69, and Tre Sullivan, 71, had high praise Mr. Biden's presidency -- and deep worries that he could win again.

''People will not vote for somebody in their 80s who by the time he's done being the president he'll be 84,'' Ms. Sullivan said.

Reminded that Mr. Biden would be 86 at the end of a second term, the two women recoiled.

''Oh, God, that's right,'' said Ms. Watson, who is retired from the marketing business.

''It's not going to happen,'' said Ms. Sullivan, who is retired from a career in sales work.

Mr. Biden responds to such concerns by pointing to his record of rebuilding roads and bridges, expanding health care, curbing the cost of prescription drugs for Medicare beneficiaries, investing in climate change projects, forgiving student debt and treating veterans exposed to toxic burn pits. His aides argue that voters will still prefer a president who delivers regardless to the divisive and unpopular policies of Mr. Trump's Republican Party. And Mr. Trump, if he wins the nomination, would be 82 at the end of a second term.

A focus group of swing voters convened after the State of the Union by Sarah Longwell, a Republican pollster and vocal critic of Mr. Trump, found that Mr. Biden still had residual good will among some of those who took a chance on him. The voters who participated, all of whom voted for Mr. Trump in 2016 and switched to Mr. Biden in 2020, used phrases like ''family man'' and ''he cares'' to describe the president. They remained viscerally disaffected from Mr. Trump, calling him ''demonstrably unfit for office'' and ''an embarrassment to our country.''

Still, another challenger would pose more of a generational threat. Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida is 44; Nikki Haley, a former U.N. ambassador, is 51; and former Vice President Mike Pence is 63. ''If the Republicans nominate a younger, vigorous person, male or female, who seems up to the job, I think he's in trouble,'' Mr. Ayres said of Mr. Biden.

For the moment, with no Republican nominee to debate, Mr. Biden plans to play off House Republicans the way he did at the State of the Union, hoping they will turn off voters while he appears to focus on the country's priorities.

Senator Chris Coons, a Democratic ally of the president from Delaware, noted how House Republicans devolved into chaos simply trying to pick a new speaker, a process that deadlocked until the 15th ballot, while Mr. Biden appeared recently with politicians from both parties at an Ohio River bridge set to be upgraded as part of the infrastructure package he signed.

''That was a pretty sharp contrast,'' Mr. Coons said, ''and I think you're going to see that contrast every week this year.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/19/us/politics/biden-2024-campaign.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/19/us/politics/biden-2024-campaign.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO" Although President Biden has yet to formally announce his re-election campaign, the decision is taken as a given among his advisers. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A15) This article appeared in print on page A1, A15.

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[***Sex Work, Academia and Pain That Resists Diagnosis***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66MK-D1F1-JBG3-6063-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1201 words

**Byline:** By Jessica Ferri

**Body**

Chris Belcher's entertaining debut, PRETTY BABY: A Memoir (260 pp., Avid Reader, $27), recounts how a West Virginia adolescent who read Foucault and Derrida went on to become ''L.A.'s renowned lesbian dominatrix.'' Her work is as much about money and financial precarity as it is about sex and sexuality, if not more so. Having moved to California for a Ph.D. program in English, Belcher finds herself in her mid-20s ''at the end of my financial rope,'' collecting food stamps and considering selling her eggs when a new girlfriend, Catherine, suggests she join her in working at a ''B.D.S.M. dungeon'' on Venice Boulevard. ''Needing the money is always more present than anything we might have to bury inside,'' Belcher writes. It is the only thing preventing her from having to return to her small town, with its small-town mentality.

But the drag, too, is essential to her survival. After developing her nascent homosexuality in high school and college, when she presumed that queerness required her to be ''butch,'' she now finds herself reveling in the performance of über-femininity. ''Domination is one of the only professions in which femininity is worth more than masculinity,'' she writes, ''and I was building my femininity to sell.'' When Belcher brings Catherine home to meet her parents, her father expresses a new approval of her appearance: She's slimmed down and grown out her long hair. ''I had fashioned my femininity as an appeal to other women's fathers,'' she reflects, but ''it also appealed to my own. I had made my way back to him, his pretty baby.''

Juggling her careers in sex work and academia, the author lays bare the soul-crushing difference in pay: ''My adjunct professorship at a state college paid me $800 per month,'' for hours upon hours of lecturing, reading and grading. By contrast, a single domination client pays her ''$1,200 for four hours of cathartic suffering,'' and then a few more hours sleeping in a cage.

On one job, Belcher meets a young man at a bar where he's paid her to publicly reject him. They look as if they could be on a Tinder date, she thinks, until she remembers how a friend told her about a real Tinder date she'd been ''afraid'' to leave. ''Feeling like I've just gotten away with something,'' Belcher realizes: ''It's not just the money. It's that I get to say no.''

Speaking up doesn't come so easily to most. Three months after the 2016 presidential election, Elissa Bassist suffered from blurred vision and debilitating headaches, neither the first nor the last symptoms of a mysterious, chronic illness. In HYSTERICAL: A Memoir (244 pp., Hachette, $29), the author recounts the two years she spent going from one doctor's office to another, only to receive one diagnosis again and again: ''Nothing Is Wrong With You.''

When she complains to two gynecologists that her ''vagina is broken,'' one prescribes ''more sex, a 19th-century recommendation based on curing hysteria,'' and the other tells her ''it's psychological.'' A third finally determines she has a ruptured cervix. ''Being socialized is almost like being gaslit into mental illness,'' she writes. It's no surprise that women are more likely than men to be misdiagnosed or not diagnosed at all. As Bassist's mother says, about everything from medicine to the fit of a seatbelt, ''It's a man's world.''

Bassist compares misogyny to an iceberg, whose visible peak represents the more obvious forms of violence like murder and rape. But also damaging is the unseen ''gray area'' of sexual pressure, rape culture and mansplaining. ''Hysterical'' was written before Roe v. Wade was overturned, and reading it now feels a bit like an exercise in self-punishment. We know that hetero-patriarchy is all about power and control. But what to do about it? Bassist's self-deprecating style masks an unwieldy thesis, and both author and reader are left overwhelmed by its lack of focus. In ''King Kong Theory,'' Virginie Despentes describes the constant scrutiny women writers must endure: ''Talking about things that should remain secret, being exposed in the newspapers. ... The public shame is comparable to being a whore.''

After nearly giving up on writing (thinking, ''Silence is for the best''), Bassist realizes this approach is effectively equivalent to suffering under a false or nonexistent diagnosis. Writing, she reads in psychology studies, even ''correlated with improved immune function.''

''It wasn't only that I thought I was going to die when I was sick,'' she writes, ''but that I thought I was going to die with so much unsaid.''

In I'M NOT BROKEN: A Memoir (324 pp., Vintage, paperback, $17), Jesse Leon writes that he kept his own silence about his childhood trauma in 1980s San Diego for decades. Bullied by his white classmates for his Mexican, ***working-class*** heritage, at 11 he's raped and serially assaulted by a shopkeeper who then intimidates him into returning to the shop twice a week for years, so that hundreds of other men can pay to rape him too. When Leon does tell the police and a therapist about the abuse, no one takes action. The shopkeeper vanishes into thin air.

Still in junior high, Leon continues performing sex work because it pays him ''more in a few minutes of work than my mom makes in a week with her ... minimum-wage job as a school cafeteria worker.'' He drinks and does drugs to numb himself to his and his beloved mother's traumas: A victim of abuse herself, Amá is an Indigenous woman working two jobs while battling serious illness. She tries not to let her son slip through the cracks; but her own cracks are more like canyons.

What saves Leon is his education. After high school he enrolls in a college-prep program, and then goes from community college to Berkeley to a master's program in public policy at Harvard. His studies help him see the inherited trauma of his culture. ''I started to question why, as a person of Mexican descent, I always said 'Mande' or 'Mandeme usted' instead of '¿Que?' as most other Spanish-speaking cultures do,'' he writes. ''It made me angry to realize how deeply servitude and subservience have been engrained in my people by colonization.'' In a book limited by its directness, the reader longs for more reflective moments like this one.

Leon begins each of three sections with a story about his father's lineage of Mexican revolutionaries from the gold mines of the Sierra Madre. Leon's healing begins when he is able to choose his own context. Where his ''guarded, private, machista'' father ''rarely talked about his life,'' Leon finds relief in confession. He attends Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings while in school, and begins ''writing every day.'' While studying abroad in Spain -- where his ability to speak Spanish belies the foreignness he feels -- he comes out as gay, feeling a new freedom to explore his sexuality without the pressures of his culture's hypermasculinity. ''I let go of my perceptions of manhood and machismo and went with the flow,'' Leon writes. ''It was ecstasy.''

Jessica Ferri is the author of ''Silent Cities New York'' and ''Silent Cities San Francisco.'' Her work has appeared in The Los Angeles Times, The Economist and NPR.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/06/books/review/pretty-baby-chris-belcher-hysterical-elissa-bassist-im-not-broken-jesse-leon.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/06/books/review/pretty-baby-chris-belcher-hysterical-elissa-bassist-im-not-broken-jesse-leon.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS This article appeared in print on page BR26.

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[***In Chicago, a Battle Over a Religious Statue Is About Much More Than Religion***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:673T-7801-DXY4-X48F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 17, 2022 Saturday 10:05 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1306 words

**Byline:** Julie Bosman and Todd Heisler

**Highlight:** The city’s Pilsen neighborhood used to be home to Polish immigrants. Now it’s mostly Latino. Both groups see much at stake in the fate of a replica of Michelangelo’s Pietà.

**Body**

In Chicago, a Battle Over a Religious Statue Is About Much More Than Religion

We’re exploring how America defines itself one place at a time. Two communities in Chicago have seen their future tied to the fate of a beloved religious statue.

CHICAGO — On a cold Tuesday morning in Chicago, police officers lined an alley on the West Side. Across a chain-link fence, a group of people in parkas paced nervously in a backyard.

Then the officers stepped aside. A three-ton statue wrapped in blue cloths was loaded from the vacant St. Adalbert Church onto the bed of a truck, beginning its slow journey down the alley.

Even shrouded in blankets, the statue had a lifelike quality: It was a replica, still visible in silhouette, of Michelangelo’s Pietà, the marbled figure of Mary cradling the body of Jesus.

“Don’t take her away!” shouted Judy Vazquez, one of the people in the backyard, as the statue passed by.

“Alleluia!” said another protester, Bronislawa Stekala, clutching a rosary of brown wooden beads and raising her fist in anger.

For more than five years, a group of Polish and Latino Catholics from Chicago and its suburbs has been waging a fierce but quixotic fight against the Archdiocese of Chicago.

They first objected to the closure in 2019 of St. Adalbert, a towering brick structure in the Pilsen neighborhood, part of a wave of parish consolidations tied to shrinking attendance and the exorbitant cost of repairing antiquated buildings. Then the group turned its efforts to the statue inside, which was slated to be moved to another Catholic parish, St. Paul, a mile away.

Their mission was about more than the statue. For the Polish members of the group, the church and the statue were monuments to their ancestors and a reminder of their ties to Pilsen, which was once an entry point in Chicago for Polish immigrants. For the Latinos, the fight was to preserve community anchors including churches, as the neighborhood becomes increasingly gentrified and ***working-class*** Mexican families are being forced out by rising rents.

“If they sell the property of St. Adalbert’s, it’s going to change the fabric of Pilsen,” Ms. Vazquez said. “This is unacceptable that they want to sell every piece of church property to developers. The developers will have carte blanche. They’re going to continue to develop Pilsen. They’ll take the culture away from the neighborhood.”

The Archdiocese of Chicago says the changes reflect reality: The number of weekend churchgoers at St. Adalbert had shrunk to about 200, far less than is needed to sustain a church of its size. And the building required millions in repairs because of its crumbling brick facade, a decades-old problem that was explained in detail to parishioners before St. Adalbert merged with a neighboring parish.

Moving the statue to that parish, also in Pilsen, will give the beloved Pietà a home, the archdiocese said, a place where it can be protected and preserved for the community.

“We understand that change is difficult and many have worshiped at St. Adalbert or have family history with the church,” Manuel Gonzales, a spokesman for the archdiocese, said in an email. “We truly hope the small number of former St. Adalbert parishioners, who are among the protesters, will join with their neighbors to help the unification succeed.”

I watched the protesters one morning in November as they gathered for one of their regular prayer sessions in the alley. They drank coffee, shared memories of the church and prayed the rosary with their eyes lowered. Most of the group carried memories of what St. Adalbert was like more than a half-century ago, when it was a thriving parish with a school and a vast convent that was home to dozens of nuns.

Byron Sigcho-Lopez, the alderman who represents Pilsen on the Chicago City Council, stood among the prayer group, recalling all the history of the church and the multicultural effort to save it. In front of St. Adalbert, a faded sign still notes a Mass schedule, with separate services in Polish and Spanish.

“Both communities are trying to save St. Adalbert,” he said. “It’s a sacred and important site for both communities.”

Mr. Sigcho-Lopez had pushed for a zoning change that would give the community more input into the fate of the church building, should it be sold.

“The objective is to find somebody that could repurpose the building,” said Raul Serrato, a member of the finance council at St. Paul. “That’s been the difficulty because obviously nobody, including us, wants the building torn down. It’s a beautiful structure.”

On the day of the statue’s removal, Ms. Vazquez and the other members of her group would not let it leave without a fight.

For weeks, they had waited anxiously, knowing that it could be moved at any time. Then Ms. Vazquez heard on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving that crews had arrived at the church. Members of the group raced over and stood in a backyard, watching for hours as workers took the statue out of the church and loaded it onto a truck.

Stanley Rydzewski, 68, reminisced about baptisms and weddings at St. Adalbert, saying that the building was more than a parish, a repository of vital Polish history.

“Polish people built this church,” he said. He had long since left his home in the old neighborhood for the suburbs, he said, but was bitter about the slow dismantling of a parish he loved.

After workers removed the statue, the truck turned onto the street in front of the church, headed toward St. Paul. Ms. Vazquez and several other protesters positioned themselves in front of the truck, locking arms and refusing to move.

Julio Delgado, who lives across the street, emerged from his house and shook his head at the commotion.

“The church is a lost cause, the statue is a lost cause, and it’s been a lost cause for years,” said Mr. Delgado, who regularly attended St. Adalbert when it was open.

After an extended standoff, police officers arrested the protesters, and the statue continued its journey to St. Paul church.

One week later, Father Michael Enright, the pastor of St. Paul, opened the door of the rectory and led me into the darkened, silent church.

There was the statue, cut from Carrara marble, in its new perch in front of Gothic arches and stained-glass windows.

He declined to comment on the conflict over the statue; the protest group has been angry with him for years over the closing of St. Adalbert. But he is now the statue’s caretaker of sorts, and an unusually qualified one: He happens to be a hobbyist stonecutter who has carved pieces in the church, including a lectern that stands on the altar.

When the Pietà arrived at St. Paul in November, it was covered in dust and dirt from the move. Father Enright carefully vacuumed some of the debris and wiped the statue down with paper towels.

Standing before the marble form of Mary and Jesus, he said he could see why it had inspired such passion and devotion.

“There is something to be said for beauty,” he said.

Ms. Vazquez cannot bring herself to attend Mass at St. Paul. But she has visited the statue twice in its new home, she said this week, popping in and saying a prayer.

“I was just talking to her, giving her my pain, saying ‘Ave Maria,’” she said. “I just had to be by her.”

PHOTOS: A replica of Michelangelo’s Pietà, top left, on a truck near St. Adalbert Church in Chicago’s Pilsen neighborhood, top right, which holds significance for the city’s Polish and Latino communities. St. Adalbert closed in 2019, but parishioners have held vigils and other events outside, like a celebration of the Virgin of Guadalupe, above.; The three-ton marble statue of Mary and Jesus in its new home, St. Paul church, a mile from St. Adalbert. “There is something to be said for beauty,” said the Rev. Michael Enright, the pastor of St. Paul. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD HEISLER/THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A15.

**Load-Date:** February 3, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Biden Drawing Up a 2024 Playbook That Looks a Lot Like 2020’s***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67KK-P801-DXY4-X2C4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 19, 2023 Sunday 23:17 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1818 words

**Byline:** Peter Baker, Reid J. Epstein and Lisa Lerer

**Highlight:** President Biden’s strategy is to frame the race as a contest between a seasoned leader and a conspiracy-minded opposition, while batting away concerns about his age.

**Body**

President Biden’s strategy is to frame the race as a contest between a seasoned leader and a conspiracy-minded opposition, while batting away concerns about his age.

WASHINGTON — Forget the Wilmington basement. This time he will have a Rose Garden. And Air Force One and a big white mansion and all the other advantages of incumbency in a year when he is not forced by a pandemic to stick to streaming from downstairs.

But as President Biden prepares to run for a second term, his team is mapping out a strategy for 2024 that in many other ways resembles that of 2020. Whether he ultimately faces Donald J. Trump again or another Republican trying to be like Mr. Trump, the president plans a campaign message that still boils down to three words: Competent beats crazy.

Whether he can sell that theme again represents a singular challenge given surveys showing that the public has not exactly rallied behind him and harbors deep doubts about his age. When Mr. Biden kicks off his re-election campaign this spring, as is widely expected, he will be the oldest president in history but one of the lowest-rated in the modern period, presiding over an economy that is improving but unsettled and leading a party publicly behind him but privately angst-ridden. And rather than Mr. Trump, he may yet face a Republican challenger closer to the age of his son.

The goal, according to interviews with White House officials, outside advisers, key allies and party strategists, is to frame the race as a contest, not a referendum on Mr. Biden. On one side, in this narrative, will be a mature, seasoned leader with a raft of legislation on his record aimed at winning back ***working-class*** Democrats. On the other will be an ideologically driven, conspiracy-minded opposition consumed by its own internal power struggles and tethered to a leader facing multiple investigations for trying to overturn a democratic election.

“It’s incumbent on the president and his team to make sure the election is a choice,” said Lis Smith, a senior adviser to Pete Buttigieg during the 2020 Democratic primary campaign. “It’s not going to be Joe Biden versus some mythical Democratic candidate. It’s going to be between Joe Biden and whoever the Republican nominee is.”

Whit Ayres, a veteran Republican pollster, said a rematch between Mr. Biden and Mr. Trump would be the best scenario for the president. “At this point, President Biden just needs to seem like he is still very much with it and able to do the job and at that point his fate is largely out of his hands,” Mr. Ayres said. “He’s got to pray the Republicans blow themselves up again.”

Mr. Biden previewed his approach in his State of the Union address this month when he baited Republicans into a debate over Social Security and Medicare, then pressed his argument during appearances in Wisconsin and Florida. He used the nationally televised speech before Congress to highlight his legislative successes while focusing on pocketbook issues to reach out to voters upset at him over inflation.

The trips that followed illustrated one important difference from 2020. No longer tied to the basement of his home in Delaware, the way he was by Covid-19 in 2020, Mr. Biden will travel frequently this year to deliver his message, aides said. As projects from the 2021 infrastructure package break ground, the president intends to cut a lot of ribbons around the country to take credit.

Republican strategists are gambling that the physical toll of a full-scale, nonpandemic campaign effort will wear on an 80-year-old president. They plan to portray him as an aging, failed leader and a big-spending captive of the political left who drove up inflation and did little to defend the border against a record wave of illegal immigration.

“Joe Biden’s campaign team doesn’t have a strategic problem; they have a candidate problem,” said Chris LaCivita, a Trump campaign consultant. “Americans have now watched Joe Biden wreck our economy, and he’ll have to answer for it. Biden won’t be able to hide in his basement like last time.”

While Mr. Biden seems eager for a rematch, it is hardly certain that he can replicate the 2020 outcome. Not only is his approval rating [*hovering at an anemic 43 percent*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/biden-approval-rating/?cid=rrpromo), but two recent surveys, [*the Washington Post-ABC News poll*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2023/02/05/poll-biden-trump-2024/) and the [*Harvard CAPS-Harris Poll*](https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/3863637-trump-beats-biden-harris-in-2024-matchups-poll/), found Mr. Trump leading by several points. Moreover, despite Mr. Biden’s legislative victories, 62 percent told [*The Post and ABC*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2023/02/06/poll-americans-dont-feel-biden-impact/) that he had accomplished “not very much” or “little or nothing.”

Biden aides scorn such surveys, saying that the polling system is broken, as proved by the midterm elections when Democrats did better than expected.

Although Mr. Biden has yet to formally announce his campaign, the decision is taken as a given within his circle. The next step, advisers said, will come in March when Democrats announce which city will host their nominating convention next year; [*the finalists are Atlanta, Chicago and New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/27/us/politics/dnc-convention-cities-2024-biden.html).

Democrats expect Mr. Biden to make his bid official no earlier than April to put off scrutiny of his fund-raising until the next reporting deadline in July. While Mr. Biden has appeared at fund-raising events for the Democratic National Committee, he has yet to mount a major effort to raise cash for his re-election bid. But aides said the president was driven less by such considerations and as a tested incumbent had the luxury of time. They say that his fund-raising list is bigger than any of his Democratic predecessors and that their campaign apparatus remains intact whenever Mr. Biden is ready.

An April kickoff would be consistent with Mr. Biden’s 2020 campaign, which formally got underway in April 2019, and President Barack Obama’s re-election bid, which formally began in April 2011. (Mr. Trump, by contrast, filed for re-election on the day of his inauguration.)

No leadership for the campaign has been chosen yet. Biden advisers have spoken with top Democratic campaign strategists, but at least three have indicated they are not interested in running the campaign and declined to have additional conversations about the post for a mix of personal and professional reasons, according to people informed about the discussions.

Among other things, there is a sense from younger campaign strategists that the crucial decisions will be made by Mr. Biden’s longtime aides in the White House, meaning that the official manager may not have a lot of control but will still take much of the blame for tactical and strategic mistakes.

Some of Mr. Biden’s most trusted political strategists are expected to remain at their posts in the White House and coordinate with the campaign from there, including Anita Dunn, Jennifer O’Malley Dillon, Steven J. Ricchetti and Bruce Reed. Mike Donilon, a senior adviser who has long been at Mr. Biden’s side, may switch over to the campaign but no decision has been made, according to Democrats close to the situation. Ron Klain, who just stepped down as White House chief of staff, and Kate Bedingfield, who is leaving as White House communications director, may help with the campaign in some capacity.

No decision has been made about where the campaign’s headquarters will be. The president has pushed for Wilmington, his hometown, according to people briefed on internal discussions. But some advisers fear that such a location would make recruitment harder, with younger campaign aides not eager to spend a year in a sleepy, small town. They are pressing instead for Philadelphia, where Mr. Biden’s 2020 effort was based.

In seeking a second term, Mr. Biden is pushing history where it has never gone before, asking voters to keep him in power until he is 86. Surveys and focus groups have consistently identified that as a major concern of voters, and even a majority of Democrats tell pollsters they would prefer the party nominate someone else.

In conversations, Democratic voters regularly mention Mr. Biden’s octogenarian status without being asked. During a lunch this month at the Riverfront Market food hall in Wilmington, Kate Watson, 69, and Tre Sullivan, 71, had high praise Mr. Biden’s presidency — and deep worries that he could win again.

“People will not vote for somebody in their 80s who by the time he’s done being the president he’ll be 84,” Ms. Sullivan said.

Reminded that Mr. Biden would be 86 at the end of a second term, the two women recoiled.

“Oh, God, that’s right,” said Ms. Watson, who is retired from the marketing business.

“It’s not going to happen,” said Ms. Sullivan, who is retired from a career in sales work.

Mr. Biden responds to such concerns by pointing to his record of rebuilding roads and bridges, expanding health care, curbing the cost of prescription drugs for Medicare beneficiaries, investing in climate change projects, forgiving student debt and treating veterans exposed to toxic burn pits. His aides argue that voters will still prefer a president who delivers regardless to the divisive and unpopular policies of Mr. Trump’s Republican Party. And Mr. Trump, if he wins the nomination, would be 82 at the end of a second term.

A focus group of swing voters convened after the State of the Union by Sarah Longwell, a Republican pollster and vocal critic of Mr. Trump, found that Mr. Biden still had residual good will among some of those who took a chance on him. The voters who participated, all of whom voted for Mr. Trump in 2016 and switched to Mr. Biden in 2020, used phrases like “family man” and “he cares” to describe the president. They remained viscerally disaffected from Mr. Trump, calling him “demonstrably unfit for office” and “an embarrassment to our country.”

Still, another challenger would pose more of a generational threat. Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida is 44; Nikki Haley, a former U.N. ambassador, is 51; and former Vice President Mike Pence is 63. “If the Republicans nominate a younger, vigorous person, male or female, who seems up to the job, I think he’s in trouble,” Mr. Ayres said of Mr. Biden.

For the moment, with no Republican nominee to debate, Mr. Biden plans to play off House Republicans the way he did at the State of the Union, hoping they will turn off voters while he appears to focus on the country’s priorities.

Senator Chris Coons, a Democratic ally of the president from Delaware, noted how House Republicans devolved into chaos simply trying to pick a new speaker, a process that deadlocked until the 15th ballot, while Mr. Biden appeared recently with politicians from both parties at an Ohio River bridge set to be upgraded as part of the infrastructure package he signed.

“That was a pretty sharp contrast,” Mr. Coons said, “and I think you’re going to see that contrast every week this year.”

PHOTO" Although President Biden has yet to formally announce his re-election campaign, the decision is taken as a given among his advisers. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A15) This article appeared in print on page A1, A15.

**Load-Date:** February 19, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Republicans Are Still Waging War on Workers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62N2-6VP1-DXY4-X2XM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 11, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 18; PAUL KRUGMAN

**Length:** 910 words

**Byline:** By Paul Krugman

**Body**

Has the Republican Party, which has championed the interests of big business and sought to keep wages low since the late 19th century, suddenly become populist? Some of its rising stars would have you believe so. For example, after the 2020 election Senator Josh Hawley declared that ''we must be a ***working-class*** party, not a Wall Street party.''

But while Republicans have lately attacked selected businesses, their beef with big companies seems to be over noneconomic issues. It bothers them a lot that some of corporate America has taken a mild stand in favor of social equality and against voter suppression.

What doesn't bother them is the fact that many corporations pay little or nothing in taxes and pay their workers poorly. On such matters the G.O.P. is the same as it ever was: It's for tax cuts that favor corporations and the wealthy, against anything that might improve the lives of ordinary workers.

The latest example: the Republican push to end enhanced unemployment benefits that have sustained millions of American families through the pandemic, even though unemployment remains very high. Multiple Republican-controlled states have moved to cut off the $300-a-month supplement provided under the American Rescue Plan, even though this means states turning away free money that helps boost their economies -- the supplement is entirely paid for by the federal government.

And who has been pushing for a drastic cut in aid to the unemployed? Why, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Tell me again how the G.O.P. has become an anti-corporate party of the ***working class***?

Before I get into the substantive issues here, it's important to be aware of the historical context -- namely, that Republicans have always opposed helping the unemployed, no matter what the state of the economy may be.

In 2011, with the economy still deeply depressed in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, leading Republicans attacked unemployment benefits that, they claimed, were encouraging people to ''just stay home and watch television.''

And last summer, as a renewed surge in the coronavirus forced much of the country back into lockdown, Senator Lindsey Graham declared that enhanced unemployment benefits would be extended ''over our dead bodies.''

I mention these previous episodes to disabuse readers of any notion that the current assault on the unemployed is a good-faith response to anything actually happening in the economy. The G.O.P. has always been determined to make the lives of the jobless miserable, regardless of economic conditions.

That said, is there actually a case that relatively generous benefits are hurting the economic recovery, because they are discouraging Americans from taking available jobs?

Until last week's employment report, there was fairly broad agreement among economic researchers that the expanded benefits introduced during the pandemic weren't significantly reducing employment. Notably, the expiration of the $600-a week-benefit introduced in March 2020 didn't lead to any visible rise in overall employment; in particular, states with low wages, for whom the benefit should have created a big incentive to turn down job offers, didn't see more employment than higher-wage states when it was removed.

On Friday, however, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that the U.S. economy added only 266,000 jobs in April, far short of consensus expectations that we'd gain around a million new jobs. Was this evidence that the economy really is being held back because we're ''paying people not to work''?

No. For one thing, you should never make much of one month's numbers, especially in an economy still distorted by the pandemic. For example, that low reported number was ''seasonally adjusted.'' The economy actually added more than a million jobs; however, the bureau marked that down because the economy normally adds a lot of jobs in the spring. That's standard and appropriate practice -- but are we having a normal spring?

Also, if unemployment benefits were holding job growth back, you'd expect the worst performance in low-wage industries, where benefits are large relative to wages. The actual pattern was the reverse: big job gains in low-wage sectors like leisure and hospitality, job losses in high-wage sectors like professional services.

I don't want to make too much of this, since other things have been going on as life gradually returns to normal -- although the job number actually reports the situation in mid-April, too soon to reflect the sharp recent progress against the spread of the coronavirus. But on the face of it the data don't support an unemployment-benefits story.

So what actually happened? We don't know. Maybe it was a statistical aberration, maybe a variety of factors ranging from computer chip shortages to lack of child care were holding the economy back. The sensible thing is to wait a few months for more evidence, not rush to cut off a crucial financial lifeline for millions of families.

But punishing the unemployed is what Republicans do, whenever they can, whatever the economic circumstances. The G.O.P., posturing aside, is still a corporatist party.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/10/opinion/jobs-unemployment-benefits-republicans.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/10/opinion/jobs-unemployment-benefits-republicans.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT BLACK/MAGNUM PHOTOS)

**Load-Date:** May 11, 2021

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[***A Conflict of Ambitions in Gowanus***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:669M-M4H1-JBG3-6538-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 4, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 3; BIG CITY

**Length:** 1032 words

**Byline:** By Ginia Bellafante

**Body**

Can a pay-what-you-want cafe exist in a gentrified Gowanus?

By any measure, the area around an industrial patch of Ninth Street in Brooklyn, straddling Park Slope and Gowanus, ought to emerge as an urbanist's utopia -- a space where painters, poets, craftsmen, professionals with artsy jobs and ***working-class*** people live and connect and thrive. It should be the kind of place where small businesses holding dear to collectivist values serve a polylithic community deeply invested in itself. In late June, Katie Bishop, a 33-year-old former Marine and bassoonist with an advanced degree in music theory opened a coffeehouse -- Principles GI -- on Ninth Street with precisely such a vision in mind.

Unlike Blank Street, the quickly multiplying coffee chain backed by private equity, Ms. Bishop's venture is held together by her ethics and enthusiasms, aiming, for example, to reach ''zero coffee-cup waste by 2023.'' Principles was inspired by a movement in the late 1960s, energized long before she was born, when protesters of the Vietnam War opened coffeehouses, typically near military bases, to provide a forum for soldiers increasingly disenchanted with American aggression abroad. As Fred Gardner, a young Harvard graduate who opened a venue like this near Fort Jackson, in South Carolina, wrote: ''By 1967 the Army was filling up with people who would rather be making love to the music of Jimi Hendrix than war to the lies of Lyndon Johnson.''

Ms. Bishop hoped to create, as she put it recently, ''a social hub masquerading as a coffeehouse.''

A native of Arizona, she moved to Portland, Ore., a decade ago (after she was stationed in Albany, Ga.) and got involved with the Occupy movement, particularly with a veterans' group that opposed the war in Iraq. By 2016 she was in New York, attending Queens College, loving coffee and working as a barista. Principles would merge her interests -- for quality beans, for inclusion and activism, for the vibrant exchange of ideas, for cycling. (In a corner of the shop, she has set up a bike tool library so that anyone could come in and make repairs.)

To start the business, Ms. Bishop raised $5,000 via GoFundMe, borrowed $25,000 from friends and got an interest-free loan in the same amount from the Hebrew Free Loan Society, a 130-year-old organization that extends credit to low-income New Yorkers. Beyond that she secured a five-year lease for $5,000 a month (at 1,600 square feet, the space is big), brought in found furniture, got help building more from a friend in theatrical production and had countertops given to her by a woodworker whose shop is across the street.

Low margins allow for the most distinctive feature of her operation -- letting people pay whatever they want for a cup of coffee (specialty drinks come at a set price) based on what they can afford or are willing to give. Some people pay nothing, some $1, some $20 or $30. In the roughly two months that Principles has been open, she has found that certain patrons see a virtue in turning over more money than even the very best cup of coffee on earth could possibly be worth.

Progressives in New York and other large, punishingly expensive cities often bemoan the absence of small, socially minded independent businesses like this. And yet they simultaneously resist the kind of density that would allow them to succeed. During the past month, nearly 300 residents have signed a petition asking the Department of City Planning to oppose a residential rezoning of Ninth Street between Second Avenue and Third, the site of Ms. Bishop's shop, that would permit nine-story residential buildings with mostly market-rate rental apartments -- presumably housing people willing to offer $5 for a cup of Mother Tongue, ''a queer-run, woman/trans-centric roastery,'' as Ms. Bishop described it, out of Oakland, Calif.

There is no question that some of the concerns about the plan, which the Adams administration supports (because, as a spokesman for the mayor put it, ''Mayor Adams has articulated a bold vision to turn New York into a 'City of Yes,'''), require long and serious conversation. Gowanus, which already famously contains a canal that is a Superfund site, remains especially vulnerable to storm surge and consideration to what the current infrastructure can and cannot sustain is crucial. The real issue, though, is that the proposal does not account for enough affordable housing which the petition fails to address. Kathryn Krase, a social worker, lawyer and one of the forces behind it, who owns a home nearby, said that her group was deeply in favor of its expansion but preferred an overall rezoning plan more ''modest'' in scale.

For the past several months, Shahana Hanif, the newly elected councilwoman for the district, has been working toward a different kind of proposal, one that would require a greater number of affordable units (the current plan puts the number at 13 out of 48) delivered at rents that low-income, not merely middle-income people, could manage. ''With the compounded issues of our housing crisis, new immigrants coming and residents still displaced from Ida who are living in hotels,'' Ms. Hanif said, the configuration as it stands now ''is simply not enough.'' On Ninth Street one of the places poised for development is a parking lot, which ought to be entirely uncontroversial. ''Housing should be everyone's biggest priority,'' she said.

A city built around silos of wealth, poverty and middle-of-the road affluence cannot remain animated; it can't cook. In one sense, Ms. Bishop's venture, however idealistic, provides a template for how we ought to think about emerging neighborhoods -- as places deeply integrated at the level of class, race and even philosophy. It is easy to imagine a certain kind of New Yorker eye-rolling over her business model, just as it is easy to imagine another losing her mind over the fact of an international ad agency called Mother, also on Ninth Street, which bills itself as refusing to answer to the tentacles ''of the grotesquely swollen octopus of global capital.'' We need all the crazy dreams, in the end.Email [*bigcity@nytimes.com*](mailto:bigcity@nytimes.com); follow Ginia Bellafante on Twitter: @GiniaNYT

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/02/nyregion/gowanus-gentrification-brooklyn.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/02/nyregion/gowanus-gentrification-brooklyn.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Katie Bishop at Principles GI, which was inspired by the egalitarian coffeehouses that sprang up around military bases during the Vietnam War. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 4, 2022

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[***Adams Welded Diverse Allies To Pull Ahead***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:630F-5F21-JBG3-63HF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 24, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1564 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Body**

Eric Adams has a significant lead in the New York City mayor's race thanks to his support from a traditional Democratic coalition of unions and Black and Latino voters.

Eric Adams's strong showing in New York City's Democratic primary for mayor reflected his ability to build an old-school political coalition that united Black and Latino voters with unions.

He was able to persuade ***working-class*** people, largely outside Manhattan, that he was the best candidate to make the city safe from crime and return it to economic health. But even as he held a 75,000-vote lead on Wednesday night over his closest rival, Maya Wiley, his victory was not assured.

Nearly 70 percent of voters did not choose Mr. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, as their first choice, and the final outcome will depend on how many of those voters listed him lower on their ballots.

Under the city's new system of ranked-choice voting, where voters select as many as five candidates in order of preference, thousands of votes will be shifted among the candidates before a final winner is declared. Tens of thousands of absentee ballots must also be counted, and the entire process may take until July 12.

It remains mathematically possible for Mr. Adams's closest rivals -- Ms. Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio, or Kathryn Garcia, a former city sanitation commissioner -- to still finish first after ranked-choice tabulations, but it seems unlikely, according to voting experts.

In ranked-choice elections in the United States over the last two decades, the candidate who is in first place in the first round of voting usually wins. Ms. Wiley or Ms. Garcia would have to be overwhelmingly ranked higher than Mr. Adams among voters who supported other losing candidates.

It is also unclear how many voters ranked five candidates; a phenomenon known as ''ballot exhaustion,'' when every candidate ranked by a voter has been eliminated, could favor Mr. Adams.

''It's mathematically possible, but it's highly unlikely,'' Ken Sherrill, a professor emeritus of political science at Hunter College, said of Ms. Wiley or Ms. Garcia pulling off a win. ''Seventy-five thousand is a very large number to overcome.''

If Mr. Adams does win the primary -- and the general election in November -- he would be the city's second Black mayor after David N. Dinkins, who was elected in 1989. Ms. Wiley is also Black; she and Ms. Garcia are both seeking to become the first woman to be elected mayor of New York.

Ms. Wiley performed well in some largely Black neighborhoods in Brooklyn and in Astoria and Long Island City in Queens. Ms. Garcia had strong support in Manhattan and parts of Brownstone Brooklyn.

But Mr. Adams, who ran as a moderate, led in every borough except Manhattan, and did particularly well in the Bronx. In some parts of the city like Jamaica in Southeast Queens, Mr. Adams won more than 60 percent of votes, compared with 15 percent for Ms. Wiley.

''Adams used his approach on policing of saying we need justice and safety simultaneously to fuse together that traditional coalition,'' said Bruce Gyory, a veteran Democratic strategist.

The city's Board of Elections will do its first ranked-choice voting run -- covering all in-person votes -- on Tuesday, giving a better sense of the likely outcome.

Some progressive groups attempted to persuade voters to leave Mr. Adams off their ballots; Ms. Garcia made several appearances late in the campaign with Andrew Yang, a rival candidate, in a bid to be ranked by his supporters.

On the day of the primary, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the city's most famous progressive, criticized Mr. Adams and pressed hard for Ms. Wiley.

And many voters said they had ranked Ms. Wiley and Ms. Garcia in the first two spots on their ballots, and it is possible that one of them could capture a majority of the other's supporters under ranked-choice voting.

Ms. Wiley told reporters in Brooklyn on Wednesday that she still had a path to victory, saying that she had ''every reason to believe we can win this race.''

Asked if she was considering conceding, Ms. Wiley scoffed at the idea.

''No,'' she said with a mildly outraged laugh. '''Cause I'm winning.''

Ms. Garcia did not hold any public events, and her campaign said she was spending time with family.

The fact that three of the candidates who finished in the top four were relatively moderate -- Mr. Adams, Ms. Garcia and Mr. Yang, a 2020 presidential candidate -- seemed to signal the mood of the city as New Yorkers emerge from the pandemic. A recent rise in gun violence has led to widespread concerns over safety.

But Ms. Wiley received nearly a quarter of first-choice votes, proving that a share of the electorate liked her message of cutting the police budget and focusing on inequality. It is possible that Ms. Wiley, who became the standard-bearer for the left, peaked too late in the race. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez did not endorse Ms. Wiley until the last month of the race after other left-leaning candidates faltered.

If Mr. Adams wins in the coming weeks, his victory could stall the progressive movement's momentum in New York, reinforcing the idea that rising crime and public safety were of more concern to voters.

Still, progressive candidates had a strong showing in several key races: Alvin Bragg was ahead in the Democratic primary for Manhattan district attorney; Brad Lander was leading the city comptroller race; and left-leaning candidates won mayoral primaries in Buffalo and Rochester.

The night featured other small surprises: In the Republican primary for Staten Island borough president, Vito J. Fossella, a former congressman, had a slight lead over Steven Matteo, a prominent city councilman. Mr. Fossella decided not to run for re-election in 2008 after he was charged with drunken driving and admitted to fathering a child in an extramarital affair.

Whoever ultimately wins the Democratic primary will face the Republican nominee, Curtis Sliwa, the founder of the Guardian Angels, in November. Mr. Sliwa received nearly 69 percent of votes among the roughly 58,000 Republicans who voted in the primary.

Mr. Adams's lead reflected a potent outer-borough strategy. His institutional support from the Brooklyn machine and veteran Democrats in Queens and the Bronx likely helped him turn out key constituencies.

Mr. Adams appeared to do well in Latino neighborhoods -- a key demographic that he pushed hard to secure with key leaders like Ruben Diaz Jr., the Bronx borough president. In the heavily Latino neighborhood of Mott Haven in the Bronx, for instance, Mr. Adams won more than 45 percent of first-choice votes, compared to less than 20 percent for Ms. Wiley.

Mr. Adams ran a disciplined campaign -- his motto was ''stay focused, don't get distracted, grind'' -- and hammered away at the message that he was the only candidate who could tackle both crime and police reform. Mr. Adams also secured a series of critical endorsements and raised a campaign war chest of more than $10 million -- the most among candidates participating in the public matching funds program.

Running as a ***working-class*** underdog, Mr. Adams focused on communities that were hit hard by the pandemic -- a message he touched on during his primary night speech, said Christina Greer, an associate professor of political science at Fordham University.

''There are so many communities feeling left out and Adams, as his authentic self, seemed just as angry and hurt and inspired as those communities,'' Professor Greer said.

As one of the moderate candidates in the Democratic field, Mr. Adams would be a significant departure from Mr. de Blasio in style and substance, though Mr. de Blasio was believed to privately support Mr. Adams in the race.

Mr. de Blasio praised Mr. Adams on Wednesday and said their coalitions were similar.

''I give credit to Eric Adams -- the strength he created in Brooklyn, in Queens and the Bronx,'' he said. ''Eric obviously had an outer-borough-focused, ***working-class***-focused strategy. That's a lot of what we did in 2013.''

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo also weighed in on the race and said he would welcome a new mayor; his feud with Mr. de Blasio is well established. Mr. Cuomo said that Mr. Adams showed competence on the issue of public safety that New Yorkers care most about.

''I have a good relationship with Eric Adams,'' Mr. Cuomo said. ''I know him. He was in Albany. We worked together.''

This was the first year that the city offered early voting in a mayoral election, and turnout was better than expected. Nearly 800,000 votes have been counted so far in the Democratic mayoral primary -- higher than turnout in the last competitive mayoral primary in 2013. That number will grow as counting continues and absentee ballots are processed -- more than 100,000 have already been received.

The absentee ballots are unlikely to greatly deviate from the voting patterns seen in the Primary Day vote count, although a large number from Manhattan could favor Ms. Garcia.

At his primary night party on Tuesday, Mr. Adams smiled broadly as he celebrated his lead. Then he took aim at the city's news media and elites and said he had focused on voters who reliably showed up at the polls.

''Social media does not pick a candidate,'' he said. ''People on Social Security pick a candidate.''

Anne Barnard contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/nyregion/nyc-eric-adams-primary-results.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/nyregion/nyc-eric-adams-primary-results.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Eric Adams after the polls closed Tuesday. Mr. Adams, who ran as a moderate, led in every borough except Manhattan in early results. (A1)

Eric Adams's lead reflected a potent outer-borough strategy and a disciplined campaign. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A16)

**Load-Date:** June 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Cranking Up The Sound Outside Of the City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:678P-6971-DXY4-X064-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4; SOUTH AFRICA DISPATCH

**Length:** 1416 words

**Byline:** By John Eligon

**Body**

Clubs in Khayelitsha, the nation's second largest township, are attracting Black professionals with entertainment that ''we love, we want.''

At night, quiet and darkness shroud much of Khayelitsha, a township outside of Cape Town. But along a roughly quarter-mile stretch of Spine Road, a major thoroughfare, blue-and-yellow lights glow from bare wooden structures that vibrate with the electronic beats of the wildly popular South African genre amapiano.

Several Mercedes-Benzes and BMWs are among cars parked along the road, while smoke wafts from the grills of dozens of food vendors. Some people sell alcohol from the trunks of their cars, while others peddle joints outside the clubs.

On a recent evening, 36-year-old Ncedo Silas -- looking ready for the office with a sweater zipped to his neck and thick clear-framed glasses -- bobbed inside one of the clubs with a shoulder-to-shoulder crowd basking in an eye-burning haze of hookah.

''People used to go to town,'' he said, referring to Cape Town, for a good time. But now, he added, there are numerous establishments in the township, population 450,000, whose owners ''know what it is that we love, we want.''

Townships in South Africa were born of racist apartheid-era social engineering that kept nonwhite citizens segregated from economic opportunities and basic infrastructure. That legacy continues to be felt in the poverty and crime that afflicts many townships.

In recent years, though, Khayelitsha's nightlife scene has grown immensely, with restaurants and clubs cropping up, particularly along Spine Road. All the activity has helped to temper concerns about encountering violent crime at nighttime venues in the township, and attracted more local Black professionals like Mr. Silas, who works in insurance. He and others are rejecting the velvet ropes of the larger city of Cape Town -- with its traffic, expensive drinks and whiter population -- for nightlife they believe better suits their culture and tastes.

''I can't relate to that -- it's white music,'' Mr. Silas said of Cape Town establishments.

Although many townships under apartheid lacked basic services like running water and electricity, many people who grew up in them have long found comfort in gathering, socializing and celebrating in them.

After the country's transition to multiracial democracy in 1994 led to greater economic opportunities for Black South Africans, the entertainment possibilities in townships became increasingly sophisticated. That's evident nationwide; clubs in Soweto, near Johannesburg, and Umlazi, near the coastal city of Durban, are among the hottest in the country.

''The township comes with a certain kind of freedom,'' said Zinhle Mqadi, the chief executive of Max's Lifestyle Village in Umlazi, a sprawling venue that includes a restaurant, nightclub, carwash and salon.

Khayelitsha was created in 1983 by the apartheid government to relieve overcrowded settlements nearby. It is now South Africa's second largest Black township.

The origins of its booming nightlife scene date to 2007, when a local businessman, Bulelani Skaap, better known as Ace, opened the nightclub KwaAce, around the corner from Spine Road. Over the years, other establishments popped up nearby, attracting the luxury car set.

Spine Road grew into a casual hub of evening activity. Revelers parked their cars along the side of the road, and grilled meat and drank.

Fikile Makuliwe, a 31-year-old Khayelitsha native, saw opportunity.

About four years ago, while studying engineering in college, he began setting up a gazebo along Spine Road every weekend with comfortable chairs, hookah pipes and a cellphone charging station. Mr. Makuliwe said he hoped the comfortable setup, which he broke down at the end of each evening, would attract revelers looking for an experience that felt V.I.P.

After saving money from this venture and an engineering apprenticeship, Mr. Makuliwe in late 2020 opened Ocean Canda, which sells sushi and other seafood by day and features D.J.s spinning ear-splitting beats by night.

''There's no place like this place,'' said Thando Mpushe, a 35-year-old professional opera singer, standing on the elevated platform that is Ocean Canda's V.I.P. section.

Ocean Canda's tall, boxy structure, framed with exposed logs and a corrugated tin roof, feels more beachfront shack than ritzy club.

But it was one of several establishments opened during the pandemic -- some without the city's blessing -- that helped make Spine Road a hive of activity.

''It has now outgrown what would have been expected,'' said Ndithini Tyhido, the chairman of the Khayelitsha Development Forum, adding that Spine Road has attracted an influx of working professionals, some from Cape Town and surrounding suburbs. ''Look at the clothes they wear, the cars they drive, the types of drinks they are having.''

Despite the best efforts of some establishments to try to exude an upscale aura -- with plush sofas, and names like ''Paris Lifestyle'' -- the atmosphere along Spine Road remains decidedly ***working class***.

Wedged between neighborhoods of tightly packed bungalows, the corridor features several slapdash sheds playing music and serving drinks. Hundreds of people hang around cars, and as the night progresses, drunken stragglers stumble along dirt paths or collapse in the street.

To some, Khayelitsha's flourishing nightlife is a testament to the hustle and ingenuity of people in a country where about a third of the population is unemployed, and where many are constrained by systemic barriers -- like difficulties getting bank loans and a historic lack of stable, affordable housing.

Thera, a 36-year-old former restaurant manager, used to sell liquor on Spine Road out of his compact hatched Renault. Last March -- without permission from the city, he said -- he put together a tin shack about the size of a classroom on the street, and strung lights on a wall in the shape of letters bearing the name of his new establishment: R Lounge.

Thera, who asked that his last name be withheld for fear of getting in trouble, said he was motivated by hunger and poverty. ''What we are doing is illegal,'' he said. ''We'll try to make as much money as we can.''

Khayelitsha's intrepid nightlife entrepreneurs are also forced to keep an eye on crime.

Through last September, Western Cape Province recorded 571 mass shootings over a three-year period, most of them occurring in the townships near Cape Town. There were 130 murders in Khayelitsha over a three-month span last year, among the most in the country.

Malibongwe Dadase, who last October opened Dadase's Shisanyama, a restaurant and lounge a lonely and dark five-minute drive from Spine Road, said that although the violence deterred some customers, he hoped the presence of businesses like his could help thwart crime.

''I was like, 'OK, it's fine, let me take a risk,''' Mr. Dadase, 42, said of his decision to open. ''Fear can limit your dreams.''

In some ways, the booming nightlife has created pockets of safety, community leaders said.

Murders and some other violent crimes generally don't occur along Spine Road, possibly because the crowds act as a deterrent, said Lunga Guza, the head of the area's Community Police Forum, a residents group that works with the police. But there has been gender-based violence, he said, and the traffic and drunkenness can be a nuisance.

Another possible crime prevention measure is so-called protection fees. Gangs in Khayelitsha are notorious for forcing business owners to pay for ''protection,'' or face potentially fatal consequences. Although the gangs' efforts are considered illegal extortion, locals say they can keep serious criminals away. But all of the nightlife owners interviewed denied having paid such fees.

Several years ago, Sbongile Matyi and his family moved into a home they bought in the suburb of Kuils River because they felt it was safer than Khayelitsha, where he grew up. Yet here was Mr. Matyi, 34, on a recent evening sucking on a hookah pipe in Ocean Canda.

In his new suburb, which has many more white residents than Khayelitsha, he sometimes felt judged, he said. A neighbor once asked how he could afford to buy a home in Kuils River, said Mr. Matyi, who is Black and works in law enforcement. He doesn't want to have to deal with that type of attitude when he is trying to relax and have a good time.

''The reason I come back here: People, they value me, they respect me,'' he said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/world/africa/southafrica-apartheid-townships-nightlife.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/world/africa/southafrica-apartheid-townships-nightlife.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Evening in the township of Khayelitsha: outside the booming dance halls, people also sell liquor from their vehicles, left, and grill food, right. ''People used to go to town,'' one partygoer said, referring to nearby Cape Town -- with its traffic, expensive drinks and whiter population -- for a night out. But some Black professionals say the township venues ''know what it is that we love, we want.''

Club Canda, one of several nightclubs in Khayelitsha. Restaurants and clubs along the township's Spine Road are attracting revelers eager to smoke, drink and move to amapiano, a South African hybrid of house, jazz and lounge music.

Hanging out at Ocean Canda. ''There's no place like this place,'' said a patron watching from the club's V.I.P. platform. said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOAO SILVA/THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A4.

**Load-Date:** January 9, 2023

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[***Republicans Are Still Waging War on Workers; Paul Krugman***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62MX-23W1-DXY4-X2JV-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 909 words

**Byline:** Paul Krugman

**Highlight:** Times are good? Punish the unemployed. Times are bad? Punish the unemployed.

**Body**

Has the Republican Party, which has championed the interests of big business and sought to keep wages low since the late 19th century, suddenly become populist? Some of its rising stars would have you believe so. For example, after the 2020 election Senator Josh Hawley [*declared*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265) that “we must be a ***working-class*** party, not a Wall Street party.”

But while Republicans have lately attacked selected businesses, their beef with big companies seems to be over noneconomic issues. It bothers them a lot that some of corporate America has taken a mild stand in favor of social equality and against voter suppression.

What doesn’t bother them is the fact that many corporations pay little or nothing in taxes and pay their workers poorly. On such matters the G.O.P. is the same as it ever was: It’s for tax cuts that favor corporations and the wealthy, against anything that might improve the lives of ordinary workers.

The latest example: the Republican push to end enhanced unemployment benefits that have sustained millions of American families through the pandemic, even though unemployment remains very high. Multiple Republican-controlled states have moved to [*cut off*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265) the $300-a-week supplement provided under the American Rescue Plan, even though this means states turning away free money that helps boost their economies — the supplement is entirely paid for by the federal government.

And who has been pushing for a drastic cut in aid to the unemployed? Why, the U.S. [*Chamber of Commerce*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265). Tell me again how the G.O.P. has become an anti-corporate party of the ***working class***?

Before I get into the substantive issues here, it’s important to be aware of the historical context — namely, that Republicans have always opposed helping the unemployed, no matter what the state of the economy may be.

In 2011, with the economy still deeply depressed in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, leading Republicans attacked unemployment benefits that, they [*claimed*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265), were encouraging people to “just stay home and watch television.”

And last summer, as a renewed surge in the coronavirus forced much of the country back into lockdown, Senator Lindsey Graham declared that enhanced unemployment benefits would be extended “[*over our dead bodies*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265).”

I mention these previous episodes to disabuse readers of any notion that the current assault on the unemployed is a good-faith response to anything actually happening in the economy. The G.O.P. has always been determined to make the lives of the jobless miserable, regardless of economic conditions.

That said, is there actually a case that relatively generous benefits are hurting the economic recovery, because they are discouraging Americans from taking available jobs?

Until last week’s employment report, there was fairly broad agreement among economic researchers that the expanded benefits introduced during the pandemic weren’t significantly reducing employment. Notably, the expiration of the $600-a week-benefit introduced in March 2020 didn’t lead to any visible rise in overall employment; in particular, states with low wages, for whom the benefit should have created a big incentive to turn down job offers, [*didn’t see more employment*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265) than higher-wage states when it was removed.

On Friday, however, the Bureau of Labor Statistics [*announced*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265) that the U.S. economy added only 266,000 jobs in April, far short of [*consensus expectations*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265) that we’d gain around a million new jobs. Was this evidence that the economy really is being held back because we’re “paying people not to work”?

No. For one thing, you should never make much of one month’s numbers, especially in an economy still distorted by the pandemic. For example, that low reported number was “seasonally adjusted.” The economy actually added [*more than a million jobs*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265); however, the bureau marked that down because the economy normally adds a lot of jobs in the spring. That’s standard and appropriate practice — but are we having a normal spring?

Also, if unemployment benefits were holding job growth back, you’d expect the worst performance in low-wage industries, where benefits are large relative to wages. The actual pattern was the [*reverse*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265): big job gains in low-wage sectors like leisure and hospitality, job losses in high-wage sectors like professional services.

I don’t want to make too much of this, since other things have been going on as life gradually returns to normal — although the job number actually reports the situation in [*mid-April*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265), too soon to reflect the sharp recent [*progress*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265) against the spread of the coronavirus. But on the face of it the data don’t support an unemployment-benefits story.

So what actually happened? We don’t know. Maybe it was a statistical aberration, maybe a variety of factors ranging from computer chip shortages to lack of child care were holding the economy back. The sensible thing is to wait a few months for more evidence, not rush to cut off a crucial financial lifeline for millions of families.

But punishing the unemployed is what Republicans do, whenever they can, whatever the economic circumstances. The G.O.P., posturing aside, is still a corporatist party.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1324171689052299265).

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT BLACK/MAGNUM PHOTOS)

**Load-Date:** May 12, 2021

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[***Tim Ryan Is Fighting for the Soul of the Democratic Party***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66P3-65X1-JBG3-636M-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 2648 words

**Byline:** By Alec MacGillis

**Body**

ZANESVILLE, Ohio -- Tim Ryan is a ''crazy, lying fraud.'' That's how J.D. Vance, the best-selling memoirist turned Republican Senate candidate from Ohio, opened his remarks at his September rally alongside Donald Trump in the middle of the congressional district Mr. Ryan has represented for two decades.

Mr. Ryan seems like an unlikely object of such caustic rhetoric. A 49-year-old former college-football quarterback, he is the paragon of affability, a genial Everyman whose introductory campaign video is so innocuous that it might easily be mistaken for an insurance commercial. His great passions, outside of politics, are yoga and mindfulness practice.

''We have to love each other, we have to care about each other, we have to see the best in each other, we have to forgive each other,'' he declared when he won the Democratic Senate primary in May.

He isn't just preaching kindness and forgiveness. For years, he has warned his fellow Democrats that their embrace of free trade and globalization would cost them districts like the one he represents in the Mahoning River Valley -- and lobbied them to prioritize domestic manufacturing, which, he argued, could repair some of the damage.

His efforts went nowhere. Mr. Ryan failed in his bid to replace Nancy Pelosi as House minority leader in 2016. His presidential run in 2020 ended with barely a trace. And his opponent, Mr. Vance, was expected to coast to victory this year in a state that Mr. Trump carried twice by eight points.

But things haven't gone as predicted. Mr. Ryan is running close enough in the polls that a political action committee aligned with Mitch McConnell, the Republican Senate leader, has had to commit $28 million to keep the seat (now held by Rob Portman, who is retiring), and Mr. Vance has had to ratchet up his rhetorical attacks against this ''weak, fake congressman.''

After years of being overlooked, Tim Ryan is pointing his party toward a path to recovery in the Midwest. On the campaign trail, he has embraced a unifying tone that stands out from the crassness and divisiveness that Mr. Trump and his imitators have wrought. A significant number of what he calls the ''exhausted majority'' of voters have responded gratefully.

And his core message -- a demand for more aggressive government intervention to arrest regional decline -- is not only resonating with voters but, crucially, breaking through with the Democratic leaders who presided over that decline for years. The Democrats have passed a burst of legislation that will pave the way for two new Intel chip plants in the Columbus exurbs, spur investment in new electric vehicle ventures in Mr. Ryan's district, and benefit solar-panel factories around Toledo, giving him, at long last, concrete examples to cite of his party rebuilding the manufacturing base in which the region took such pride.

In short, the party is doing much more of what Mr. Ryan has long said would save its political fortunes in the Midwest. The problem for him -- and also for them -- is that it may have come too late.

Tim Ryan was not always so alone in Congress. Manufacturing regions of the Northeast and Midwest used to produce many other Democrats like him, often with white-ethnic Catholic, ***working-class*** backgrounds and strong ties to organized labor. (Mr. Ryan's family is Irish and Italian, and both his grandfather and great-grandfather worked in the steel mills.) One particularly notorious example of the type was James Traficant, who represented the Mahoning Valley in highly eccentric fashion and served seven years in prison after a 2002 conviction on charges that included soliciting bribes and racketeering. That left his young former staff member -- Tim Ryan -- to win the seat at age 29.

A few stalwarts remain: Marcy Kaptur, whose mother was a union organizer at a sparkplug plant, will likely hold her Toledo-area House seat after her MAGA opponent lied about his military record. And Sherrod Brown, whose upbringing in hard-hit Mansfield and generally disheveled affect has lent authenticity to his own progressive populism (never mind the fact that he's a doctor's son and has a Yale degree), has survived two Senate re-elections thanks to his personal appeal and weak opponents.

But nearly all the rest have vanished. Many of them fell victim to the Democratic wipeout in 2010. Others succumbed to the extreme Republican gerrymandering that followed. But central to their disappearance was the economic decline of the communities they represented, which was on a scale that remains hard for many in more prosperous pockets of the country to grasp.

In the first decade of this century, after Bill Clinton signed NAFTA in 1993 and ushered China into the World Trade Organization in 2000, so many manufacturing businesses closed in Ohio -- about 3,500, nearly a fifth of the total -- that its industrial electricity consumption fell by more than a quarter. Mr. Ryan's district was among the most ravaged. By 2010, the population of Youngstown had fallen 60 percent from its 1930 peak and it ranked among the poorest cities in the country.

For the Democrats representing these devastated areas, the fallout was enormous. ''We were always supposed to be the party of working people, and so those rank-and-file union members kept getting crushed, and jobs kept leaving, and their unions and the Democrats weren't able to do anything for them,'' said Mr. Ryan, when I met with him in August, after an event he held at a substance abuse treatment program in Zanesville. Democratic candidates were also putting their attention elsewhere, on social issues, and voters noticed.

Mr. Ryan is determined not to make the same mistake. ''You want culture wars?'' he asks in one TV ad, while throwing darts in a bar. ''I'm not your guy. You want a fighter for Ohio? I'm all in.''

In the 2000s, as Mr. Ryan saw his band of like-minded Democrats dwindle, he started looking for answers, and he found some of them at the Coalition for a Prosperous America, a small advocacy group founded in 2007 to promote American manufacturing and agriculture.

The group's theory is fairly straightforward: The ''free trade'' that has been so ruinous to manufacturing regions like the Mahoning Valley has been anything but free, given all the various forms of support that other nations provide their own industries. The group has been lobbying members of both parties to consider explicit support for U.S. producers, whether in the form of tariffs or subsidies, even if it means brushing up against World Trade Organization rules.

For years, the Coalition for a Prosperous America and its allies in Congress ran up against free-trade orthodoxy. But growing alarm over climate change, the breakdown of global supply chains during the pandemic and Russia's war against Ukraine have brought a stunning turnaround. The Inflation Reduction Act includes many of the kinds of policies that Mr. Ryan and C.P.A. have championed, including refundable tax credits for solar-panel production, a 15 percent alternative minimum tax for corporations, and requirements that electric vehicles have North American-made parts to qualify for consumer tax credits. This month, the Biden administration announced major new tech-export controls aimed at China, with the U.S. trade representative, Katherine Tai, declaring that free trade ''cannot come at the cost of further weakening our supply chains.''

It's a vindication for Mr. Ryan and his former House allies, such as Tom Perriello, who represented south-central Virginia between 2009 and 2011.

''The elite echo chamber assumed away all the human costs'' of globalization, said Mr. Perriello, instead of realizing industries needed to be helped to save middle-class jobs.

Still, the shift has come only after tremendous economic losses for places like the Mahoning Valley and political losses for the Democrats. In the 2020 presidential election, Democrats lost white voters without college degrees by 26 percentage points nationwide, and their margins among ***working-class*** Black and Hispanic voters shrank, too. They lost Mahoning County, once a Democratic stronghold, for the first time since 1972.

''For the most part, people lost jobs here and Washington wasn't doing anything for them,'' said David Betras, the former chairman of the Mahoning County Democratic Party. ''And then Trump came along and he said, 'Hey, they screwed you.' People thought, 'At least he sees me. He's giving me water.''' It might be contaminated water, as Mr. Betras noted, ''but at least it's water.''

Mr. Ryan's attempt to point his party in a different direction in the Midwest is still running up against resistance, even as he has drawn close to Mr. Vance in the polls. The first ad released by Mr. Ryan's campaign, in April, is Exhibit A.

Wearing an untucked shirt, he delivers a barrage against the threat presented by China: ''It is us versus China and instead of taking them on, Washington's wasting our time on stupid fights ... China is out-manufacturing us left and right ... America can never be dependent on Communist China ... It is time for us to fight back ... We need to build things in Ohio by Ohio workers.''

By the standards of the Ohio Senate race of 2022, it was pretty mild stuff. At an April rally with Mr. Trump, after completing his extreme pivot from Trump critic to acolyte, Mr. Vance lashed out at ''corrupt scumbags who take their marching orders from the Communist Chinese.'' But the Ryan ad nonetheless got opprobrium from Asian Americans, who said it risked fueling anti-Asian sentiment.

Irene Lin, a Democratic strategist based in Ohio, found that remarkable. ''It's so weird that he runs an ad attacking China, and people say, 'You sound like Trump.' Tim's been attacking China for decades! Trump co-opted it from us and we need to take it back, because Trump is a complete fraud on this.''

Still, the episode underscored Mr. Ryan's conundrum: how to match Mr. Trump and Mr. Vance when it comes to the decline of Ohio manufacturing without offending allies within the liberal Democratic coalition.

When I asked Mr. Ryan in Zanesville how he would distinguish his own views from those of Mr. Vance, he insisted it would not be difficult. For one thing, he noted, Mr. Vance has attacked a core element of the industrial policy that Mr. Ryan sees as key to reviving Ohio: electric vehicle subsidies. At the Mahoning rallies, Mr. Vance denounced them as giveaways for the elites, which, as Mr. Ryan sees it, overlooks the hundreds of workers who now have jobs at the old Lordstown General Motors plant in the Mahoning Valley, building electric cars, trucks and tractors as part of a new venture led by the Taiwanese company Foxconn, and at a large battery plant across the street.

''He's worried about losing the internal-combustion auto jobs -- dude, where've you been?'' Mr. Ryan asked. ''Those jobs are going. That factory was empty.''

Less than two months after Mr. Ryan's anti-culture war ad, the Supreme Court issued its Dobbs ruling on abortion, bolstering Democrats' prospects with moderate voters of the sort who help decide elections in places like suburban Columbus -- and making it harder for Mr. Ryan to avoid hot-button social issues. He calls the ruling ''the largest governmental overreach into personal lives in my lifetime,'' but his continued focus on economic issues shows that he believes that's not enough to win an election. Recent polls suggest he may be right.

Mr. Ryan was in the Columbus suburbs on the evening after we spoke in Zanesville, but he was there to discuss the China ad, not abortion. At an event hosted by local Asian American associations, a few women told Mr. Ryan how hurtful they had found the ad. He answered in a conciliatory tone, but did not apologize.

The ad, he said, was directed at the Chinese government, not Asian or Asian American people, and the things in it needed saying. ''I got nothing but love in my heart. I have no hate in my heart,'' he said, but the United States needed to rise to meet China's aggressive trade policies. In Youngstown, Chinese ''steel would land on our shore so subsidized, that it was the same price as the raw material cost for an American company before they even turn the lights on. That is what they have been doing.''

''That is not in your ad,'' said one of the women. ''You need to put those things in your ad.''

''I just want to make a point,'' Mr. Ryan said. ''One is, I love you. Two is, I will always defend you and never let anyone try to hurt you, never. Not on my watch. But we have got to absolutely and decisively defeat China economically. And if we don't do that, you're going to have these countries dictating the rules of the road for the entire world and continuing to try to displace and weaken the United States.''

Watching Mr. Ryan, I was struck by what a delicate balancing act he was trying to pull off. He was, on the one hand, the last of a breed, a son of steel country with two public college degrees (Bowling Green State University and the University of New Hampshire) in a party increasingly dominated by professionals with elite degrees.

But he was trying to adapt to today's liberal coalition, too, with his soft-edged rhetoric and, yes, the mindfulness stuff, which Mr. Vance has lampooned. (''You know Tim Ryan has not one but two books on yoga and meditation?'' he said at the September rally with Mr. Trump.)

There were other models on the ballot this fall for how Democrats might seek to win in the Midwest: Gov. Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan running for re-election on abortion rights, John Fetterman running for Senate in Pennsylvania on his unique brand of postindustrial authenticity, Mandela Barnes running for Senate in Wisconsin as an avatar of youthful diversity.

But Mr. Ryan's bid may have the most riding on it, because it is based on substantive disagreements within the party about how to rebuild the middle class and the middle of the country. For years, too many leading Democrats stood by as the wrenching transformation of the economy devastated communities, while accruing benefits to a small set of highly prosperous cities, mostly on the coasts, that became the party's gravitational center. It was so easy to disregard far-off desolation -- or to take only passing note of it, counting the dollar stores as one happened to traverse areas of decline -- until Mr. Trump's victory brought it to the fore.

With its belated embrace of the industrial policy advocated by Mr. Ryan, the Democratic Party seems finally to be reckoning with this failure. It means grappling with regional decline, because not everyone can relocate to prosperous hubs, and even if they did, it wouldn't necessarily help the Democrats in a political system that favors the geographic dispersal of party voters.

It means recognizing the emotional power of made-in-America patriotism, which can serve to neuter the uglier aspects of the opposition's anti-immigrant appeals. And it means transcending the culture-war incitements offered up by the likes of Mr. Trump and Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida.

The approach may well fall short this time in Ohio, because Mr. Ryan's party has let so much terrain slip out of its hands. But even so, it showed what might have been, all along, and might yet be again, if a region can begin to recover, and the resentment can begin to recede.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/21/opinion/tim-ryan-democrats-midterms-ohio.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/21/opinion/tim-ryan-democrats-midterms-ohio.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MEGAN JELINGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page SR10.

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[***New Orleans***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67K7-1HF1-JBG3-60RB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 18, 2023 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Travel Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 1649 words

**Byline:** By Richard Fausset

**Body**

Friday

3 p.m. | Get your bearings

In the French Quarter, the city's colonial heart, gimmicky ghost tours are as common as cockroaches. A better way to commune with the spirits is to visit the Historic New Orleans Collection's museum on Royal Street (free), which opened in April 2019 after a $38 million restoration and expansion of an 1816 mansion. Artifacts like an advertisement for the 1859 opening of the French Opera House, with text in French and English, evoke ghost worlds (the Opera House burned down in 1919). An 18-minute film on French Quarter history, projected across four walls, covers 300-plus years of immigration, epidemics, nation-to-nation handoffs and the neighborhood's libertine streak. The gift shop is one of the best in town: find handmade wooden spoons for stirring a roux ($21), and prints of New Orleans musicians by the local photographer Michael P. Smith (from $35 unframed).

5:30 p.m. | Drink to your health

Bourbon Street beckons, just one block away, with its river of whiskey-fuelled partying pedestrians. If you find yourself, say, rapping Tone Loc lyrics at a random karaoke joint, no one will judge. For a less cacophonous experience, seek out Jewel of the South, a bar-restaurant set in an old Creole cottage on St. Louis Street, where the city's storied cocktail tradition is both reverently upheld and inventively remixed. Start with a tart, lively Brandy Crusta ($16), a 19th-century New Orleans invention, served in a sugar-encrusted glass, then move on to a Night Tripper ($14), named for New Orleans's piano giant Mac Rebennack, also known as Dr. John. It is a round, mellow, confident concoction of bourbon, amaro, Liquore Strega and Peychaud's bitters -- the drink equivalent of one of Rebennack's more restrained Duke Ellington covers.

7 p.m. | Head to the Gallic side

In the Bywater, a formerly ***working-class*** neighborhood hugging the Mississippi River that has been altered of late by an influx of the hip and the bourgeois, the bar scene is charmingly scruffy and low-key. Have dinner at N7, named for the old auto route from Paris to the French Riviera. The restaurant opened in 2015, but exudes the offhand wabi-sabi of a local institution decades older. Savor a natural wine in a bar adorned with vintage Parisian flotsam (an old Cahiers du Cinema cover; a photo of Jane Birkin as Melody Nelson) and order the reliably comforting coq au Riesling ($25). For the budget-minded, there are hard-boiled eggs ($1) at the bar, set in a wire carousel. For live music nearby, try Saturn Bar, a Kennedy-era dive with an eclectic gamut spanning cumbia to spiky dance-punk.

9 p.m. | Dance and shake

Friday is usually brass band night ($10 cover) at Bullet's Sports Bar, a friendly corner tavern in the Seventh Ward neighborhood. Pass the vigorous security pat-down at the door, sidle up to the bar and order a vodka ''setup'' ($18) -- a half-pint of Absolut, with plastic cups for your friends and mixers for an added charge. Sporty's Brass Band has been holding down the Friday gig at Bullet's recently. The band's job is to levitate this workaday bar the way Yippies once sought to levitate the Pentagon. Unlike the Yippies, Sporty's success rate hovers around 100 percent. (Note: Bullet's, oddly, does not allow patrons under the age of 30 on live music nights; if you are younger, it's not as though you don't have options.)

Saturday

8 a.m. | Grab a biscuit Uptown

The six-mile commercial corridor of Magazine Street is a glorious mishmash of retail shops, art galleries and good places to eat, with surprises on nearly every block. For breakfast Uptown, stop in for a flaky cheddar-and-chive biscuit ($4.75) at La Boulangerie, a New Orleans take on a classic French bakery with a happy thrum on Saturday mornings. Take it to go and stroll along Magazine Street, taking notes on places you might want to hit up when they open later in the day: Magpie, is a standout vintage clothing and jewelry store, and Sisters in Christ, which sells records and books, is well attuned to the city's D.I.Y. arts underground. Shawarma on the Go, inside a Jetgo gas station, is notable for its Lebanese iced tea with pine nuts. Crunchy, cold, aromatic and savory-sweet, the drink is a local spin on a traditional Lebanese drink called jallab.

11 a.m. | Paddle the urban bayou

In the city's earlier days, Bayou St. John was a crucial boat-traffic route from Lake Pontchartrain to the heart of the French settlement. Since Hurricane Katrina, the placid waterway has undergone significant ecological restoration, and now presents paddlers with a mash-up of city vibes and Louisiana wild. Kayak-Iti-Yat offers a two-hour kayak tour for $49 per person and launches from a spot about three miles from the French Quarter (beginners welcome, reserve ahead). You may see turtles in the mud, egrets and pelicans fishing on the surface, and the occasional alligator on the lurk. You will most likely float by the Pitot House, the 1799 West Indies-style home once occupied by New Orleans's first U.S. mayor. You may also exchange pleasantries with neighbors out walking their dogs along the banks.

1:30 p.m. | Taste Mid-City's Best

Explore New Orleans food at its casual best in the Mid-City area, an eclectic mix of residential neighborhoods. The eggplant Parmesan ($17) with a side of gumbo ($8) at Liuzza's shows how Sicilian immigrants have contributed to the Creole culinary conversation, while Parkway Bakery and Tavern turns out some of the city's best po' boys, which it began serving nearly a century ago to feed striking streetcar operators. The tiny and affordable 1000 Figs, a falafel and hummus place with a short, smart wine list, gives a taste of New Orleans's recent love affair with Middle Eastern cooking, and Katie's is a classic haunt notable for its side-street charm and a menu full of gut-busting local specialties, including a signature crawfish beignet ($16).

3:30 p.m. | Meander in a garden

The Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden (free), on 11 acres in New Orleans City Park, was expanded in 2019. Here the primordial south Louisiana landscape meets the shock of the new, with nearly 100 contemporary sculptures from the likes of Frank Gehry, Anish Kapoor and Larry Bell set amid lagoons and the hulking, twisting majesty of live oak trees. A 70-foot glass bridge designed by Elyn Zimmerman is adorned with depictions of the Mississippi River's snaking paths. An indoor pavilion features another Mississippi River-themed work from Maya Lin, the designer of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, which uses glassy green marbles to depict the river and its tributaries. The work spreads up a wall and onto the ceiling, suggesting the untameable nature of water, despite the best intentions of levee builders.

7 p.m. | Try Japanese Dishes

New Orleans takes its traditions seriously. But the city is also open to fresh ideas and outside influences, particularly those with a common culinary denominator. (Vietnamese refugees began settling here in the 1970s, and their impact on the dining scene continues, with the line between banh mi and po' boy growing fuzzier by the year.) In the Uptown neighborhood, the chef Jacqueline Blanchard, who grew up in bayou country and has worked at Thomas Keller's French Laundry, gives the Japanese izakaya concept a gentle Louisiana twist at Sukeban. Here, tamaki hand rolls (starting at $7) can be adorned with mild Cajun Bowfin caviar ($10), and potato salad ($7), that old Southern standby, is reimagined with pickled carrots and the crispy, tiny dried fish known as niboshi.

9 p.m. | Hop among the bars

Walk down Oak Street to Maple Leaf Bar, a live music institution that opened in 1974 and remains one of the best venues to see local blues, R&B, brass band and jazz acts. James Booker, widely considered one of the finest piano players in a city long on piano genius, was a regular at the Maple Leaf's small stage before his death in 1983. Wander in the other direction on Oak Street to take in the joys of Snake and Jake's Christmas Club Lounge, a proudly divey shack of a place where cheap drinks are poured in a tenebrous atmosphere perfect for the hatching of plots or the making of late-night friends.

Sunday

9 a.m. | Check out a literary hub

Mornings might be the best time to enjoy a walk in the French Quarter and the Faubourg Marigny, the Quarter's more reserved sister neighborhood just next door. The amateur drinkers have been scooped off the streets, cleaning crews have worked to neutralize the previous night's party-town bouquet, and the sun is not yet out in full force. End up at Baldwin & Co., a Black-owned bookstore in the Marigny that opens early (it's also a coffee shop), and showcases the work of Black authors -- from Dick Gregory, the comic and activist, to the New Orleans fiction master Maurice Carlos Ruffin to the vegan comfort-food entrepreneur Pinky Cole. Even on Sunday mornings, the place can feel like an old-school literary salon, with customers passionately debating and discussing current events.

11 a.m. | Let brunch rule

Few cities take the art of brunch as seriously as New Orleans. There is an entire local mythology built around the meal and its popularization more than a century ago, which is credited to a German Francophone chef named Madame Begue. For the modern-day brunch vibe, go to the Elysian Bar, set inside the Hotel Peter and Paul, a renovated former church, schoolhouse, convent and rectory in the Marigny. If the weather is good, grab a spot in the courtyard. Linger over chicken liver toast ($14) with red onion jam and apple, or ''Baked Eggs in Purgatory'' ($20), with tomato, ricotta and chimichurri. Accompany with a Mother Superior cocktail ($14) -- a light concoction of rosé, aloe, cucumber, mint and lime -- to atone for any sinful thoughts of abandoning obligations back home and staying a little longer.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/12/travel/18hours-neworleans-print.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/12/travel/18hours-neworleans-print.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: one way to see parts of New Orleans

La Boulangerie, a New Orleans take on a classic French bakery

Sukeban, a Japanese-style pub with a Louisiana flavor

a meal at Liuzza's with Creole and Sicilian influences

and the Historic New Orleans Collection's museum. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA ESSEX BRADLEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page C8.

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[***How Adams Built a Diverse Coalition That Put Him Ahead in the Mayor’s Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6307-XYB1-DXY4-X426-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** NYREGION

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**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Highlight:** Eric Adams has a significant lead in the New York City mayor’s race thanks to his support from a traditional Democratic coalition of unions and Black and Latino voters.

**Body**

Eric Adams has a significant lead in the New York City mayor’s race thanks to his support from a traditional Democratic coalition of unions and Black and Latino voters.

[*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/eric-adams-mayor-nyc)’s strong showing in [*New York City’s Democratic primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/06/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html) for mayor reflected his ability to build an old-school political coalition that united Black and Latino voters with unions.

He was able to persuade ***working-class*** people, largely outside Manhattan, that he was the best candidate to make the city safe from crime and return it to economic health. But even as he held a 75,000-vote lead on Wednesday night over his closest rival, Maya Wiley, his victory was not assured.

Nearly 70 percent of voters did not choose Mr. [*Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/eric-adams-lawsuit.html), the Brooklyn borough president, as their first choice, and the final outcome will depend on how many of those voters listed him lower on their ballots.

Under the city’s new system of ranked-choice voting, where voters select as many as five candidates in order of preference, thousands of votes will be shifted among the candidates before a final winner is declared. Tens of thousands of absentee ballots must also be counted, and the entire process may take until July 12.

It remains [*mathematically possible*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/nyregion/ranked-choice-voting-nyc-mayor.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) for [*Mr. Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/05/nyregion/eric-adams-ad-general-election.html)’s closest rivals — Ms. Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio, or Kathryn Garcia, a former city sanitation commissioner — to still finish first after ranked-choice tabulations, but it seems unlikely, according to voting experts.

In ranked-choice elections in the United States over the last two decades, the candidate who is in first place in the first round of voting usually wins. Ms. Wiley or Ms. Garcia would have to be overwhelmingly ranked higher than Mr. Adams among voters who supported other losing candidates.

It is also unclear how many voters ranked five candidates; [*a phenomenon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/28/us/politics/ranked-choice-voting-new-york-mayoral-race.html) known as “ballot exhaustion,” when every candidate ranked by a voter has been eliminated, could favor Mr. Adams.

“It’s mathematically possible, but it’s highly unlikely,” Ken Sherrill, a professor emeritus of political science at Hunter College, said of Ms. Wiley or Ms. Garcia pulling off a win. “Seventy-five thousand is a very large number to overcome.”

If Mr. Adams does win the primary — and the general election in November — he would be the city’s second Black mayor after David N. Dinkins, who was elected in 1989. Ms. Wiley is also Black; she and Ms. Garcia are both seeking to become the first woman to be elected mayor of New York.

Ms. Wiley performed well in some largely Black neighborhoods in Brooklyn and in Astoria and Long Island City in Queens. Ms. Garcia had strong support in Manhattan and parts of Brownstone Brooklyn.

But Mr. Adams, who ran as a moderate, led in every borough except Manhattan, and did particularly well in the Bronx. In some parts of the city like Jamaica in Southeast Queens, Mr. Adams [*won more than 60 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) of votes, compared with 15 percent for Ms. Wiley.

“Adams used his approach on policing of saying we need justice and safety simultaneously to fuse together that traditional coalition,” said Bruce Gyory, a veteran Democratic strategist.

The city’s Board of Elections will do its first ranked-choice voting run — covering all in-person votes — on Tuesday, giving a better sense of the likely outcome.

Some progressive groups attempted to persuade voters to leave Mr. Adams off their ballots; Ms. Garcia made several appearances late in the campaign with Andrew Yang, a rival candidate, in a bid to be ranked by his supporters.

On the day of the primary, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the city’s most famous progressive, criticized Mr. Adams and pressed hard for Ms. Wiley.

And many voters said they had ranked Ms. Wiley and Ms. Garcia in the first two spots on their ballots, and it is possible that one of them could capture a majority of the other’s supporters under ranked-choice voting.

Ms. Wiley told reporters in Brooklyn on Wednesday that she still had a path to victory, saying that she had “every reason to believe we can win this race.”

Asked if she was considering conceding, Ms. Wiley scoffed at the idea.

“No,” she said with a mildly outraged laugh. “’Cause I’m winning.”

Ms. Garcia did not hold any public events, and her campaign said she was spending time with family.

The fact that three of the candidates who finished in the top four were relatively moderate — Mr. Adams, Ms. Garcia and Mr. Yang, a 2020 presidential candidate — seemed to signal the mood of the city as New Yorkers emerge from the pandemic. A recent rise in gun violence has led to widespread concerns over safety.

But Ms. Wiley received nearly a quarter of first-choice votes, proving that a share of the electorate liked her message of cutting the police budget and focusing on inequality. It is possible that Ms. Wiley, who became the standard-bearer for the left, peaked too late in the race. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez did not endorse Ms. Wiley until the last month of the race after other left-leaning candidates faltered.

If Mr. Adams wins in the coming weeks, his victory could stall the progressive movement’s momentum in New York, reinforcing the idea that rising crime and public safety were of more concern to voters.

Still, progressive candidates had a strong showing in several key races: Alvin Bragg was [*ahead in the Democratic primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/nyregion/manhattan-district-attorney.html) for Manhattan district attorney; Brad Lander was leading the city comptroller race; and left-leaning candidates won mayoral primaries in Buffalo and Rochester.

The night featured other small surprises: In the Republican primary for Staten Island borough president, Vito J. Fossella, a former congressman, had a slight lead over Steven Matteo, a prominent city councilman. Mr. Fossella [*decided not to run for re-election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/15/nyregion/15fossella.html) in 2008 after he was charged with drunken driving and admitted to fathering a child in an extramarital affair.

Whoever ultimately wins the Democratic primary will face [*the Republican nominee*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/nyregion/curtis-sliwa-nyc-mayor.html), Curtis Sliwa, the founder of the Guardian Angels, in November. Mr. Sliwa received nearly 69 percent of votes among the roughly 58,000 Republicans who voted in the primary.

Mr. Adams’s lead reflected a potent outer-borough strategy. His institutional support from the Brooklyn machine and veteran Democrats in Queens and the Bronx likely helped him turn out key constituencies.

Mr. Adams appeared to do well in Latino neighborhoods — a key demographic that he pushed hard to secure with key leaders like Ruben Diaz Jr., the Bronx borough president. In the heavily Latino neighborhood of Mott Haven in the Bronx, for instance, Mr. Adams won more than 45 percent of first-choice votes, compared to less than 20 percent for Ms. Wiley.

Mr. Adams ran a disciplined campaign — his motto was “stay focused, don’t get distracted, grind” — and hammered away at the message that he was the only candidate who could tackle both crime and police reform. Mr. Adams also secured a series of critical endorsements and raised a campaign war chest of more than $10 million — the most among candidates participating in the public matching funds program.

Running as a ***working-class*** underdog, Mr. Adams focused on communities that were hit hard by the pandemic — a message he touched on during his primary night speech, said Christina Greer, an associate professor of political science at Fordham University.

“There are so many communities feeling left out and Adams, as his authentic self, seemed just as angry and hurt and inspired as those communities,” Professor Greer said.

As one of the moderate candidates in the Democratic field, Mr. Adams would be a significant departure from Mr. de Blasio in style and substance, though Mr. de Blasio was believed to privately support Mr. Adams in the race.

Mr. de Blasio praised Mr. Adams on Wednesday and said their coalitions were similar.

“I give credit to Eric Adams — the strength he created in Brooklyn, in Queens and the Bronx,” he said. “Eric obviously had an outer-borough-focused, ***working-class***-focused strategy. That’s a lot of what we did in 2013.”

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo also weighed in on the race and said he would welcome a new mayor; [*his feud*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/22/nyregion/cuomo-deblasio-feud-nyc.html) with Mr. de Blasio is well established. Mr. Cuomo said that Mr. Adams showed competence on the issue of public safety that New Yorkers care most about.

“I have a good relationship with Eric Adams,” Mr. Cuomo said. “I know him. He was in Albany. We worked together.”

This was the first year that the city offered early voting in a mayoral election, and turnout was better than expected. Nearly 800,000 votes have been counted so far in the Democratic mayoral primary — higher than turnout in the last competitive mayoral primary in 2013. That number will grow as counting continues and absentee ballots are processed — more than 100,000 have already been received.

The absentee ballots are unlikely to greatly deviate from the voting patterns seen in the Primary Day vote count, although a large number from Manhattan could favor Ms. Garcia.

At his primary night party on Tuesday, Mr. Adams smiled broadly as he celebrated his lead. Then he took aim at the city’s news media and elites and said he had focused on voters who reliably showed up at the polls.

“Social media does not pick a candidate,” he said. “People on Social Security pick a candidate.”

Anne Barnard contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Eric Adams after the polls closed Tuesday. Mr. Adams, who ran as a moderate, led in every borough except Manhattan in early results. (A1); Eric Adams’s lead reflected a potent outer-borough strategy and a disciplined campaign. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A16)

**Load-Date:** October 5, 2021

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[***Rose-Tinted Lens for Tough Times***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642G-H9P1-DXY4-X239-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Byline:** By Jeannette Catsoulis

**Body**

In this charming memoir, Kenneth Branagh recalls his childhood in Northern Ireland through a rose-tinted lens.

Romanticism reigns in ''Belfast,'' Kenneth Branagh's cinematic memoir of his childhood in a turbulent Northern Ireland. From the lustrous, mainly black-and-white photography to the cozy camaraderie of its ***working-class*** setting, the movie softens edges and hearts alike. The family at its center might have health issues, money worries and an outdoor toilet, but this is no Ken Loach-style deprivation: In these streets, grit and glamour stroll hand-in-hand.

So when Ma (Caitriona Balfe) sits in her doorway to peel potatoes for dinner, what we notice is the soft afternoon light dancing on her luminous skin and brunette curls. And when Pa (Jamie Dornan), square of jaw and shoulder, strides toward home after a spell working in England, the camera shoots him like a returning hero. Which, of course, he is, at least to his younger son, Buddy (a wonderful Jude Hill), a smart, cheery 9-year-old and a fictional version of Branagh himself.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Viewed largely through Buddy's eyes, ''Belfast,'' which opens in August, 1969 (after a brief, colorful montage of the present-day city), is about the destruction of an idyll. Mere minutes into the film, a hail of Molotov cocktails ignites the friendly neighborhood where Catholics and Protestants live amicably side-by-side. A swirling camera conveys Buddy's confusion and terror; yet, even as the barricades go up and the local bully-boy (Colin Morgan) tries to draw Buddy's Protestant family into his campaign to ''cleanse the community'' of its Catholic residents, the movie refuses to get bogged down in militancy.

Instead, we watch Buddy play ball with his cousins; moon over a pretty classmate; watch ''Star Trek'' and Westerns on television; and spend time with his loving grandparents (Judi Dench and Ciarán Hinds). Drawing from his own experiences, Branagh crafts nostalgic, sentimental scenes suffused with some of Van Morrison's warmest songs. Family visits to movies like ''Chitty Chitty Bang Bang'' (1968) add wonder and fantasy to Buddy's life and a clue to his future career. They also offer an escape from a conflict he doesn't understand and his director refuses to elucidate. Snippets of television news play in the background, but the growing Troubles that would tear the country apart are not the story that Branagh (whose family moved to England when he was nine) wants to tell.

So while ''Belfast'' is, in one sense, a deeply personal coming-of-age tale, it's also a more universal story of displacement and detachment, located most powerfully in Balfe's fierce, shining performance. Her authenticity steadies the heartbeat of a film whose cuteness can sometimes grate, and whose telescoped view offers little sense of life beyond Buddy's block. Branagh's remembrances may be idealized, but with ''Belfast'' he has written a charming, rose-tinted thank-you note to the city that sparked his dreams and the parents whose sacrifices helped them come true.

BelfastRated PG-13 for loud bangs and angry bullies. Running time: 1 hour 38 minutes. In theaters.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/11/movies/belfast-review.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/11/movies/belfast-review.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Caitriona Balfe and Jamie Dornan in ''Belfast.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY ROB YOUNGSON/FOCUS FEATURES)

**Load-Date:** November 12, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Pundit Accountability***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61KD-J111-JBG3-60VY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 23, 2020 Wednesday 06:24 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1643 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. High voter turnout was supposed to usher in a Democratic sweep. What happened?

Americans under the age of 40 vote at relatively low rates. They also lean left politically. The same is true of Latinos and Asian-Americans.

This combination has helped feed a widespread belief that an increase in voter turnout would benefit Democrats. People ranging from [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to [*President Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) have made that claim. So have I: “The country’s real silent majority prefers Democrats,” I [*wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) in 2017.

I now think that’s at least partly wrong, and I want to explain today.

First, a little background: A decade ago, the journalist Dave Weigel — now a Washington Post reporter — introduced a concept he called [*pundit accountability*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). The idea was that journalists make a lot of analytical judgments and that we should occasionally revisit them to acknowledge what we got right and wrong. Doing so is a sign of respect to readers and can make us better at our jobs going forward.

Over the years, [*several journalists*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) have [*picked up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) on Weigel’s idea, especially around the end of the year. I’m doing so with today’s newsletter.

I’ll start with the more pleasant side of accountability. In hindsight, I feel good about pieces explaining why Trump was [*unlikely to win re-election*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), why Democrats should hope [*Joe Biden would run*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) for president and why the U.S. [*would struggle*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to contain the coronavirus.

I feel less good about [*largely writing off*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) Biden after he lost New Hampshire and Iowa and about treating the 2020 polls [*credulously*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). The common thread: Politics is less predictable than we journalists sometimes imagine. I’ll try to do a better job of remembering that.

That idea also helps to explain the misperceptions on voter turnout. In 2020, [*turnout soared*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), yet Democrats did worse than expected. Yes, they defeated Trump, but they failed to retake the Senate (for now) and lost ground in the House and in state legislatures.

How could this be, when the big demographic groups with low voter turnout — Millennials, Latinos and Asian-Americans — lean left?

Because the infrequent voters in these groups are less liberal than the frequent voters. “Latino nonvoters, for example, seem to have a higher opinion of Trump than Latino voters,” Yanna Krupnikov, a political scientist at Stony Brook University, told me. Over all, nonvoters split roughly evenly between Democratic leaners and Republican ones, [*a recent Knight Foundation study found*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Once you think it through, the pattern makes some sense. It involves social class.

People who don’t vote (or who didn’t until 2020) are more likely to be ***working class*** — that is, not to have college degrees — than reliable voters, Knight concluded. And ***working-class*** Americans are more conservative on several big issues, including abortion, guns and immigration. They’re also less trusting of institutions and elites.

The fact that turnout surged this year and Democrats didn’t do as well as expected is yet another example of the party’s struggles with ***working-class*** voters, [*and not just* ***working-class*** *whites*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). Whether Democrats can figure out how to do better may be the biggest looming question about American politics.

Have you changed your mind about anything lately? Email us at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](mailto:themorning@nytimes.com) and put “mind change” in the subject line.

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* The Trump administration and Pfizer [*are nearing a deal*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) in which the drug maker would produce at least tens of millions of additional vaccine doses next year in exchange for better access to manufacturing supplies.

1. Dr. Anthony Fauci [*received Moderna’s vaccine*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) in public, calling it “a symbol to the rest of the country that I feel extreme confidence in the safety and the efficacy of this vaccine.”
2. Rail, air and sea routes between Britain and France [*are open again*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). The closing of the border, to limit the spread of a new virus variant found in Britain, had left more than 1,500 trucks stranded.
3. Fewer homeless people across the U.S. [*have contracted the virus*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) than experts feared. Isolation and a lack of indoor shelter appear to have played roles.
4. As a second virus wave hit Europe this fall, our photographers captured medical workers who have been [*fighting to contain the crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Politics

* Trump [*railed against the $900 billion stimulus deal*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) in a video posted online, calling the measure a “disgrace” and demanding changes, including payouts to Americans of $2,000 instead of $600. Afterward, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi tweeted, “Democrats are ready to bring this to the Floor this week by unanimous consent. Let’s do it!”

1. Trump [*issued 20 pardons and commutations*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), including to two people who pleaded guilty in the special counsel’s Russia inquiry and to four Blackwater guards convicted in connection with the killing of Iraqi civilians.

* President-elect Joe Biden [*picked Miguel Cardona*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) as his nominee for education secretary. Cardona has emerged as an urgent voice pressing to reopen schools safely during the pandemic.

1. Biden [*criticized the Trump administration*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) for not being more transparent about an apparent Russian hacking of the U.S. government. “The Defense Department won’t even brief us on many things,” Biden said.
2. Gov. Gavin Newsom [*appointed Alex Padilla*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), California’s secretary of state, to fill Kamala Harris’s Senate seat. Padilla will be the first Latino senator to represent the state, which is almost 40 percent Latino.

Other Big Stories

* The Justice Department [*sued Walmart,*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) saying the company had helped fuel the country’s opioid crisis by filling suspicious prescriptions.

1. Israel [*will hold its fourth election*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) in two years. The country’s Parliament dissolved itself last night after missing a deadline to approve a budget.
2. A police officer [*fatally shot*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) a 47-year-old Black man in Columbus, Ohio. Three weeks ago, a county sheriff’s deputy killed a Black man there, igniting protests. “Our community is exhausted,” said the mayor, Andrew Ginther.
3. The Washington Football Team paid a female former employee $1.6 million to settle a sexual misconduct claim against the team owner, Daniel Snyder, in 2009, [*The Washington Post reports*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). It is the latest in a string of misconduct accusations against team officials.
4. The [*N.B.A. season started last night*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). Unlike the end of last season, it will not take place in a bubble in Florida, but in teams’ home arenas.

Morning Reads

Each December, The Times Magazine celebrates some of the notable people who died during the year, in an issue called The Lives They Lived. [*The latest one is out this morning*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) and includes:

[*Chadwick Boseman*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), the actor who built his career portraying giants of American history.

[*Mimi Jones*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), a civil rights activist known for her participation in the 1964 St. Augustine swim-in.

[*Bill Withers*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), the three-time Grammy Award winner whose songs turned the loves, struggles, regrets and joys of working people into art.

[*Tom Seaver*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), the greatest New York Met of all time.

[*Cecilia Chiang*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), who escaped war in China and shaped Chinese food in the U.S., with a little help from Henry Kissinger.

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ARTS AND IDEAS

Building a podcasting empire

Over the past two years, Spotify has tried to become the go-to place for podcasts as well as music.

In May, the company struck a deal reportedly worth more than $100 million with the popular podcaster Joe Rogan. Spotify has also signed exclusive deals with the Obamas, Kim Kardashian West and Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan. And it has bought high-profile podcasting companies, including Gimlet Media — the maker of “Crimetown” and “Reply All” — and The Ringer, which focuses on sports and pop culture.

Why is Spotify so invested in podcasts? It sees them as an opportunity to make more [*money from advertising*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) than music alone allows. Podcasts let advertisers “have a more intimate relationship with the user,” a [*Spotify executive told CNBC*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), adding that advertisers also like the user data that the company tracks.

Deals with stars like Rogan are another draw for advertisers, one analyst [*told The Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing): “Spotify is buying not only Joe Rogan’s extensive and future content library, but also his loyal audience.”

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

This [*creamy noodle dish*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) will win over vegans and nonvegans.

What to Listen to

Looking to fall in love with Mozart, opera or the piano? Five minutes of listening is all it will take, and [*this list*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) is a great place to start.

Coming Soon

Read [*this interview*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) with the actress Carey Mulligan, who delivered the performance of her career in “Promising Young Woman,” an upcoming dark comedy about consent and revenge.

Imagine

Scooby Snacks, Everlasting Gobstoppers, Burple Nurples: The Times’s arts critic Maya Phillips [*wrote an ode to the sweets*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) “dreamed up in the fictional worlds of TV and movies, summoned from the imagination like Peter Pan’s multicolored pies.”

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was moonwalk. 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: The elf in “Elf” (five letters).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — David

P.S. The word “vaxications” — vacations some people [*expect to book after the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) — appeared for the first time in The Times yesterday, as noted by the Twitter bot [*@NYT\_first\_said*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

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 year in good news.

Lalena Fisher, 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: Voters waited to cast their ballots on Election Day in Cranberry Township, Pa. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jeff Swensen/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 23, 2020

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[***A Vibrant Nightlife Scene Booms in South Africa’s Townships; South Africa Dispatch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:678H-3541-DXY4-X53R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** John Eligon

**Highlight:** Clubs in Khayelitsha, the nation’s second largest township, are attracting Black professionals with entertainment that “we love, we want.”

**Body**

Clubs in Khayelitsha, the nation’s second largest township, are attracting Black professionals with entertainment that “we love, we want.”

At night, quiet and darkness shroud much of Khayelitsha, a township outside of Cape Town. But along a roughly quarter-mile stretch of Spine Road, a major thoroughfare, blue-and-yellow lights glow from bare wooden structures that vibrate with the electronic beats of the wildly popular South African genre amapiano.

Several Mercedes-Benzes and BMWs are among cars parked along the road, while smoke wafts from the grills of dozens of food vendors. Some people sell alcohol from the trunks of their cars, while others peddle joints outside the clubs.

On a recent evening, 36-year-old Ncedo Silas — looking ready for the office with a sweater zipped to his neck and thick clear-framed glasses — bobbed inside one of the clubs with a shoulder-to-shoulder crowd basking in an eye-burning haze of hookah.

“People used to go to town,” he said, referring to Cape Town, for a good time. But now, he added, there are numerous establishments in the township, population 450,000, whose owners “know what it is that we love, we want.”

Townships in South Africa were born of racist apartheid-era social engineering that kept nonwhite citizens segregated from economic opportunities and basic infrastructure. That legacy continues to be felt in the poverty and crime that afflicts many townships.

In recent years, though, Khayelitsha’s nightlife scene has grown immensely, with restaurants and clubs cropping up, particularly along Spine Road. All the activity has helped to temper concerns about encountering violent crime at nighttime venues in the township, and attracted more local Black professionals like Mr. Silas, who works in insurance. He and others are rejecting the velvet ropes of the larger city of Cape Town — with its traffic, expensive drinks and whiter population — for nightlife they believe better suits their culture and tastes.

“I can’t relate to that — it’s white music,” Mr. Silas said of Cape Town establishments.

Although many townships under apartheid lacked basic services like running water and electricity, many people who grew up in them have long found comfort in gathering, socializing and celebrating in them.

After the country’s transition to multiracial democracy in 1994 led to greater economic opportunities for Black South Africans, the entertainment possibilities in townships became increasingly sophisticated. That’s evident nationwide; clubs in Soweto, near Johannesburg, and Umlazi, near the coastal city of Durban, are among the hottest in the country.

“The township comes with a certain kind of freedom,” said Zinhle Mqadi, the chief executive of Max’s Lifestyle Village in Umlazi, a sprawling venue that includes a restaurant, nightclub, carwash and salon.

Khayelitsha was created in 1983 by the apartheid government to relieve overcrowded settlements nearby. It is now South Africa’s second largest Black township.

The origins of its booming nightlife scene date to 2007, when a local businessman, Bulelani Skaap, better known as Ace, opened the nightclub KwaAce, around the corner from Spine Road. Over the years, other establishments popped up nearby, attracting the luxury car set.

Spine Road grew into a casual hub of evening activity. Revelers parked their cars along the side of the road, and grilled meat and drank.

Fikile Makuliwe, a 31-year-old Khayelitsha native, saw opportunity.

About four years ago, while studying engineering in college, he began setting up a gazebo along Spine Road every weekend with comfortable chairs, hookah pipes and a cellphone charging station. Mr. Makuliwe said he hoped the comfortable setup, which he broke down at the end of each evening, would attract revelers looking for an experience that felt V.I.P.

After saving money from this venture and an engineering apprenticeship, Mr. Makuliwe in late 2020 opened Ocean Canda, which sells sushi and other seafood by day and features D.J.s spinning ear-splitting beats by night.

“There’s no place like this place,” said Thando Mpushe, a 35-year-old professional opera singer, standing on the elevated platform that is Ocean Canda’s V.I.P. section.

Ocean Canda’s tall, boxy structure, framed with exposed logs and a corrugated tin roof, feels more beachfront shack than ritzy club.

But it was one of several establishments opened during the pandemic — some without the city’s blessing — that helped make Spine Road a hive of activity.

“It has now outgrown what would have been expected,” said Ndithini Tyhido, the chairman of the Khayelitsha Development Forum, adding that Spine Road has attracted an influx of working professionals, some from Cape Town and surrounding suburbs. “Look at the clothes they wear, the cars they drive, the types of drinks they are having.”

Despite the best efforts of some establishments to try to exude an upscale aura — with plush sofas, and names like “Paris Lifestyle” — the atmosphere along Spine Road remains decidedly ***working class***.

Wedged between neighborhoods of tightly packed bungalows, the corridor features several slapdash sheds playing music and serving drinks. Hundreds of people hang around cars, and as the night progresses, drunken stragglers stumble along dirt paths or collapse in the street.

To some, Khayelitsha’s flourishing nightlife is a testament to the hustle and ingenuity of people in a country where about a third of the population is unemployed, and where many are constrained by systemic barriers — like difficulties getting bank loans and a historic lack of stable, affordable housing.

Thera, a 36-year-old former restaurant manager, used to sell liquor on Spine Road out of his compact hatched Renault. Last March — without permission from the city, he said — he put together a tin shack about the size of a classroom on the street, and strung lights on a wall in the shape of letters bearing the name of his new establishment: R Lounge.

Thera, who asked that his last name be withheld for fear of getting in trouble, said he was motivated by hunger and poverty. “What we are doing is illegal,” he said. “We’ll try to make as much money as we can.”

Khayelitsha’s intrepid nightlife entrepreneurs are also forced to keep an eye on crime.

Through last September, Western Cape Province recorded 571 mass shootings over a three-year period, most of them occurring in the townships near Cape Town. There were 130 murders in Khayelitsha over a three-month span last year, among the most in the country.

Malibongwe Dadase, who last October opened Dadase’s Shisanyama, a restaurant and lounge a lonely and dark five-minute drive from Spine Road, said that although the violence deterred some customers, he hoped the presence of businesses like his could help thwart crime.

“I was like, ‘OK, it’s fine, let me take a risk,’” Mr. Dadase, 42, said of his decision to open. “Fear can limit your dreams.”

In some ways, the booming nightlife has created pockets of safety, community leaders said.

Murders and some other violent crimes generally don’t occur along Spine Road, possibly because the crowds act as a deterrent, said Lunga Guza, the head of the area’s Community Police Forum, a residents group that works with the police. But there has been gender-based violence, he said, and the traffic and drunkenness can be a nuisance.

Another possible crime prevention measure is so-called protection fees. Gangs in Khayelitsha are notorious for forcing business owners to pay for “protection,” or face potentially fatal consequences. Although the gangs’ efforts are considered illegal extortion, locals say they can keep serious criminals away. But all of the nightlife owners interviewed denied having paid such fees.

Several years ago, Sbongile Matyi and his family moved into a home they bought in the suburb of Kuils River because they felt it was safer than Khayelitsha, where he grew up. Yet here was Mr. Matyi, 34, on a recent evening sucking on a hookah pipe in Ocean Canda.

In his new suburb, which has many more white residents than Khayelitsha, he sometimes felt judged, he said. A neighbor once asked how he could afford to buy a home in Kuils River, said Mr. Matyi, who is Black and works in law enforcement. He doesn’t want to have to deal with that type of attitude when he is trying to relax and have a good time.

“The reason I come back here: People, they value me, they respect me,” he said.

PHOTOS: Evening in the township of Khayelitsha: outside the booming dance halls, people also sell liquor from their vehicles, left, and grill food, right. “People used to go to town,” one partygoer said, referring to nearby Cape Town — with its traffic, expensive drinks and whiter population — for a night out. But some Black professionals say the township venues “know what it is that we love, we want.”; Club Canda, one of several nightclubs in Khayelitsha. Restaurants and clubs along the township’s Spine Road are attracting revelers eager to smoke, drink and move to amapiano, a South African hybrid of house, jazz and lounge music.; Hanging out at Ocean Canda. “There’s no place like this place,” said a patron watching from the club’s V.I.P. platform. said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOAO SILVA/THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A4.

**Load-Date:** January 10, 2023

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[***What Urban Planners Can Learn From This Idealistic Coffee Shop; Big CITY***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6696-40N1-JBG3-61SB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1059 words

**Byline:** Ginia Bellafante

**Highlight:** Can a pay-what-you-want cafe exist in a gentrified Gowanus?

**Body**

Can a pay-what-you-want cafe exist in a gentrified Gowanus?

By any measure, the area around an industrial patch of Ninth Street in Brooklyn, straddling Park Slope and Gowanus, ought to emerge as an urbanist’s utopia — a space where painters, poets, craftsmen, professionals with artsy jobs and ***working-class*** people live and connect and thrive. It should be the kind of place where small businesses holding dear to collectivist values serve a polylithic community deeply invested in itself. In late June, Katie Bishop, a 33-year-old former Marine and bassoonist with an advanced degree in music theory opened a coffeehouse — [*Principles GI*](https://principlesbk.nyc/) — on Ninth Street with precisely such a vision in mind.

Unlike [*Blank Street*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/29/dining/blank-street-coffee.html), the quickly multiplying coffee chain backed by private equity, Ms. Bishop’s venture is held together by her ethics and enthusiasms, aiming, for example, to reach “zero coffee-cup waste by 2023.” Principles was inspired by a movement in the late 1960s, energized long before she was born, when protesters of the Vietnam War opened coffeehouses, typically near military bases, to provide a forum for soldiers increasingly disenchanted with American aggression abroad. As [*Fred Gardner*](https://www.nytimes.com/1969/04/28/archives/antiwar-gis-and-army-head-for-clash-over-vietnam-officials.html), a young Harvard graduate who opened a venue like this near Fort Jackson, in South Carolina, wrote: “By 1967 the Army was filling up with people who would rather be making love to the music of Jimi Hendrix than war to the lies of Lyndon Johnson.”

Ms. Bishop hoped to create, as she put it recently, “a social hub masquerading as a coffeehouse.”

A native of Arizona, she moved to Portland, Ore., a decade ago (after she was stationed in Albany, Ga.) and got involved with the [*Occupy movement*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/organization/occupy-movement-occupy-wall-street), particularly with a veterans’ group that opposed the war in Iraq. By 2016 she was in New York, attending Queens College, loving coffee and working as a barista. Principles would merge her interests — for quality beans, for inclusion and activism, for the vibrant exchange of ideas, for cycling. (In a corner of the shop, she has set up a bike tool library so that anyone could come in and make repairs.)

To start the business, Ms. Bishop raised $5,000 via GoFundMe, borrowed $25,000 from friends and got an interest-free loan in the same amount from the [*Hebrew Free Loan Society*](https://hfls.org/about/mission-history/), a 130-year-old organization that extends credit to low-income New Yorkers. Beyond that she secured a five-year lease for $5,000 a month (at 1,600 square feet, the space is big), brought in found furniture, got help building more from a friend in theatrical production and had countertops given to her by a woodworker whose shop is across the street.

Low margins allow for the most distinctive feature of her operation — letting people pay whatever they want for a cup of coffee (specialty drinks come at a set price) based on what they can afford or are willing to give. Some people pay nothing, some $1, some $20 or $30. In the roughly two months that Principles has been open, she has found that certain patrons see a virtue in turning over more money than even the very best cup of coffee on earth could possibly be worth.

Progressives in New York and other large, punishingly expensive cities often bemoan the absence of small, socially minded independent businesses like this. And yet they simultaneously resist the kind of density that would allow them to succeed. During the past month, nearly 300 residents have signed a petition asking the Department of City Planning to oppose a residential rezoning of Ninth Street between Second Avenue and Third, the site of Ms. Bishop’s shop, that would permit nine-story residential buildings with mostly market-rate rental apartments — presumably housing people willing to offer $5 for a cup of Mother Tongue, “a queer-run, woman/trans-centric roastery,” as Ms. Bishop described it, out of Oakland, Calif.

There is no question that some of the concerns about the plan, which the Adams administration supports (because, as a spokesman for the mayor put it, “Mayor Adams has articulated a bold vision to turn New York into a ‘City of Yes,’”), require long and serious conversation. Gowanus, which already famously contains a canal that is a Superfund site, remains especially vulnerable to storm surge and consideration to what the current infrastructure can and cannot sustain is crucial. The real issue, though, is that the proposal does not account for enough affordable housing which the petition fails to address. Kathryn Krase, a social worker, lawyer and one of the forces behind it, who owns a home nearby, said that her group was deeply in favor of its expansion but preferred an overall rezoning plan more “modest” in scale.

For the past several months, [*Shahana Hanif*](https://council.nyc.gov/shahana-hanif/), the newly elected councilwoman for the district, has been working toward a different kind of proposal, one that would require a greater number of affordable units (the current plan puts the number at 13 out of 48) delivered at rents that low-income, not merely middle-income people, could manage. “With the compounded issues of our housing crisis, new immigrants coming and residents still displaced from Ida who are living in hotels,” Ms. Hanif said, the configuration as it stands now “is simply not enough.” On Ninth Street one of the places poised for development is a parking lot, which ought to be entirely uncontroversial. “Housing should be everyone’s biggest priority,” she said.

A city built around silos of wealth, poverty and middle-of-the road affluence cannot remain animated; it can’t cook. In one sense, Ms. Bishop’s venture, however idealistic, provides a template for how we ought to think about emerging neighborhoods — as places deeply integrated at the level of class, race and even philosophy. It is easy to imagine a certain kind of New Yorker eye-rolling over her business model, just as it is easy to imagine another losing her mind over the fact of an international ad agency called Mother, also on Ninth Street, which bills itself as refusing to answer to the tentacles “of the grotesquely swollen octopus of global capital.” We need all the crazy dreams, in the end.

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PHOTO: Katie Bishop at Principles GI, which was inspired by the egalitarian coffeehouses that sprang up around military bases during the Vietnam War. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[***‘Belfast’ Review: A Boy’s Life; Critic’s Pick***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6429-6M21-DXY4-X1HD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 11, 2021 Thursday 06:34 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 538 words

**Byline:** Jeannette Catsoulis

**Highlight:** In this charming memoir, Kenneth Branagh recalls his childhood in Northern Ireland through a rose-tinted lens.

**Body**

In this charming memoir, Kenneth Branagh recalls his childhood in Northern Ireland through a rose-tinted lens.

Romanticism reigns in “Belfast,” Kenneth Branagh’s cinematic memoir of his childhood in a turbulent Northern Ireland. From the lustrous, mainly black-and-white photography to the cozy camaraderie of its ***working-class*** setting, the movie softens edges and hearts alike. The family at its center might have health issues, money worries and an outdoor toilet, but this is no Ken Loach-style deprivation: In these streets, grit and glamour stroll hand-in-hand.

So when Ma (Caitriona Balfe) sits in her doorway to peel potatoes for dinner, what we notice is the soft afternoon light dancing on her luminous skin and brunette curls. And when Pa (Jamie Dornan), square of jaw and shoulder, strides toward home after a spell working in England, the camera shoots him like a returning hero. Which, of course, he is, at least to his younger son, Buddy (a wonderful Jude Hill), a smart, cheery 9-year-old and a fictional version of Branagh himself.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/Ja3PPOnJQ2k)]

Viewed largely through Buddy’s eyes, “Belfast,” which opens in August, 1969 (after a brief, colorful montage of the present-day city), is about the destruction of an idyll. Mere minutes into the film, a hail of Molotov cocktails ignites the friendly neighborhood where Catholics and Protestants live amicably side-by-side. A swirling camera conveys Buddy’s confusion and terror; yet, even as the barricades go up and the local bully-boy (Colin Morgan) tries to draw Buddy’s Protestant family into his campaign to “cleanse the community” of its Catholic residents, the movie refuses to get bogged down in militancy.

Instead, we watch Buddy play ball with his cousins; moon over a pretty classmate; watch “Star Trek” and Westerns on television; and spend time with his loving grandparents (Judi Dench and Ciarán Hinds). Drawing from his own experiences, Branagh crafts nostalgic, sentimental scenes suffused with [*some of Van Morrison’s warmest songs*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=506t6WgCx88). Family visits to movies like “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang” (1968) add wonder and fantasy to Buddy’s life and a clue to his future career. They also offer an escape from a conflict he doesn’t understand and his director refuses to elucidate. Snippets of television news play in the background, but the growing Troubles that would tear the country apart are not the story that Branagh (whose family moved to England when he was nine) wants to tell.

So while “Belfast” is, in one sense, a deeply personal coming-of-age tale, it’s also a more universal story of displacement and detachment, located most powerfully in Balfe’s fierce, shining performance. Her authenticity steadies the heartbeat of a film whose cuteness can sometimes grate, and whose telescoped view offers little sense of life beyond Buddy’s block. Branagh’s remembrances may be idealized, but with “Belfast” he has written a charming, rose-tinted thank-you note to the city that sparked his dreams and the parents whose sacrifices helped them come true.

Belfast

Rated PG-13 for loud bangs and angry bullies. Running time: 1 hour 38 minutes. In theaters.

PHOTO: Caitriona Balfe and Jamie Dornan in “Belfast.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY ROB YOUNGSON/FOCUS FEATURES)

**Load-Date:** November 12, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Zeldin Seizes on Safety After Shooting at Home***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66KP-M451-DXY4-X02N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 12, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 13

**Length:** 1170 words

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

**Body**

The shooting of two teenagers directly outside his Long Island home has given Mr. Zeldin an opportunity to push his tough-on-crime message within a personal frame.

After two teenage boys were shot outside his home on Long Island last weekend, Representative Lee Zeldin wasted little time to amplify the tough-on-crime message he has relentlessly pressed in his bid for governor of New York.

He quickly assembled a news conference in front of his moonlit house on Sunday night, followed up the next day with a Fox News interview, and used an appearance at the Columbus Day Parade to imbue his political messaging with a new personal, if frightening, outlook.

''It doesn't hit any closer to home than this,'' Mr. Zeldin, a Republican, said while marching at the parade in Manhattan on Monday, describing the incident as ''traumatic'' for his twin 16-year-old daughters, who were doing their homework in the kitchen when the shooting happened. ''This could be anyone across this entire state.''

''Last night the girls wanted to sleep with us,'' Mr. Zeldin also said during the parade. ''I didn't think that the next time I'd be standing in front of a crime scene, it would be crime scene tape in front of my own house.''

The shooting unfolded on Sunday afternoon when the police said multiple gunshots were fired from a dark-colored vehicle at three teenage boys walking near Mr. Zeldin's home in Suffolk County on Long Island. Two 17-year-old boys were forced to take cover by Mr. Zeldin's porch, suffering injuries that were not life threatening, while a 15-year-old boy fled the shots unharmed.

That the shooting unfolded near the home of a conservative congressman who has anchored his campaign for governor on the state of crime in New York, attracting outsize media attention, appears to have been pure happenstance.

The police had not made any arrests as of Tuesday, but they were investigating whether the incident was connected to gang violence, according to a law enforcement official who asked to remain anonymous to discuss an ongoing investigation.

But with less than four weeks until Election Day, the shooting offered Mr. Zeldin an opportunity to elevate the issue of public safety in the governor's race, as the congressman seeks a breakout in his efforts to unseat Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat who has so far enjoyed a comfortable lead in most public polls.

Mr. Zeldin faces a steep climb to overcome Ms. Hochul's significant fund-raising edge in a state where Democrats overwhelmingly outnumber Republicans. He has been quick to talk about the impact of the shooting in starkly personal terms, appealing to New Yorkers who have also been affected by gun violence. Mr. Zeldin was at a campaign event in the Bronx with his wife during the shooting.

Mr. Zeldin, a staunch Trump supporter who has represented Suffolk County in Congress since 2015, has said he would make law and order his top priority if elected. He has consistently sought to blame the rise in violence on criminal justice policies enacted by progressive lawmakers as well as on left-leaning prosecutors, such as Alvin Bragg, the district attorney in Manhattan. He has promised to fire Mr. Bragg ''on Day 1.''

At the same time, he has opposed Democratic-led efforts to tighten gun control measures, cheering the Supreme Court's decision to strike down New York's concealed carry law as ''a historic, proper, and necessary victory.''

Ms. Hochul, who is seeking her first full term, has trumpeted her efforts to tighten the state's bail laws and has emphasized initiatives to crack down on illegal gun trafficking, as well as a law she signed raising the age for the purchase of semiautomatic rifles, after a massacre at a Buffalo supermarket earlier this year.

''We're not running away from those issues,'' Ms. Hochul said on Monday. ''We're leaning hard into them because we have a real record of accomplishment.''

The shooting outside Mr. Zeldin's home is the second time his safety has been threatened this election cycle.

Three months ago, a man tried to physically attack Mr. Zeldin with a sharp key chain during a campaign event near Rochester. The attacker, a veteran of the Iraq War who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and alcoholism, was quickly subdued and initially released without bail before being arrested on federal assault charges.

Mr. Zeldin, who was not injured, used the confrontation to attack Democrats for the reforms they enacted to the state's bail laws two years ago, even if the episode did little to shake up the state of the race.

''It's an extraordinary coincidence of events that gives Zeldin's crime message added credibility, urgency, and national attention,'' said William F. B. O'Reilly, a Republican political consultant who is not working on the Zeldin campaign. ''This will almost certainly help him in the final weeks of the campaign.''

Mr. Zeldin could certainly use a boost, having lagged behind Ms. Hochul in nearly every public poll commissioned this cycle. He has also found himself chasing her haul of campaign contributions -- a tribute to a voracious fund-raising apparatus that raised $11.1 million from July to October of this year. The cash has allowed her to blanket airwaves and smartphones with campaign ads attacking Mr. Zeldin's support of Mr. Trump and his opposition to abortion rights.

Mr. Zeldins financial outlook is not exactly bleak, however. He brought in $6.4 million during the same period, thanks in part to fund-raisers with former president Donald J. Trump and Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida. He has also seen support from conservative super PACs which have spent nearly $4 million in the past weeks on ads calling Ms. Hochul soft on crime and criticizing her handling of the economy.

On Tuesday, a police car was still stationed outside Mr. Zeldin's home in Shirley, a ***working-class*** hamlet on the South Shore of Long Island, where residents on the typically sleepy street were still rattled by the burst of violence.

Dan Haug was in his home when he heard the shots and ran to the window, spotting one of the boys lying in Mr. Zeldin's bushes, screaming and bleeding from the gunshot wounds.

''You know, there's little isolated incidents in this neighborhood with like, fireworks and like dogs getting loose,'' said Mr. Haug, who has lived in the neighborhood for seven years. ''But nothing like that.''

Mary Smith, the mother of the teenager who escaped unharmed, blamed the shooting on the proliferation of guns among young people, while stressing that she did not believe her son was in a gang, saying: ''He's just a normal kid.''

While expressing sympathy for the Zeldin family ordeal, Ms. Smith lamented that she had heard nothing from the congressman himself, despite his many public comments.

''I'm around the corner from you,'' Ms. Smith said in an interview. ''They took the story away from the victims and made it about running for government.''

Chelsia Rose Marcius contributed reporting.Chelsia Rose Marcius contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/11/nyregion/lee-zeldin-shooting-house.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/11/nyregion/lee-zeldin-shooting-house.html)

**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page A13.

**Load-Date:** October 12, 2022

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[***Tim Ryan Is Winning the War for the Soul of the Democratic Party; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66NM-R5S1-JBG3-614C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 21, 2022 Friday 14:53 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2638 words

**Byline:** Alec MacGillis

**Highlight:** The Democrats are doing almost exactly what he said they should to save their political fortunes in the Midwest. But is it enough to win Ohio?

**Body**

ZANESVILLE, Ohio — Tim Ryan is a “crazy, lying fraud.” That’s how J.D. Vance, the best-selling memoirist turned Republican Senate candidate from Ohio, opened his remarks at his[*September rally*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aiTD1Nm9Lc) alongside Donald Trump in the middle of the congressional district Mr. Ryan has represented for two decades.

Mr. Ryan seems like an unlikely object of such caustic rhetoric. A 49-year-old former college-football quarterback, he is the paragon of affability, a genial Everyman whose [*introductory campaign video*](https://twitter.com/timryan/status/1386648125889208320) is so innocuous that it might easily be mistaken for an insurance commercial. His great passions, outside of politics, are yoga and mindfulness practice.

“We have to love each other, we have to care about each other, we have to see the best in each other, we have to forgive each other,” he declared when he won the Democratic Senate primary in May.

He isn’t just preaching kindness and forgiveness. For years, he has warned his fellow Democrats that their embrace of free trade and globalization would cost them districts like the one he represents in the Mahoning River Valley — and lobbied them to prioritize domestic manufacturing, which, he argued, could repair some of the damage.

His efforts went nowhere. Mr. Ryan failed in his bid to replace Nancy Pelosi as House minority leader in 2016. His presidential run in 2020 ended with barely a trace. And his opponent, Mr. Vance, was expected to coast to victory this year in a state that Mr. Trump carried twice by eight points.

But things haven’t gone as predicted. Mr. Ryan is running close enough in the polls that a political action committee aligned with Mitch McConnell, the Republican Senate leader, has had to commit $28 million to keep the seat (now held by Rob Portman, who is retiring), and Mr. Vance has had to ratchet up his rhetorical attacks against this “weak, fake congressman.”

After years of being overlooked, Tim Ryan is pointing his party toward a path to recovery in the Midwest. On the campaign trail, he has embraced a unifying tone that stands out from the crassness and divisiveness that Mr. Trump and his imitators have wrought. A significant number of what he calls the “exhausted majority” of voters have responded gratefully.

And his core message — a demand for more aggressive government intervention to arrest regional decline — is not only resonating with voters but, crucially, breaking through with the Democratic leaders who presided over that decline for years. The Democrats have passed a burst of legislation that will pave the way for two new Intel chip plants in the Columbus exurbs, spur investment in new electric vehicle ventures in Mr. Ryan’s district, and benefit solar-panel factories around Toledo, giving him, at long last, concrete examples to cite of his party rebuilding the manufacturing base in which the region took such pride.

In short, the party is doing much more of what Mr. Ryan has long said would save its political fortunes in the Midwest. The problem for him — and also for them — is that it may have come too late.

Tim Ryan was not always so alone in Congress. Manufacturing regions of the Northeast and Midwest used to produce many other Democrats like him, often with white-ethnic Catholic, ***working-class*** backgrounds and strong ties to organized labor. (Mr. Ryan’s family is Irish and Italian, and both his grandfather and great-grandfather worked in the steel mills.) One particularly notorious example of the type was James Traficant, who represented the Mahoning Valley in highly eccentric fashion and served seven years in prison after a 2002 conviction on charges that included soliciting bribes and racketeering. That left his young former staff member — Tim Ryan — to win the seat at age 29.

A few stalwarts remain: Marcy Kaptur, whose mother was a union organizer at a sparkplug plant, will likely hold her Toledo-area House seat after her MAGA opponent lied about his military record. And Sherrod Brown, whose upbringing in hard-hit Mansfield and generally disheveled affect has lent authenticity to his own progressive populism (never mind the fact that he’s a doctor’s son and has a Yale degree), has survived two Senate re-elections thanks to his personal appeal and weak opponents.

But nearly all the rest have vanished. Many of them fell victim to the Democratic wipeout in 2010. Others succumbed to the extreme Republican gerrymandering that followed. But central to their disappearance was the economic decline of the communities they represented, which was on a scale that remains hard for many in more prosperous pockets of the country to grasp.

In the first decade of this century, after Bill Clinton signed NAFTA in 1993 and ushered China into the World Trade Organization in 2000, so many manufacturing businesses closed in Ohio — about 3,500, nearly a[*fifth of the total*](https://www.daytondailynews.com/business/ohio-has-lost-500-factories-over-last-years-stats-show/Xb6J9jILaVaFd7LBEg6gAM/) — that its industrial electricity consumption fell by more than a quarter. Mr. Ryan’s district was among the most ravaged. By 2010, the population of Youngstown had fallen 60 percent from its 1930 peak and it ranked among the poorest cities in the country.

For the Democrats representing these devastated areas, the fallout was enormous. “We were always supposed to be the party of working people, and so those rank-and-file union members kept getting crushed, and jobs kept leaving, and their unions and the Democrats weren’t able to do anything for them,” said Mr. Ryan, when I met with him in August, after an event he held at a substance abuse treatment program in Zanesville. Democratic candidates were also putting their attention elsewhere, on social issues, and voters noticed.

Mr. Ryan is determined not to make the same mistake. “You want culture wars?” he asks in one TV ad, while throwing darts in a bar. “I’m not your guy. You want a fighter for Ohio? I’m all in.”

In the 2000s, as Mr. Ryan saw his band of like-minded Democrats dwindle, he started looking for answers, and he found some of them at the Coalition for a Prosperous America, a small advocacy group founded in 2007 to promote American manufacturing and agriculture.

The group’s theory is fairly straightforward: The “free trade” that has been so ruinous to manufacturing regions like the Mahoning Valley has been anything but free, given all the various forms of support that other nations provide their own industries. The group has been lobbying members of both parties to consider explicit support for U.S. producers, whether in the form of tariffs or subsidies, even if it means brushing up against World Trade Organization rules.

For years, the Coalition for a Prosperous America and its allies in Congress ran up against free-trade orthodoxy. But growing alarm over climate change, the breakdown of global supply chains during the pandemic and Russia’s war against Ukraine have brought a stunning turnaround. The Inflation Reduction Act includes many of the kinds of policies that Mr. Ryan and C.P.A. have championed, including refundable tax credits for solar-panel production, a 15 percent alternative minimum tax for corporations, and requirements that electric vehicles have North American-made parts to qualify for consumer tax credits. This month, the Biden administration announced major new tech-export controls aimed at China, with the U.S. trade representative, Katherine Tai, declaring that free trade “cannot come at the cost of further weakening our supply chains.”

It’s a vindication for Mr. Ryan and his former House allies, such as Tom Perriello, who represented south-central Virginia between 2009 and 2011.

“The elite echo chamber assumed away all the human costs” of globalization, said Mr. Perriello, instead of realizing industries needed to be helped to save middle-class jobs.

Still, the shift has come only after tremendous economic losses for places like the Mahoning Valley and political losses for the Democrats. In the 2020 presidential election, Democrats lost white voters without college degrees[*by 26 percentage points nationwide*](https://theliberalpatriot.substack.com/p/what-would-the-working-class-say), and their margins among ***working-class*** Black and Hispanic voters shrank, too. They lost Mahoning County, once a Democratic stronghold, for the first time since 1972.

“For the most part, people lost jobs here and Washington wasn’t doing anything for them,” said David Betras, the former chairman of the Mahoning County Democratic Party. “And then Trump came along and he said, ‘Hey, they screwed you.’ People thought, ‘At least he sees me. He’s giving me water.’” It might be contaminated water, as Mr. Betras noted, “but at least it’s water.”

Mr. Ryan’s attempt to point his party in a different direction in the Midwest is still running up against resistance, even as he has drawn close to Mr. Vance in the polls. The first ad released by Mr. Ryan’s campaign, in April, is Exhibit A.

Wearing an untucked shirt, he delivers a[*barrage*](https://m.facebook.com/watch/?v=1016522545914046&amp;_rdr) against the threat presented by China: “It is us versus China and instead of taking them on, Washington’s wasting our time on stupid fights … China is out-manufacturing us left and right … America can never be dependent on Communist China … It is time for us to fight back … We need to build things in Ohio by Ohio workers.”

By the standards of the Ohio Senate race of 2022, it was pretty mild stuff. At an April rally with Mr. Trump, after completing his extreme pivot from Trump critic to acolyte, Mr. Vance lashed out at “corrupt scumbags who take their marching orders from the Communist Chinese.” But the Ryan ad nonetheless got opprobrium from Asian Americans, who said it risked fueling anti-Asian sentiment.

Irene Lin, a Democratic strategist based in Ohio, found that remarkable. “It’s so weird that he runs an ad attacking China, and people say, ‘You sound like Trump.’ Tim’s been attacking China for decades! Trump co-opted it from us and we need to take it back, because Trump is a complete fraud on this.”

Still, the episode underscored Mr. Ryan’s conundrum: how to match Mr. Trump and Mr. Vance when it comes to the decline of Ohio manufacturing without offending allies within the liberal Democratic coalition.

When I asked Mr. Ryan in Zanesville how he would distinguish his own views from those of Mr. Vance, he insisted it would not be difficult. For one thing, he noted, Mr. Vance has attacked a core element of the industrial policy that Mr. Ryan sees as key to reviving Ohio: electric vehicle subsidies. At the Mahoning rallies, Mr. Vance denounced them as giveaways for the elites, which, as Mr. Ryan sees it, overlooks the hundreds of workers who now have jobs at the old Lordstown General Motors plant in the Mahoning Valley, building electric cars, trucks and tractors as part of a new venture led by the Taiwanese company Foxconn, and at a large battery plant across the street.

“He’s worried about losing the internal-combustion auto jobs — dude, where’ve you been?” Mr. Ryan asked. “Those jobs are going. That factory was empty.”

Less than two months after Mr. Ryan’s anti-culture war ad, the Supreme Court issued its Dobbs ruling on abortion, bolstering Democrats’ prospects with moderate voters of the sort who help decide elections in places like suburban Columbus — and making it harder for Mr. Ryan to avoid hot-button social issues. He calls the ruling “the largest governmental overreach into personal lives in my lifetime,” but his continued focus on economic issues shows that he believes that’s not enough to win an election. Recent polls suggest he may be right.

Mr. Ryan was in the Columbus suburbs on the evening after we spoke in Zanesville, but he was there to discuss the China ad, not abortion. At an event hosted by local Asian American associations, a few women told Mr. Ryan how hurtful they had found the ad. He answered in a conciliatory tone, but did not apologize.

The ad, he said, was directed at the Chinese government, not Asian or Asian American people, and the things in it needed saying. “I got nothing but love in my heart. I have no hate in my heart,” he said, but the United States needed to rise to meet China’s aggressive trade policies. In Youngstown, Chinese “steel would land on our shore so subsidized, that it was the same price as the raw material cost for an American company before they even turn the lights on. That is what they have been doing.”

“That is not in your ad,” said one of the women. “You need to put those things in your ad.”

“I just want to make a point,” Mr. Ryan said. “One is, I love you. Two is, I will always defend you and never let anyone try to hurt you, never. Not on my watch. But we have got to absolutely and decisively defeat China economically. And if we don’t do that, you’re going to have these countries dictating the rules of the road for the entire world and continuing to try to displace and weaken the United States.”

Watching Mr. Ryan, I was struck by what a delicate balancing act he was trying to pull off. He was, on the one hand, the last of a breed, a son of steel country with two public college degrees (Bowling Green State University and the University of New Hampshire) in a party increasingly dominated by professionals with elite degrees.

But he was trying to adapt to today’s liberal coalition, too, with his soft-edged rhetoric and, yes, the mindfulness stuff, which Mr. Vance has lampooned. (“You know Tim Ryan has not one but two books on yoga and meditation?” he said at the September rally with Mr. Trump.)

There were other models on the ballot this fall for how Democrats might seek to win in the Midwest: Gov. Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan running for re-election on abortion rights, John Fetterman running for Senate in Pennsylvania on his unique brand of postindustrial authenticity, Mandela Barnes running for Senate in Wisconsin as an avatar of youthful diversity.

But Mr. Ryan’s bid may have the most riding on it, because it is based on substantive disagreements within the party about how to rebuild the middle class and the middle of the country. For years, too many leading Democrats stood by as the wrenching transformation of the economy devastated communities, while accruing benefits to a small set of highly prosperous cities, mostly on the coasts, that became the party’s gravitational center. It was so easy to disregard far-off desolation — or to take only passing note of it, counting the dollar stores as one happened to traverse areas of decline — until Mr. Trump’s victory brought it to the fore.

With its belated embrace of the industrial policy advocated by Mr. Ryan, the Democratic Party seems finally to be reckoning with this failure. It means grappling with regional decline, because not everyone can relocate to prosperous hubs, and even if they did, it wouldn’t necessarily help the Democrats in a political system that favors the geographic dispersal of party voters.

It means recognizing the emotional power of made-in-America patriotism, which can serve to neuter the uglier aspects of the opposition’s anti-immigrant appeals. And it means transcending the culture-war incitements offered up by the likes of Mr. Trump and Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida.

The approach may well fall short this time in Ohio, because Mr. Ryan’s party has let so much terrain slip out of its hands. But even so, it showed what might have been, all along, and might yet be again, if a region can begin to recover, and the resentment can begin to recede.

Alec MacGillis ([*@AlecMacGillis*](https://twitter.com/AlecMacGillis)) is a reporter for ProPublica, an editor at large for The Baltimore Banner, and the author, most recently, of “Fulfillment: America in the Shadow of Amazon.”

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PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MEGAN JELINGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page SR10.

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[***For Zeldin, a Shooting Hits Close to Home and to His Campaign Theme***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66KK-64T1-DXY4-X534-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1164 words

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

**Highlight:** The shooting of two teenagers directly outside his Long Island home has given Mr. Zeldin an opportunity to push his tough-on-crime message within a personal frame.

**Body**

The shooting of two teenagers directly outside his Long Island home has given Mr. Zeldin an opportunity to push his tough-on-crime message within a personal frame.

After two teenage boys [*were shot outside his home*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/09/nyregion/lee-zeldin-shooting-long-island-home.html) on Long Island last weekend, Representative Lee Zeldin wasted little time to amplify the tough-on-crime message he has relentlessly pressed in his bid for governor of New York.

He quickly assembled a news conference in front of his [*moonlit house*](https://www.space.com/full-hunters-moon-orange-october-09-22) on Sunday night, followed up the next day with a Fox News interview, and used an appearance at the Columbus Day Parade to imbue his political messaging with a new personal, if frightening, outlook.

“It doesn’t hit any closer to home than this,” Mr. Zeldin, a Republican, [*said*](https://apnews.com/article/2022-midterm-elections-shootings-new-york-campaigns-crime-7ca23a101be42f2c1983a51a5173ea2c) while marching at the parade in Manhattan on Monday, describing the incident as “traumatic” for his twin 16-year-old daughters, who were doing their homework in the kitchen when the shooting happened. “This could be anyone across this entire state.”

“Last night the girls wanted to sleep with us,” Mr. Zeldin [*also said during the parade*](https://abc7ny.com/governor-race-new-york-hochul/12311932/). “I didn’t think that the next time I’d be standing in front of a crime scene, it would be crime scene tape in front of my own house.”

The shooting unfolded on Sunday afternoon when the police said multiple gunshots were fired from a dark-colored vehicle at three teenage boys walking near Mr. Zeldin’s home in Suffolk County on Long Island. Two 17-year-old boys were forced to take cover by Mr. Zeldin’s porch, suffering injuries that were not life threatening, while a 15-year-old boy fled the shots unharmed.

That the shooting unfolded near the home of a conservative congressman who has anchored his campaign for governor on the state of crime in New York, attracting outsize media attention, appears to have been pure happenstance.

The police had not made any arrests as of Tuesday, but they were investigating whether the incident was connected to gang violence, according to a law enforcement official who asked to remain anonymous to discuss an ongoing investigation.

But with less than four weeks until Election Day, the shooting offered Mr. Zeldin an opportunity to elevate the issue of public safety in the governor’s race, as the congressman seeks a breakout in his efforts to unseat Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat who has so far enjoyed a comfortable lead in most public polls.

Mr. Zeldin faces a steep climb to overcome Ms. Hochul’s significant fund-raising edge in a state where Democrats overwhelmingly outnumber Republicans. He has been quick to talk about the impact of the shooting in starkly personal terms, appealing to New Yorkers who have also been affected by gun violence. Mr. Zeldin was at a campaign event in the Bronx with his wife during the shooting.

Mr. Zeldin, a staunch Trump supporter who has represented Suffolk County in Congress since 2015, has said he would make law and order his top priority if elected. He has consistently sought to blame the rise in violence on criminal justice policies enacted by progressive lawmakers as well as on left-leaning prosecutors, such as Alvin Bragg, the district attorney in Manhattan. He has promised to fire Mr. Bragg [*“on Day 1.”*](https://twitter.com/leezeldin/status/1520849499660369922?lang=en)

At the same time, he has opposed Democratic-led efforts to tighten gun control measures, cheering the Supreme Court’s decision to strike down New York’s concealed carry law as “a historic, proper, and necessary victory.”

Ms. Hochul, who is seeking her first full term, has trumpeted her efforts to [*tighten the state’s bail laws*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/29/nyregion/bail-reform-hochul-ny.html) and has emphasized initiatives to crack down on illegal gun trafficking, as well as a law she signed raising the age for the purchase of semiautomatic rifles, after a massacre at a Buffalo supermarket earlier this year.

“We’re not running away from those issues,” Ms. Hochul [*said*](https://abc7ny.com/governor-race-new-york-hochul/12311932/) on Monday. “We’re leaning hard into them because we have a real record of accomplishment.”

The shooting outside Mr. Zeldin’s home is the second time his safety has been threatened this election cycle.

Three months ago, a man [*tried to physically attack*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/21/nyregion/lee-zeldin-attacked-campaign-event.html) Mr. Zeldin with a sharp key chain during a campaign event near Rochester. The attacker, [*a veteran of the Iraq War*](https://www.timesunion.com/state/article/He-was-accused-of-assaulting-a-congressman-Now-17355084.php) who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and alcoholism, was quickly subdued and initially released without bail before being [*arrested on federal assault charges*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/23/nyregion/zeldin-attack-suspect-charged.html\).

Mr. Zeldin, who was not injured, used the confrontation to attack Democrats for the reforms they enacted to the state’s bail laws two years ago, even if the episode did little to shake up the state of the race.

“It’s an extraordinary coincidence of events that gives Zeldin’s crime message added credibility, urgency, and national attention,” said William F. B. O’Reilly, a Republican political consultant who is not working on the Zeldin campaign. “This will almost certainly help him in the final weeks of the campaign.”

Mr. Zeldin could certainly use a boost, having lagged behind Ms. Hochul in nearly every public poll commissioned this cycle. He has also found himself chasing her haul of campaign contributions — a tribute to a voracious fund-raising apparatus that raised $11.1 million from July to October of this year. The cash has allowed her to blanket airwaves and smartphones with campaign ads attacking Mr. Zeldin’s support of Mr. Trump and his opposition to abortion rights.

Mr. Zeldins financial outlook is [*not exactly bleak*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/08/nyregion/hochul-zeldin-fund-raising.html), however. He brought in $6.4 million during the same period, thanks in part to fund-raisers with former president Donald J. Trump and Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida. He has also seen support from conservative super PACs which have spent nearly $4 million in the past weeks on ads calling Ms. Hochul soft on crime and criticizing her handling of the economy.

On Tuesday, a police car was still stationed outside Mr. Zeldin’s home in Shirley, a ***working-class*** hamlet on the South Shore of Long Island, where residents on the typically sleepy street were still rattled by the burst of violence.

Dan Haug was in his home when he heard the shots and ran to the window, spotting one of the boys lying in Mr. Zeldin’s bushes, screaming and bleeding from the gunshot wounds.

“You know, there’s little isolated incidents in this neighborhood with like, fireworks and like dogs getting loose,” said Mr. Haug, who has lived in the neighborhood for seven years. “But nothing like that.”

Mary Smith, the mother of the teenager who escaped unharmed, blamed the shooting on the proliferation of guns among young people, while stressing that she did not believe her son was in a gang, saying: “He’s just a normal kid.”

While expressing sympathy for the Zeldin family ordeal, Ms. Smith lamented that she had heard nothing from the congressman himself, despite his many public comments.

“I’m around the corner from you,” Ms. Smith said in an interview. “They took the story away from the victims and made it about running for government.”

Chelsia Rose Marcius contributed reporting.

Chelsia Rose Marcius contributed reporting.

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[***F.D.R. Transformed the U.S.; Biden Could, Too***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62K4-X8T1-DXY4-X1RY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 896 words

**Byline:** By Nicholas Kristof

**Body**

YAMHILL, Ore. -- The best argument for President Biden's three-part proposal to invest heavily in America and its people is an echo of Franklin Roosevelt's explanation for the New Deal.

''In 1932 there was an awfully sick patient called the United States of America,'' Roosevelt said in 1943. ''He was suffering from a grave internal disorder ... and they sent for a doctor.''

Paging Dr. Joe Biden.

We should be cleareyed about both the enormous strengths of the United States -- its technologies, its universities, its entrepreneurial spirit -- and its central weakness: For half a century, compared with other countries, we have underinvested in our people.

In 1970, the United States was a world leader in high school and college attendance, enjoyed high life expectancy and had a solid middle class. This was achieved in part because of Roosevelt.

The New Deal was imperfect and left out too many African-Americans and Native Americans, but it was still transformative.

Here in my hometown, Yamhill, the New Deal was an engine of opportunity. A few farmers had rigged generators on streams, but Roosevelt's rural electrification brought almost everyone onto the grid and output soared. Jobs programs preserved the social fabric and built trails that I hike on every year. The G.I. Bill of Rights gave local families a shot at education and homeownership.

Roosevelt's Public Works Administration provided $27,415 in 1935 (the equivalent of $530,000 today) to help build a high school in Yamhill. That provided jobs for 90 people on the relief rolls, and it created the school that I attended and that remains in use today.

In short, the New Deal invested in the potential and productivity of my little town -- and of much of the nation. The returns were extraordinary.

These kinds of investments in physical infrastructure (interstate highways) and human capital (state universities and community colleges) continued under Democratic and Republican presidents alike. They made America a stronger nation and a better one.

Yet beginning in the 1970s, America took a wrong turn. We slowed new investments in health and education and embraced a harsh narrative that people just need to lift themselves up by their bootstraps. We gutted labor unions, embraced inequality and shrugged as ***working-class*** America disintegrated. Average weekly wages for America's production workers were actually lower in December 2020 ($860) than they had been, after adjusting for inflation, in December 1972 ($902 in today's money).

What does that mean in human terms? I've written about how one-quarter of the people on my old No. 6 school bus died of drugs, alcohol or suicide -- ''deaths of despair.'' That number needs to be updated: The toll has risen to about one-third.

We allocated large sums of taxpayer dollars to incarcerate my friends and their children. Biden proposes something more humane and effective -- investing in children, families and infrastructure in ways that echo Roosevelt's initiatives.

The most important thread of Biden's program is his plan to use child allowances to cut America's child poverty in half. Biden's main misstep is that he would end the program in 2025 instead of making it permanent; Congress should fix that.

The highest return on investment in America today isn't in private equity but in early childhood initiatives for disadvantaged kids of all races. That includes home visitations, lead reduction, pre-K and child care.

Roosevelt started a day care program during World War II to make it easier for parents to participate in the war economy. It was a huge success, looking after perhaps half a million children, but it was allowed to lapse after the war ended.

Biden's proposal for day care would be a lifeline for young children who might be neglected. Aside from the wartime model, we have another in the U.S.: The military operates a high-quality on-base day care system, because that supports service members in performing their jobs.

Then there are Biden's proposed investments in broadband; that's today's version of rural electrification. Likewise, free community college would enable young people to gain technical skills and earn more money, strengthening ***working-class*** families.

Some Americans worry about the cost of Biden's program. That's a fair concern. Yet this is not an expense but an investment: Our ability to compete with China will depend less on our military budget, our spy satellites or our intellectual property protections than on our high school and college graduation rates. A country cannot succeed when so many of its people are failing.

As many Americans have criminal records as college degrees. A baby born in Washington, D.C., has a shorter life expectancy (78 years) than a baby born in Beijing (82 years). Newborns in 10 counties in Mississippi have a shorter life expectancy than newborns in Bangladesh. Rather than continue with Herbert Hoover-style complacency, let's acknowledge our ''grave internal disorder'' and summon a doctor.

The question today, as in the 1930s, is not whether we can afford to make ambitious investments in our people. It's whether we can afford not to.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/01/opinion/sunday/biden-fdr-americans.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/01/opinion/sunday/biden-fdr-americans.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY UNIVERSAL HISTORY ARCHIVE/UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

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[***Making the Lomans Feel New Again***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66K8-NSS1-DXY4-X210-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 10, 2022 Monday

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**Length:** 1108 words

**Byline:** By Jesse Green

**Body**

Wendell Pierce and Sharon D Clarke star in a powerful revival of Arthur Miller's drama, led by a Black cast.

A deeply original work that is also deeply influential may yet in time be trite. What once opened eyes comes to seem preloaded behind them, as if part of the general human inheritance.

Such has been the ironic trajectory of Arthur Miller's ''Death of a Salesman.'' When it premiered on Broadway in 1949, with its depiction of the false hopes of capitalism and the family dysfunction left in its wake, there were fathers for whom ''the doctor had to be called because they couldn't stop crying,'' the director Mike Nichols, who saw it then, said. ''It was like an explosion.''

As ''Salesman'' spread into the culture with astonishing speed, it helped introduce the seismic re-evaluations of the ensuing decades. But now that we take those shocks to be self-evident, the job of making the play feel as new as it once did is a difficult one for those who would revive it. ''Willy Loman'' has long since become shorthand for the ''low man'' in the pecking order. And everyone for whom it was required high school reading already knows the story: how a washed-up salesman's delusions about American success destroy not just his own life but also those of his wife, Linda, and their sons, Happy and Biff.

Short of stunt casting or radical resetting, directors must therefore dig either deeper or wider. Nichols's 2012 Broadway production, starring Philip Seymour Hoffman and Linda Emond as Willy and Linda, went deeper, examining the work with microscopic precision and even replicating Jo Mielziner's original set design and Alex North's music. The result was a very powerful mounting, and I use the word advisedly: It sometimes seemed like an exhibit.

The latest Broadway revival, which opened on Sunday at the Hudson Theater, goes wider, a notably rich and mostly successful approach. For the first time in a major New York production, the Lomans are played by Black actors. Wendell Pierce, as Willy, is wrenching as he flails and fails to avoid his fate instead of slumping into it from the start. And Sharon D Clarke, as Linda, is so paradoxically shattering in her stoicism that she turns what is usually portrayed as unshakable loyalty into a kind of heedless comorbidity.

Miranda Cromwell's revival, based on one she directed in London with Marianne Elliott in 2019, does more than give us Black Lomans -- including Khris Davis as Biff and McKinley Belcher III as Happy. It also, crucially, puts them in a largely white world. Willy's employer (Blake DeLong), his neighbor (Delaney Williams) and his mistress (Lynn Hawley) are thus more than foils in the usual sense; like Willy, you can never untangle the personal, economic and now racial threads of their behavior. And even if they aren't bigots, they electrify moments -- a card game with the neighbor, a negotiation with the ''boss'' -- in which Willy's paranoia seems at the same time both fantastical and well founded.

It's even more astonishing that the production achieves this effect with only a few minor alterations to the dialogue. (The college that Biff, a would-be football star, hopes to attend is now U.C.L.A., instead of the University of Virginia, where the first Black student was not admitted until 1950 -- and even then, only after a lawsuit.) Likewise, though the play's web of urban imagery, much written about in A.P. English essays, is duly honored in Anna Fleischle's skeletal set design, it gets new life when seen in the light of the redistricting and gentrification that squeezed many people like the Lomans out of their homes.

It's therefore central to the effectiveness of the casting that it's not colorblind. Neither the Black nor the white actors ignore race; they mine it, bringing their characters to fully specific and vivid life. Willy's mistress has an ear-bending ***working-class*** white Boston accent. The oddly formal patois (''Nobody dast blame this man'') of the good-hearted neighbor Charley marks him as a clear outsider. (Williams is excellent in the part.) And Biff and Happy's take on trash-talking, no less than Linda's maternal don't-cross-me commandments -- ''Attention must be finally paid!'' -- awakens lines you've heard innumerable times, asserting their implacable realness.

That awakening reaches a theatrical climax in André De Shields's terrifying performance as the ghost of Willy's older brother, Ben. Though dressed like Liberace in a white suit and crystal-studded shoes -- the costumes are by Fleischle and Sarita Fellows -- he makes every utterance sound like an elaborate curse. When he warns Biff not to ''fight fair with a stranger, boy. You'll never get out of the jungle that way,'' he puts such a troubling spin on the words ''boy'' and ''jungle'' that you feel you should duck.

But what works to ground and intensify the performances does not always work for the production overall. Cromwell's use of expressionistic devices like silhouettes and frozen poses to suggest Willy's fragmenting consciousness seems obvious and unmoored, an intrusion of acquired Polaroid memories. And though the wistful music by Femi Temowo -- including a beautiful spiritual-like setting of ''When the Trumpets Sound'' -- sets the mood for the impending tragedy, it confuses the tone when used for comic effect, or worse, solace. There is no solace in ''Salesman.''

In general, the balance of light and dark in this very dark play does not yet feel natural. Biff and Happy, in Willy's memory, are not just boyish, but clichés of boyishness; aiming to solve this textual problem by underlining it, Cromwell's direction makes it worse. On the other hand, Willy himself is often so unrelievedly monstrous that you sometimes can't see past it to the monstrosity of American business that Miller means to indict.

Yet nothing can stop the engine of the final scenes, sparking and huffing and pushing the play into great drama. As the lies that bind at last come undone, we see each of the trapped family members liberated to choose life or death or a combination thereof. (The play's last words, after all, are ''We're free.'') They have nothing left to sell. If you believe, as Nichols said in 2012, that ''now everyone in America is a salesman,'' you may even feel a shiver of recognition. Made new and unfamiliar once again in this production, the Lomans look like all of us.

Death of a SalesmanThrough Jan. 15 at the Hudson Theater, Manhattan; salesmanonbroadway.com. Running time: 3 hours 10 minutes. Death of a SalesmanThrough Jan. 15 at the Hudson Theater in Manhattan; salesmanonbroadway.com. Running time: 3 hours 10 minutes.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/09/theater/review-death-of-a-salesman.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/09/theater/review-death-of-a-salesman.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: In the latest production of ''Death of a Salesman,'' Wendell Pierce's Willy Loman ''is wrenching as he flails and fails to avoid his fate.'' (C1)

From left, Khris Davis as Biff Loman, McKinley Belcher III as Happy Loman and Sharon D Clarke as Linda Loman in the latest production of Arthur Miller's ''Death of a Salesman.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C5) This article appeared in print on page C1, C5.

**Load-Date:** October 10, 2022

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[***Get Rid of the Bad Bosses***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64TV-GTB1-DXY4-X0H4-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By E. Tammy Kim

**Body**

In 1996, Manuel Miranda, a second-generation Filipino American from Kent, Wash., graduated from Evergreen State College. He had majored in literature and got a job in Seattle, taking care of people with cerebral palsy for $9 an hour. The city was ''post-grunge'' but being transformed by tech, Miranda told me. There was a lot of excitement about Amazon, the online bookseller.

Miranda applied to work there and started out in the warehouse, packing books and CDs. He then went into customer service, where he responded to questions and complaints. Some people saw the call-center job as a way to fund arty outside ambitions, Miranda said; others wanted an inroad into tech. Miranda earned just a dollar more per hour than he had in caregiving but got stock options, health insurance and the pride of working for a cool, homegrown company.

Yet he recalled that ''the mood was pretty demoralized. There was this emphasis on productivity, getting nudged or monitored for how many emails you're answering per hour.'' Everyone had to work 50 hours a week. A couple of his co-workers told him that they wanted to organize. They were in touch with the Washington Alliance of Technology Workers (WashTech), a community group affiliated with a large union, the Communications Workers of America.

Miranda joined them, surveying colleagues about their demands (more money, fewer quotas, job mobility) and figuring out how to confront management. In 2000, a majority of the customer-service department, which had stretched to some 400 employees, joined WashTech. But in 2001, just before the dot-com bubble burst, Amazon shut down the Seattle call center and relocated the work to sites in Tacoma, West Virginia and India.

Miranda left Amazon in 1999 but kept in touch with his former co-workers. He saw the closure of the call center as a business decision but also as union-busting, which Amazon denies. Nevertheless, ''I didn't feel like the union failed,'' Miranda, who now works as a designer in New York, told me. When his co-workers lost their jobs, WashTech helped negotiate a better severance package. What's more, ''It wasn't clear how to organize a tech worker at the time,'' he said. ''Now it's something people talk about.''

I was reminded of Miranda's campaign over the holidays, as I spoke with Amazon warehouse workers protesting the conditions of mandatory overtime during the worsening pandemic. In New York, New Jersey and Washington, D.C., members of Amazonians United, an informal union, signed petitions demanding a permanent $3 raise, access to cellphones on the job and protection from firing. Their bosses did not respond. Members at two warehouses near Chicago walked off their shifts when management failed to acknowledge similar petitions.

Only a tiny number of the nation's packers and sorters took part, but I admired their nerve. All these years after Miranda and his colleagues' efforts, the methods for organizing at Amazon are still in flux; there simply isn't a single correct way to confront one of the largest, richest corporations in the world.

Amazon workers have had some success. In January, the company raised full-time rates by $2 per hour in the Chicago area and agreed to send a notice of the right to organize to all United States employees as part of a settlement with the National Labor Relations Board, which enforces labor laws in the private sector. In warehouses in New York and Maryland, Amazon posted its own fliers as well, warning workers not to talk to Amazonians United.

And in Staten Island, a rank-and-file group called the Amazon Labor Union collected enough union cards to be approved for an election at two warehouses. The N.L.R.B. also issued a complaint stating that Amazon retaliated against several workers there for participating in union organizing. (An Amazon spokeswoman said the company is ''skeptical that there are a sufficient number of legitimate signatures'' in Staten Island. She added, ''We don't think unions are the best answer for our employees.'')

Large unions are experimenting, too. This month, thousands of workers at an Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Ala., will begin voting on whether to join the Retail Wholesale and Department Store Union. The International Brotherhood of Teamsters wants to help Amazon's warehouse and transportation workers win a union contract.

There's an urgency today that didn't exist when Miranda assisted customers by phone: Amazon is now the avatar of a monopoly economy. That economy has made the world's 10 wealthiest men twice as rich in the grisly months since March 2020. It's an economy that makes me feel like the zillionth scampering fleck in some global ant farm. The days I don't, it's because of the workers I talk to and the small mutinies I see -- at Amazon and in nursing homes, truck yards, schools, factories and grocery stores. ''We're definitely not gonna have a more favorable time to have a union,'' Daniel Gross, a longtime organizer, recently told me. Which felt like his way of saying, The jig is up; we all know the score.

Workers have always organized in various ways, formal and informal. Since the beginning of the American labor movement, in the 19th century, there have been unions, as well as more ad hoc worker groups. Around the time of the Amazon call-center campaign, organizations like WashTech were much in vogue. They were called ''worker centers'' and tended to focus on communities (like Nepalese immigrants) or types of jobs (like restaurant-delivery workers) that traditional unions had failed to reach.

I got to know these groups in the mid-aughts, when, as a lawyer, I joined a legal-services agency representing worker centers in New York City. The centers' offices were welcoming and low on red tape. They had limited resources and small memberships but, in the years that followed, attained goals well beyond their means: domestic workers' bills of rights, new regulations for nail-salon techs and food-delivery cyclists, debt relief for taxi drivers.

I was impressed by their holistic approach: A construction day laborer wasn't defined by his wages and hours -- he also needed an affordable apartment and help applying for a green card. People at progressive unions thought this way, too, especially as the Great Recession and Occupy Wall Street highlighted the larger context for struggles in the workplace. And over the past decade, as a journalist and no longer a lawyer, I've seen the progressives' influence grow.

In 2020, I thought that this increased enthusiasm for organizing, combined with mass death and financial hardship, might bring about a broad ***working-class*** movement. There were hints of ferment in the walkouts of essential workers and the record turnout at protests following the murder of George Floyd. After that, things quieted down -- because, I think, of the temporary lift of an enlarged welfare state.

But then, between August and November of 2021, more than four million employees quit their jobs every month -- individual actions that expressed a rebellious impulse. I noticed the same confident discontent in organized labor: Last fall, thousands of unionized workers went on strike or were on the verge of striking at John Deere, Kellogg's, Kaiser Permanente hospitals and clinics and on the sets of Hollywood films. The wave of people leaving their jobs was named the Great Resignation; the agitation from within felt more like a great refusal, a commitment to reject the status quo and demand transformation.

I've watched a lot of new campaigns as well (including at The New York Times, where tech workers are fighting to join the union that represents other newspaper employees). For instance, since December, hundreds of Starbucks baristas -- many of them young and influenced by Bernie Sanders-style democratic socialism -- have announced their intention to join Workers United, an affiliate of the Service Employees International Union. (It's not the first attempt: The United Food and Commercial Workers and the Culinary Union already represent thousands of baristas in unionized grocery stores, hotels and airports, and the U.F.C.W. and the Industrial Workers of the World organized stand-alone stores in the past.)

So far, workers at two Starbucks locations in Buffalo have formed a union and will eventually bargain for a contract. At least 64 other stores in 20 states are trying to do the same, despite resistance from management. (A company spokesman told me: ''We don't oppose unions. We don't believe they are necessary at Starbucks.'')

For all the energy around unionizing, it is a daunting time to organize, especially in the private sector. Unions have been weak for decades -- and corporations have only become stronger. In 2000, 13.5 percent of the United States work force was unionized; now, only 10.3 percent is. Over the past 20 years, meanwhile, the average revenue of the world's biggest publicly traded companies has tripled, according to a recent study in the Review of Finance.

Companies are willing and able to pay for union-busting consultants and lobbyists pushing favorable changes to laws and regulations. Since the apex of union membership in the 1950s, the bulk of economic policy has cut against the interests of the poor and ***working class***: tax breaks for the rich; rules favoring large corporations; slashed wages; reduced social services; narrowed opportunities to sue employers for discrimination or fraud.

At the same time, the 1935 National Labor Relations Act -- the government's main tool to make sure workers can effectively organize -- has been compromised by subsequent legislation and court decisions. Fewer categories of people can unionize or can do so as quickly or en masse across workplaces. Enforcement of the law has become weaker.

The question is, can store-by-store campaigns ''match the scale of corporate power in today's American capitalism?'' a U.F.C.W. official, who wasn't authorized by the union to speak on the record, told me. Every industry now seems to be dominated by monopolies and global chains. And the United States, unlike much of Asia and Europe, doesn't have sector-wide bargaining where workers can organize across whole industries. ''Walmart, Target, Starbucks -- they have immense national and international resources,'' the official said. ''The National Labor Relations Board isn't built to help organize workers by the thousands, in many locations, all at once.''

When I asked the labor sociologist Ruth Milkman when she last felt hopeful about the ***working class***, she laughed. ''I remember when Obama was elected and I made a fool of myself predicting a big labor resurgence,'' she said. But that didn't materialize: Many workers felt ignored during the Great Recession, and promised labor-law reforms never came to pass. ''It's a story of endless disappointments,'' Milkman told me, ''and it seems like that's where we are now, too.''

Short of upending capitalism, shrinking the distance between chief executives and the rank and file would require two fundamental changes: a reduction of corporate power and an expansion of worker power.

The Biden administration could start by using antitrust and tax law to dismantle huge corporations. In a universe of smaller companies, workers would have more options and a better chance at organizing. Requiring better pay and benefits would give people the security they need to seek change; Mindy Isser, a friend who used to organize fast-food workers, said that their poverty wages made long-term campaigns nearly impossible. Fighting misclassification is also critical. Independent contractors like me are excluded from traditional unions.

Workers need to know, too, that they can report unsafe conditions or underpayment and can organize without fear of being fired. The N.L.R.B.'s new general counsel has proposed extending the right to organize to millions more workers and increasing the board's power to stop union-busting. The Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act), the most significant omnibus labor bill since the New Deal, would go much further, speeding up the process of union elections, protecting strikers, penalizing bad employers and getting rid of state ''right to work'' laws that inhibit organizing. The bill passed the House but is marooned in the Senate.

All these changes would require a politics borne of a mass workers' movement. But they are also prerequisites for expanding that movement. Hence, the temperament of the labor world: always hopeful, always disappointed. In January, a labor-studies professor published an opinion essay that compared the nascent Starbucks campaign (hundreds of workers at scattered sites) to the sit-down strikes of the 1930s that forced the Big Three automakers to the table (hundreds of thousands of workers in a few factories). Similarly, journalists on the Amazon-organizing beat have sometimes offered overly buoyant accounts of workers' prospects. I empathize with this tendency toward grandiosity. Collective action is incredible to witness.

Over the past decade, I have not only covered the labor movement as a journalist but have also participated in it directly, in campaigns at several nonprofit groups and news outlets and now as a member of a nontraditional union of freelancers. The thing about organizing at work is that, because everyone who isn't in management is in the union, you have to get over your differences -- or at least set them on a high shelf. I have learned to organize with people who don't especially like me and witnessed great tenderness among co-workers with vastly different views of race and gender and electoral politics. That's why, I think, businesses fight even small unions from the jump. Imagine multiplying such unity, office to store to factory to hospital, in every city and state. What couldn't we win?

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/17/magazine/unions-amazon.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/17/magazine/unions-amazon.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by María Jesús Contreras FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 20, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Joe Biden Is Electrifying America Like F.D.R.; Nicholas Kristof***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JY-XWP1-DXY4-X0SJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 1, 2021 Saturday 18:46 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; sunday

**Length:** 901 words

**Byline:** Nicholas Kristof

**Highlight:** My hometown in Oregon shows what the federal government can do — and also what happens when it stops trying.

**Body**

YAMHILL, Ore. — The best argument for President Biden’s three-part proposal to invest heavily in America and its people is an echo of Franklin Roosevelt’s explanation for the New Deal.

“In 1932 there was an awfully sick patient called the United States of America,” Roosevelt said in 1943. “He was suffering from a grave internal disorder … and they sent for a doctor.”

Paging Dr. Joe Biden.

We should be cleareyed about both the enormous strengths of the United States — its technologies, its universities, its entrepreneurial spirit — and its central weakness: For half a century, compared with other countries, we have underinvested in our people.

In 1970, the United States was a world leader in high school and college attendance, enjoyed high life expectancy and had a solid middle class. This was achieved in part because of Roosevelt.

The New Deal was imperfect and left out too many African-Americans and Native Americans, but it was still transformative.

Here in my hometown, Yamhill, the New Deal was an engine of opportunity. A few farmers had rigged generators on streams, but Roosevelt’s rural electrification brought almost everyone onto the grid and output soared. Jobs programs preserved the social fabric and built trails that I hike on every year. The G.I. Bill of Rights gave local families a shot at education and homeownership.

Roosevelt’s Public Works Administration provided $27,415 in 1935 (the equivalent of $530,000 today) to help [*build a high school*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/) in Yamhill. That provided jobs for 90 people on the relief rolls, and it created the school that I attended and that remains in use today.

In short, the New Deal invested in the potential and productivity of my little town — and of much of the nation. The returns were extraordinary.

These kinds of investments in physical infrastructure (interstate highways) and human capital (state universities and community colleges) continued under Democratic and Republican presidents alike. They made America a stronger nation and a better one.

Yet beginning in the 1970s, America took a wrong turn. We slowed new investments in health and education and embraced a harsh narrative that people just need to lift themselves up by their bootstraps. We gutted labor unions, embraced inequality and shrugged as ***working-class*** America disintegrated. Average weekly wages for America’s production workers were actually lower in December 2020 ($860) than they had been, after [*adjusting*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/) for inflation, in December 1972 ($902 in today’s money).

What does that mean in human terms? [*I’ve written*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/) about how one-quarter of the people on my old No. 6 school bus died of drugs, alcohol or suicide — “deaths of despair.” That number needs to be updated: The toll has risen to about one-third.

We allocated large sums of taxpayer dollars to incarcerate [*my friends*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/) and their children. Biden proposes something more humane and effective — investing in children, [*families*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/) and infrastructure in ways that echo Roosevelt’s initiatives.

The [*most important thread*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/) of Biden’s program is his plan to use child allowances to cut America’s child poverty in half. Biden’s main misstep is that he would end the program in 2025 instead of making it permanent; Congress should fix that.

The highest return on investment in America today isn’t in private equity but in early childhood initiatives for disadvantaged kids of all races. That includes home visitations, lead reduction, pre-K and child care.

Roosevelt [*started a day care program*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/) during World War II to make it easier for parents to participate in the war economy. It was a huge success, looking after perhaps half a million children, but it was allowed to lapse after the war ended.

Biden’s proposal for day care would be a lifeline for young children who might be neglected. Aside from the wartime model, we have another in the U.S.: The military operates a high-quality on-base day care system, because that supports service members in performing their jobs.

Then there are Biden’s proposed investments in broadband; that’s today’s version of rural electrification. Likewise, free community college would enable young people to gain technical skills and earn more money, strengthening ***working-class*** families.

Some Americans worry about the cost of Biden’s program. That’s a fair concern. Yet this is not an expense but an investment: Our ability to compete with China will depend less on our military budget, our spy satellites or our intellectual property protections than on our high school and college graduation rates. A country cannot succeed when so many of its people are failing.

As many Americans [*have criminal records as college degrees*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/). A baby born in Washington, D.C., has a shorter life expectancy ([*78 years*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/)) than a baby born in Beijing ([*82 years*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/)). Newborns in 10 counties in Mississippi have a shorter life expectancy than newborns in Bangladesh. Rather than continue with Herbert Hoover-style complacency, let’s acknowledge our “grave internal disorder” and summon a doctor.

The question today, as in the 1930s, is not whether we can afford to make ambitious investments in our people. It’s whether we can afford not to.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/yamhill-carlton-high-school-yamhill-high-school-yamhill-or/).

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY UNIVERSAL HISTORY ARCHIVE/UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** May 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Arizona Governor Candidates Speak, and More Campaign News From the Sunday Shows***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66K4-WGH1-JBG3-62TW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 9, 2022 Sunday 13:11 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1132 words

**Byline:** Maggie Astor

**Highlight:** Katie Hobbs and Kari Lake were interviewed back-to-back on CBS, Stacey Abrams spoke on Fox News and Republicans stuck with Herschel Walker despite reports that he had paid for an abortion.

**Body**

Katie Hobbs and Kari Lake were interviewed back-to-back on CBS, Stacey Abrams spoke on Fox News and Republicans stuck with Herschel Walker despite reports that he had paid for an abortion.

There will be no debates in one of the most competitive governor’s races in the country — between Katie Hobbs, the Democratic secretary of state of Arizona, and Kari Lake, a former TV news anchor endorsed by Donald J. Trump — because Ms. Hobbs has refused to participate, arguing that Ms. Lake would create a “circus.”

In what might be the closest they come to a debate, they were interviewed back-to-back on “Face the Nation” on CBS on Sunday, with a focus on immigration and abortion.

The host, Major Garrett, pressed Ms. Lake on her proposal to create an interstate compact in which Arizona and other states would make immigration arrests independent of the federal government, and Ms. Lake defended it in incendiary fashion, saying the Biden administration had abdicated its duty to protect states from invasion.

She cited Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution — which says that without congressional consent, states cannot “enter into any agreement or compact with another state, or with a foreign power, or engage in war, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay” — and claimed that Arizona met the conditions of the clause.

Ms. Hobbs, interviewed afterward, said Ms. Lake’s proposal was “empty rhetoric” that “would do absolutely nothing to increase border security” but “would bring untold levels of chaos into our state.” She said she agreed that the Biden administration needed to take stronger action on border security, but blamed a series of presidents and Congresses under both parties for failing to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

On abortion, Ms. Lake accused Ms. Hobbs of supporting the procedure “right up until birth” — a common, and misleading, Republican claim against Democrats — and falsely claimed, “If you are in the hospital in labor, the abortionists are for giving you an abortion if you desire one.”

Ms. Hobbs reiterated that she does not support a gestational limit on abortion, saying, “I support leaving the decision between a woman and her doctor and leaving politicians entirely out of it.” However, even in states like Colorado that have no gestational limit, doctors do not perform abortions on demand until the moment of birth.

“Late-term abortion is extremely rare, and if it’s being talked about, it’s because something has gone incredibly wrong in a pregnancy,” Ms. Hobbs said. “A doctor’s not going to perform an abortion late in a pregnancy just because someone decided they want one. That is ridiculous, and she’s saying this to distract from her incredibly extreme position.”

Ms. Lake has expressed support for Arizona’s near-total abortion ban, which predates Roe v. Wade and [*is blocked*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/07/us/ohio-abortion-ban-suspension.html) as courts assess it. On Sunday, she focused on a more recent law that bans most abortions after 15 weeks, saying, “We need to draw a line somewhere.”

Here’s what else happened on the Sunday talk shows.

Republicans stood with Herschel Walker.

[*A claim*](https://www.thedailybeast.com/pro-life-herschel-walker-paid-for-girlfriends-abortion-georgia-senate) that Herschel Walker, the Republican Senate candidate in Georgia, paid for an ex-girlfriend’s abortion in 2009 — and [*the woman’s subsequent assertion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/07/us/politics/herschel-walker-abortion.html) that he also wanted her to terminate a second pregnancy in 2011 — upended Mr. Walker’s campaign. But Republicans [*have circled the wagons around him*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/04/us/politics/herschel-walker-abortion-allegation-georgia-senate.html), and that played out on the Sunday shows.

Comments from Don Bacon, a Republican congressman facing a competitive race in Nebraska, were representative of the G.O.P. line. On NBC’s “Meet the Press,” Mr. Bacon was asked if he still supported Mr. Walker and replied, “I sure do, more for the policy positions he’s going to take.”

Asked by the host, Kristen Welker, whether this suggested Republicans were “willing to win at all costs,” Mr. Bacon said, “I think people make mistakes, and if people acknowledge them and ask for forgiveness, none of us are perfect.” (Mr. Walker has not done that; he has denied the claims, though they are backed up by extensive documentation.)

Scott Jennings, a former aide to President George W. Bush who is now a conservative commentator, stated the calculus plainly on CNN’s “State of the Union.”

“At the end of the day, the country’s in the ditch, and who are you going to call? The person who’s enabled it or the person who’s going to push back on it? That’s how many are going to analyze it,” Mr. Jennings said, adding later: “When the Senate control is this close, there’s nowhere else to go. This is part of the final matrix for Republicans if they hope to get the majority.”

Stacey Abrams discussed abortion and voting rights.

An interview on “Fox News Sunday” with Stacey Abrams, the Democratic nominee for governor of Georgia, touched on a range of subjects, including the reports about Mr. Walker. She accused her opponent, Gov. Brian Kemp, of hypocrisy for opposing abortion but not denouncing Mr. Walker.

At one point, the host, Shannon Bream, asked Ms. Abrams to respond to a video clip of Kanye West claiming that “there’s more Black babies being aborted than born in New York City.” (This is not true according to [*city records*](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/vs/2019sum.pdf).) Ms. Abrams affirmed her support for legal abortion and emphasized the disproportionate rates of maternal mortality among Black women, saying, “The right to our medical care should be sacrosanct.”

Ms. Bream also asked Ms. Abrams to respond to [*a recent ruling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/30/us/politics/voting-lawsuit-georgia.html) in which a federal judge found that Georgia’s new voting restrictions — challenged by Ms. Abrams’s organization, Fair Fight Action — “violate neither the Constitution nor the Voting Rights Act.”

Ms. Abrams suggested that the judge’s hands had been tied by [*a Supreme Court ruling last year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/us/politics/supreme-court-arizona-voting-restrictions.html) that weakened the Voting Rights Act. “That’s the reason that I’m pushing so hard for the Voting Rights Act to be restored and expanded, but it’s also why I’m running for governor,” she said.

In case you missed it …

* With four weeks left until the elections, Senate control hangs in the balance. The G.O.P. claimed momentum in the spring. Then the overturning of Roe v. Wade galvanized Democrats. As the momentum shifts again, [*the final stretch*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/08/us/politics/senate-midterm-elections.html) is defying predictability.

1. In 2017, J.D. Vance, the Republican candidate for Senate in Ohio, started a nonprofit group to tackle the social ills he had written about in his “Hillbilly Elegy” memoir. [*It fell apart within two years*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/08/us/politics/jd-vance-ohio-senate-nonprofit.html).
2. In Pennsylvania, John Fetterman, the Democratic nominee for Senate, says he can win over ***working-class*** voters in deep-red counties. Some evidence suggests he can, [*but partisan loyalties may prove more powerful*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/08/us/politics/fetterman-pennsylvania-senate-race.html).

PHOTO: Katie Hobbs, the Democratic nominee for governor in Arizona, at a voter registration event last month in Tempe. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Rebecca Noble for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Here to Help; Five Movies to Stream on Hulu***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JG-5K51-DXY4-X2JK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 29, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 362 words

**Byline:** By Jason Bailey

**Body**

ANOTHER ROUND (2020)

The winner of this year's best international feature Oscar stars Mads Mikkelsen as a burned-out teacher who, along with friends, engages in some controlled day-drinking, which they believe will make their lives exciting again. It sounds like the premise for a 1990s Jim Carrey movie, but the director Thomas Vinterberg's sense of cinematic naturalism keeps the picture grounded in emotional truth.

I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO (2017)

This stunning documentary concerns the life and writings of James Baldwin, but it's less focused on tracing the arc of its subject's life than on the potency of his words. Director Raoul Peck constructs an urgent essay about our past and present by using as his framework the notes of Baldwin's unfinished book ''Remember This House,'' in which Baldwin was attempting to reckon with the legacies of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and Medgar Evers.

LOGAN LUCKY (2017)

As the director of the ''Ocean's'' trilogy, Steven Soderbergh has honored the classic heist movie aesthetic: sleek, classy and star-studded. And then he set out to subvert all of those conventions with this ***working-class*** heist comedy. The key players are familiar (the safecracker, the computer whiz, the sexy girl, the brains of the operation), but they're done with salty fun and earthy humor.

NOMADLAND (2021)

In this film, which won best picture at the Oscars on Sunday, Frances McDormand (above) builds another nuanced performance, this time as a widow who roams America living ''the van life,'' making just enough money to get by. Chloé Zhao, who won best director, uses real people who live that life in supporting roles, crafting a sensitive meditation on solitude, mortality and making the best of what's left.

THE SHAPE OF WATER (2017)

This gleeful and romantic stew of monster movie, fairy tale and Cold War thriller from Guillermo del Toro won four Oscars, including for best director and best picture. Sally Hawkins stars as a mute cleaning woman at a government research lab who becomes enchanted by a mysterious sea monster and must find a way to free the creature from his prison. Jason Bailey

For more picks, go to nytimes.com/watching.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/pageoneplus/29a3\_help.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/pageoneplus/29a3_help.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSHUA JAMES RICHARDS/SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

HULU)

**Load-Date:** April 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Bourbon Too Costly? Blame Whiskey Mania.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:677M-B581-JBG3-60G5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 4, 2023 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2023 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Dining In, Dining Out / Style Desk; Pg. 7

**Length:** 1440 words

**Byline:** By Clay Risen

**Body**

Bourbon and rye used to be workaday drinks, but prices are being driven way up by speculators, a scramble for bragging rights and a large shot of hype.

In June, two men in Virginia were charged with an unusual form of insider trading: selling information about when and where rare bottles of whiskey were going to appear in state-run liquor stores.

To an outsider, their scheme may sound strange. To many bourbon collectors, it is just another cautionary tale from today's frenetic whiskey market -- and one that some probably wish they had thought of first.

According to prosecutors, Edgar Garcia, an employee of Virginia's alcohol control board, fed the confidential information to Robert Adams, a private collector, who sold the list to scores of people on Facebook for up to $400 each.

Virginia requires that hard liquor be sold at government-owned outlets, where it is priced significantly lower than in most other states. To control the inevitable rush by bourbon lovers to snap up sought-after bottles for less, the state keeps distribution details a secret, announcing the releases at random times via email and on the board's Facebook page. Fans then stampede to the stores, and every minute counts.

''I was there within 20 minutes,'' wrote one buyer on Facebook after a release in November, only to find the shelves already picked over. ''At least 10 people in the store when I got there.''

The willingness of Mr. Garcia and Mr. Adams (who both pleaded guilty) to commit a felony just to sell information, and the apparent eagerness of others to buy it, is a measure of how much the decade-long bourbon boom has turned into a mania.

Bourbon and rye, the leading styles of American whiskey, have long been considered workaday drinks, sold at ***working-class*** prices. As recently as the early 2010s, it was hard to find a bottle priced above $100, and most sold below $50. Even as the market for six-figure single-malt Scotches boomed, collectors largely shunned American whiskey, aside from a few standouts like Pappy Van Winkle.

That has all changed. At an auction at Sotheby's last spring, several bottles of Michter's bourbon sold for more than $20,000 apiece. A new brand, the Macklowe, is selling its American single malt for $1,500. And a bottle of LeNell's Red Hook Rye, an extremely rare whiskey bottled in the late 2000s by a Brooklyn liquor-store owner, LeNell Camacho Santa Ana, can go for more than $90,000.

The price leap is not just at the luxury level. Everyday bourbons like Buffalo Trace or Eagle Rare, which once sold for about $35, now often go for twice that.

''Today, $75 is the new $35,'' said Dixon Dedman, who created Kentucky Owl, one of the first luxury American whiskeys not called Pappy. Mr. Dedman and his partners sold Kentucky Owl to Stolichnaya for an undisclosed sum in 2017, and he just introduced a new brand, 2XO, with a retail price starting at $95.

The craze drives collectors to extreme lengths. Like music fans eager to snag tickets to an upcoming show, some will camp overnight outside liquor stores, hoping to grab a limited release from cult distilleries like Buffalo Trace and Four Roses.

It's hard to pinpoint when the bourbon boom went into overdrive. The Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, a trade group, says sales of all American whiskeys have grown at a steady pace over the last decade, from 16 million to 30 million nine-liter cases.

For most of that time, the volume of sales was consistent across all price categories, from cheaper to so-called super-premium bottles costing more than $50.

Then, around 2016, sales of super-premium whiskey took off, while those of cheaper whiskey slowed. Over the next five years, sales of so-called value whiskey, priced under $20, rose just 4.2 percent, while sales of super-premium rose more than 129 percent.

Bourbon fans were becoming better educated, and with that education came a willingness to pay more for higher quality and, even more important, exclusivity. In response, distilleries began to offer limited-release bottles with unusual qualities -- drawn from a single barrel, for example, or bottled at high proof -- which fueled interest.

Supply became an issue as well. Whiskey has to age, so production can't simply ramp up to meet demand. The amount of whiskey on the shelf today is a function of decisions made five or more years ago.

The pandemic drove demand higher by combining unexpected free time, in the form of quarantines, with unexpected money, from a booming stock market and government stimulus checks.

Social media then amplified the hype. For many, the so-called crotch shot, in which a lucky buyer posts a photo on Instagram of his latest find, ideally taken from the driver's seat just after leaving a liquor store, has become a status symbol. Depending on the bottle, it can be as potent as a Rolex-clad wrist.

While some people will drink those bottles, others will flip them on the illegal secondary market, often for much more than they paid, or hold onto them as an investment.

''There's some poor guy out there whose wife has been nagging them about the 120, 200 bottles in the basement,'' said Taylor Cope, who edits the website Malt Review. ''And he says, 'No, you don't understand, I paid X for these and they're worth 2X or 5X or whatever,' and maybe for him that's some weird nest egg or retirement savings.''

For many veteran collectors, the mania has become a turnoff. What was once a geeky niche community has been replaced by an aggressive world of very wealthy collectors and speculators, driving up prices beyond what most people can afford. These longtime collectors even have a special insult for fans of overhyped whiskey -- ''taters'' (which may be short for potato, though no one is quite sure).

''Today it is so competitive, and that's not what the spirit is all about,'' said Mason Walker, a bourbon collector in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Mr. Walker said he was recently approached by a New York auction house interested in selling his collection of almost 1,000 rare bottles. Despite a lucrative offer -- he declined to say how much -- and against his wife's better judgment, he decided to keep them, for fear that they would end up in a vault somewhere, never to be opened.

Mr. Walker is not alone in feeling torn by the bourbon craze. Many longtime collectors have grown frustrated, even exhausted. They talk about moving on to something else: Bas Armagnac is frequently mentioned as the next trendy spirit.

''A little bit of the chase is fun,'' Mr. Cope said. ''The full-time-occupation chase is not that fun. People miss being able to go into a store and discover something new, and so maybe they move on.''

Still, he added, there is also a more positive way to look at the mania.

For too long, whiskey fans grumbled about bourbon being underappreciated, that a typical $35 bottle was just as good as a single-malt Scotch priced twice as high, or more.

And just maybe, Mr. Cope said, what's happening now is not a bubble in bourbon, but a leveling up in the public's appreciation for it. True, there's a lot of frustrating froth -- no one wants to see more crotch shots -- but behind it may be a justifiable readjustment of bourbon's public image.

In the early 1980s, Elmer T. Lee, an unassuming Kentuckian who worked as the distillery manager at what is now called Buffalo Trace, told his bosses that American whiskey was every bit as nuanced and elegant as single-malt Scotch, and in the right packaging could be sold at luxury prices. The owners, desperate for money, asked him to prove it.

He responded with Blanton's, the first single-barrel bourbon. He had a bottle custom-made, complete with a metal-and-cork top, and in 1984 he released it at about $30. For decades, that's roughly where it sat, creeping up with inflation to about $60 in 2018.

Then, suddenly and for reasons no one can quite explain, Blanton's went viral. Podcasters talked it up. Instagrammers hyped it. Customers lined up to buy bottles, even after store owners tripled or quadrupled the price. In New York, it often sells for more than $300.

Mr. Lee died in 2013, and so never got to see his bourbon achieve its stratospheric valuation. Would he be proud of its success, or repelled by its luxury status, realizing too late that he had created a monster?

Both answers seem possible -- which speaks volumes about the fractious state of American whiskey and its legions of fans.

Follow New York Times Cooking on Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok and Pinterest. Get regular updates from New York Times Cooking, with recipe suggestions, cooking tips and shopping advice.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/29/dining/drinks/bourbon-prices-american-whiskey.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/29/dining/drinks/bourbon-prices-american-whiskey.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Right, from top: customers waiting in line for the release of limited-supply whiskeys and bourbons at the Montgomery County Liquor & Wine store in Gaithersburg, Md.

Darren Higgins, left, and Mason Walker, with Mr. Walker's bourbon collection in 2021

at Montgomery County Liquor, Greg Leonard, left, and Jerome Peters looked over the selection of limited-supply whiskeys and bourbons (below). (PHOTOGRAPHS BY T.J. KIRKPATRICK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

DARREN HIGGINS) This article appeared in print on page D7.

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Women's Gains in the Work Force Conceal a Problem***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y20-YFY1-JBG3-63PV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 21, 2020 Tuesday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; Upshot

**Length:** 1226 words

**Byline:** By Claire Cain Miller

**Body**

Jobs traditionally viewed as female still don't pay well, and still don't appeal to men. Fixing one of these things would fix the other.

American women have just achieved a significant milestone: They hold more payroll jobs than men. But this isn't entirely good news for workers, whether they're men or women.

The difference is small, but it reflects the fact that women have been doing better in the labor market compared with men. One big reason is that the occupations that are shrinking tend to be male-dominated, like manufacturing, while those that are growing remain female-dominated, like health care and education. That puts men at a disadvantage in today's economy -- but it also ensures that the female-dominated jobs remain devalued and underpaid.

''Female-dominated jobs in the ***working class*** are just not comparable to men's jobs,'' said Janette Dill, a sociologist at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. ''So yes, it's great to see women participating at such a high level in the labor market, but it also really means continuing challenges for ***working-class*** families, because these jobs just don't replace manufacturing jobs in terms of job quality and wages.''

Women now hold 50.04 percent of payroll jobs (which excludes people who work on farms or in households or are self-employed), according to the Labor Department's jobs report this month. (Men are still a larger share of the labor force than women, a number that is calculated differently -- it includes people who don't have jobs but are looking for work; farm and household workers; and self-employed people.)

The only other time women have held more jobs was in mid-2010, when men were hit particularly hard by the recession and the decline in construction and manufacturing jobs. This time, the economy is thriving -- but women seem better able to take advantage of it.

Reasons for the decline in work for less educated men are many. They include the rise of automation; the waning power of unions; rising incarceration rates; the factories that move overseas; and hurdles to switching jobs like having to move away or return to school. But gender norms are a major and often overlooked factor. However much politicians talk about manufacturing jobs, the United States economy has become service-dominated -- and jobs helping people have typically been done by women, while jobs making things have been associated with men.

Women's success in the labor market has been driven by their educational gains, and by black and Hispanic women. While women in large numbers have moved into male-dominated jobs, especially professional ones, the reverse isn't true. Women are 84 percent of social services workers and 78 percent of health care workers. Differences in the jobs that men and women choose are now the single largest cause of the gender pay gap, accounting for more than half of it, research by the economists Francine Blau and Lawrence Kahn has found.

Sex segregation is much more prevalent in ***working-class*** jobs than in white-collar ones. But even the more prestigious female-dominated jobs, like nurse practitioner or high school teacher, have failed to attract many men. Yet when men do so-called pink-collar jobs, they tend to have more job security and wage growth over time than they would have in blue-collar jobs, research has found.

One reason men are reluctant to take pink-collar jobs is that over all, they pay less than male-dominated ones. When women enter fields in greater numbers, pay declines, the sociologist Paula England and colleagues have found. Jobs that involve caregiving, like health aide or preschool teacher, are particularly low-paying, even after controlling for the high share of female workers, other work by Ms. England has found.

Most workers have in mind the lowest wage they're willing to accept in a new job, economists say, and men who have left higher-paying manufacturing and construction jobs might be unwilling to take a large pay cut.

''The wages that nursing assistants and home health aides get, and child care workers and teachers get, communicate to society that these jobs are not valued compared to male-dominated jobs, so of course men don't want to do that,'' Ms. Dill said.

Another thing holding men back from service jobs is norms about masculinity. The markers of masculinity include earning a good income and distancing oneself from feminine things, research has shown. Taking a job traditionally done by women threatens both, said Jill Yavorsky, a sociologist at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte.

A new experiment found that when unemployed men looked at job postings, they were willing to take a job that employed mostly women. But if it called for stereotypically female traits like interpersonal skills or care work, they were not, found Ms. Dill, Ms. Yavorsky and Enrica Ruggs at the University of Memphis. Moreover, a study published in December by Ms. Yavorsky found that men, across education levels and job types, were less likely to be called back by employers for interviews when they applied for traditionally female roles.

Also, social scientists have observed that women seem to show more flexibility than men in training for and moving to new industries. Women who worked in manufacturing were hit harder than men during the recession, but they were also more likely than men to move into high-skill jobs and health care jobs.

The men who have gone into pink-collar work have viewed these jobs as a last resort after facing disadvantages in the labor market, researchers have found. They are more likely to be black or Hispanic and to have had the least education and the lowest earnings. Even though pink-collar jobs pay less over all, the men who take them often earn more than they had in jobs like manual labor, found a paper published this month by Ms. Dill and Ms. Yavorsky, using census data from 2004 to 2013.

When men take female-dominated jobs, they're more likely than not to use them as a stopgap, and return to a male-dominated job as soon as they can, found Margarita Torre Fernández, a sociologist at the University Carlos III of Madrid. Using data from the census and the National Longitudinal Study of Youth from 1979 to 2006, she found this happened in nearly every female-dominated occupation, particularly elementary school teaching, health technology and social work.

''Some men would rather endure unemployment than accept a relatively high-paying women's job and suffer the potential social stigma,'' she wrote.

Policymakers and recruiters have discussed various ways to address this issue, like bringing back manufacturing jobs, or emphasizing the masculine qualities of service jobs. But there's another solution, researchers say: improving the quality of pink-collar jobs, in terms of wages, stability, benefits and hours. That could both attract men to these jobs and also benefit women.

''There are immense economic benefits to these jobs,'' Ms. Yavorsky said. ''Inevitably, if they were more highly valued in our society, I think men would be more likely to enter them, and women would very much benefit from the higher wages.''

Improving the quality of pink-collar, ***working-class*** jobs has the potential to close gender gaps -- and also to shrink the widening gaps between the highest and lowest earners, both women and men.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/21/upshot/womens-gains-in-the-work-force-conceal-a-problem.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/21/upshot/womens-gains-in-the-work-force-conceal-a-problem.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: At Ford's River Rouge plant in Dearborn, Mich., in 2018. Debbie Manzano, center, is the first female manager at the plant. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Brittany Greeson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 23, 2020

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[***Ruing Senate Loss, Georgia G.O.P. Asks if Its Changes to Runoff Rules Backfired***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6723-3F11-DXY4-X4BW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 21

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**Byline:** By Reid J. Epstein

**Body**

Some in the party said that additional changes to election rules were likely, after Senator Raphael Warnock's victory put a new spotlight on a major 2021 voting law passed by the G.O.P.

As Georgia Democrats won their third Senate runoff election in two years, the party proved it had crafted an effective strategy for triumphing in a decades-old system created to sustain segregationist power and for overcoming an array of efforts to making voting more difficult. Republicans, meanwhile, were quietly cursing the runoff system, or at least their strategy for winning under a state law they wrote after losing the last election.

The various post-mortems over how Georgia's runoff rules shaped the state's Senate outcome on Tuesday put a spotlight on a major voting law passed by the Republican-led General Assembly last year. Some Republicans acknowledged that their efforts to limit in-person early voting days might have backfired, while others encouraged lawmakers to consider additional restrictions next year.

With Georgia poised to remain a critical political battleground and with Republicans holding gerrymandered majorities in both chambers of its state legislature, some in the party said that additional election law changes were likely.

Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, a Republican who oversees the state's voting procedures, said in an interview on Wednesday that there would be a debate next year over potential adjustments to Georgia's runoff laws and procedures after Senator Raphael Warnock's victory.

Mr. Raffensperger said he would present three proposals to lawmakers. They include forcing large counties to open more early-voting locations to reduce hourslong lines like the ones that formed at many Metro Atlanta sites last week; lowering the threshold candidates must achieve to avoid a runoff to 45 percent from 50 percent; and instituting a ranked-choice instant-runoff system that would not require voters to come back to the polls again after the general election.

''The elected legislators need to have information so they can look at all the different options that they have and really see what they're comfortable with,'' Mr. Raffensperger said.

Republicans are not the only ones hoping to end Georgia's requirement that a runoff take place if no candidate in a general election wins at least half of the vote. Democrats have long viewed the practice -- a vestige of racist 1960s efforts to keep Black candidates or candidates backed by Black voters from taking office -- as an additional hurdle for ***working-class*** people of color.

Park Cannon, a Democratic state representative from Atlanta who was arrested last year after knocking on the closed door behind which Gov. Brian Kemp signed the state's voting law, said that last Friday, she had driven for 30 minutes and then waited an hour to vote early in person.

Runoffs, Ms. Cannon said, ''are not to the benefit of working families.'' She added, ''It's very difficult to, within four weeks of taking time off to vote, have to do that again.''

Since the law was passed in 2021, Georgia Democrats have criticized the new barriers to voting that it set in place. During the runoff, Mr. Warnock, a Democrat, spared no opportunity to highlight the law and characterize it as the latest in a decades-long push to minimize the influence of Black voters and anyone who opposed Republican control.

His stump speech featured a regular refrain reminding supporters that Georgia Republicans had sought to prohibit counties from opening for in-person early voting on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, after the state's Republican attorney general and Mr. Raffensperger concluded that doing so was in violation of state law. Mr. Warnock and Democrats sued, and a state judge agreed to allow for the Saturday voting.

''People showed up in record numbers within the narrow confines of the time given to them by a state legislature that saw our electoral strength the last time and went after it with surgical precision,'' Mr. Warnock said in his victory speech on Tuesday night in Atlanta. ''The fact that voters worked so hard to overcome the hardship put in front of them does not eliminate the fact that hardship was put there in the first place.''

Because of the new voting law, Tuesday's runoff was held four weeks after the general election, rather than the nine-week runoff period under which Georgia's high-profile Senate races in early 2021 unfolded. The nine-week runoff period that year had been ordered by a federal judge; runoff contests for state elections have always operated on a four-week timeline.

Tuesday's contest also included fewer days to vote and new restrictions on absentee ballots -- and it ended with virtually the same result.

The 3.5 million votes cast in Tuesday's runoff amounted to 90 percent of the general-election turnout in the Senate race on Nov. 8. In 2021, when Mr. Warnock first won his seat, runoff turnout was 91 percent of the general-election turnout, which was higher because 2020 was a presidential year. The outpouring of voters in both years was orders of magnitude higher than in any prior Georgia runoff.

The booming turnout this year has led Georgia Republicans to insist that their voting law was not suppressive.

''We had what I think was a nearly flawless execution of two huge elections in terms of turnout and in terms of accuracy and integrity,'' said Butch Miller, a Republican leader in the Georgia State Senate who helped write the voting law and is leaving the chamber after losing the primary for lieutenant governor.

Mr. Miller said he ''didn't care for'' the way that some counties, including large Democratic-leaning ones in the Atlanta area, had opened for extra early voting days, a sentiment echoed by other Georgia Republicans after Mr. Warnock's victory.

The new law evidently had an effect on how Georgians voted. In the January 2021 runoffs, 24 percent of the vote came via absentee ballots that had been mailed to voters. On Tuesday, just 5 percent of the vote came through the mail, a result of restrictions on who could receive an absentee ballot and the shortening of the runoff period, which made it more difficult to request and receive a ballot within the allotted time period.

The 2021 law also cut the amount of in-person early voting days to a minimum of five, but allowed Georgia's counties to add more days before the state's mandated early-voting week. The Warnock campaign pressed the state's Democratic counties to open for early voting on the weekend after Thanksgiving, giving voters who were more likely to vote for the senator extra days to do so.

But then Mr. Raffensperger sought to enforce a state law that forbids in-person early voting on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, leading to Mr. Warnock's successful lawsuit.

Jason Shepherd, a former chairman of the Cobb County Republican Party, said the push to stop Saturday voting ''wasn't worth the fight'' and served to energize Democratic voters.

''You can be completely right and it can send the wrong message, because it plays into the Democrats' narrative about voter suppression,'' Mr. Shepherd said on Wednesday.

In the end, 28 of Georgia's 159 counties opened for extra in-person early voting days. Of those, 17 ended up backing Mr. Warnock and 11 went for his Republican challenger, the former football star Herschel Walker.

Compared with weekdays, when the entire state was open for in-person early voting, relatively few votes were cast on the extra voting days. Just over 167,000 votes in all were cast combined on the Saturday and Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend, along with the Tuesday and Wednesday before the holiday, when just two counties opened for voting. By contrast, 285,000 to 352,000 votes were cast statewide on each day of weekday early voting.

But voters who cast ballots during those extra in-person early voting days were likely to tilt heavily toward Mr. Warnock.

The largest 14 counties to back Mr. Warnock -- including seven in metropolitan Atlanta -- all opened for extra early voting days. Just two of the 11 largest counties to back Mr. Walker opened for extra in-person early voting days.

Maya King contributed reporting.Maya King contributed reporting.Maya King contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/08/us/politics/georgia-runoff-rules.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/08/us/politics/georgia-runoff-rules.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The runoff between Senator Raphael Warnock and Herschel Walker generated long lines at some polling places in Atlanta. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A21.

**Load-Date:** December 9, 2022

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[***Do Today’s Unions Have a Fighting Chance Against Corporate America?; The Future of Work Issue***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64T6-1D61-DXY4-X0CF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 2305 words

**Byline:** E. Tammy Kim

**Highlight:** For the workers who haven’t joined the Great Resignation, this moment has inspired a new wave of organizing — and a brutal pushback.

**Body**

In 1996, Manuel Miranda, a second-generation Filipino American from Kent, Wash., graduated from Evergreen State College. He had majored in literature and got a job in Seattle, taking care of people with cerebral palsy for $9 an hour. The city was “post-grunge” but being transformed by tech, Miranda told me. There was a lot of excitement about Amazon, the online bookseller.

Miranda applied to work there and started out in the warehouse, packing books and CDs. He then went into customer service, where he responded to questions and complaints. Some people saw the call-center job as a way to fund arty outside ambitions, Miranda said; others wanted an inroad into tech. Miranda earned just a dollar more per hour than he had in caregiving but got stock options, health insurance and the pride of working for a cool, homegrown company.

Yet he recalled that “the mood was pretty demoralized. There was this emphasis on productivity, getting nudged or monitored for how many emails you’re answering per hour.” Everyone had to work 50 hours a week. A couple of his co-workers told him that they wanted to organize. They were in touch with the Washington Alliance of Technology Workers (WashTech), a community group affiliated with a large union, the Communications Workers of America.

Miranda joined them, surveying colleagues about their demands (more money, fewer quotas, job mobility) and figuring out how to confront management. In 2000, a majority of the customer-service department, which had stretched to some 400 employees, joined WashTech. But in 2001, just before the dot-com bubble burst, Amazon shut down the Seattle call center and relocated the work to sites in Tacoma, West Virginia and India.

Miranda left Amazon in 1999 but kept in touch with his former co-workers. He saw the closure of the call center as a business decision but also as union-busting, which Amazon denies. Nevertheless, “I didn’t feel like the union failed,” Miranda, who now works as a designer in New York, told me. When his co-workers lost their jobs, WashTech helped negotiate a better severance package. What’s more, “It wasn’t clear how to organize a tech worker at the time,” he said. “Now it’s something people talk about.”

I was reminded of Miranda’s campaign over the holidays, as I spoke with Amazon warehouse workers protesting the conditions of mandatory overtime during the worsening pandemic. In New York, New Jersey and Washington, D.C., members of Amazonians United, an informal union, signed petitions demanding a permanent $3 raise, access to cellphones on the job and protection from firing. Their bosses did not respond. Members at two warehouses near Chicago walked off their shifts when management failed to acknowledge similar petitions.

Only a tiny number of the nation’s packers and sorters took part, but I admired their nerve. All these years after Miranda and his colleagues’ efforts, the methods for organizing at Amazon are still in flux; there simply isn’t a single correct way to confront one of the largest, richest corporations in the world.

Amazon workers have had some success. In January, the company raised full-time rates by $2 per hour in the Chicago area and agreed to send a notice of the right to organize to all United States employees as part of a settlement with the National Labor Relations Board, which enforces labor laws in the private sector. In warehouses in New York and Maryland, Amazon posted its own fliers as well, warning workers not to talk to Amazonians United.

And in Staten Island, a rank-and-file group called the Amazon Labor Union collected enough union cards to be approved for an election at two warehouses. The N.L.R.B. also issued a complaint stating that Amazon retaliated against several workers there for participating in union organizing. (An Amazon spokeswoman said the company is “skeptical that there are a sufficient number of legitimate signatures” in Staten Island. She added, “We don’t think unions are the best answer for our employees.”)

Large unions are experimenting, too. This month, thousands of workers at an Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Ala., will begin voting on whether to join the Retail Wholesale and Department Store Union. The International Brotherhood of Teamsters wants to help Amazon’s warehouse and transportation workers win a union contract.

There’s an urgency today that didn’t exist when Miranda assisted customers by phone: Amazon is now the avatar of a monopoly economy. That economy has made [*the world’s 10 wealthiest men twice as rich in the grisly months since March 2020.*](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/jan/17/world-10-richest-men-see-their-wealth-double-during-covid-pandemic)It’s an economy that makes me feel like the zillionth scampering fleck in some global ant farm. The days I don’t, it’s because of the workers I talk to and the small mutinies I see — at Amazon and in nursing homes, truck yards, schools, factories and grocery stores. “We’re definitely not gonna have a more favorable time to have a union,” Daniel Gross, a longtime organizer, recently told me. Which felt like his way of saying, The jig is up; we all know the score.

Workers have always organized in various ways, formal and informal. Since the beginning of the American labor movement, in the 19th century, there have been unions, as well as more ad hoc worker groups. Around the time of the Amazon call-center campaign, organizations like WashTech were much in vogue. They were called “worker centers” and tended to focus on communities (like Nepalese immigrants) or types of jobs (like restaurant-delivery workers) that traditional unions had failed to reach.

I got to know these groups in the mid-aughts, when, as a lawyer, I joined a legal-services agency representing worker centers in New York City. The centers’ offices were welcoming and low on red tape. They had limited resources and small memberships but, in the years that followed, attained goals well beyond their means: domestic workers’ bills of rights, new regulations for nail-salon techs and food-delivery cyclists, debt relief for taxi drivers.

I was impressed by their holistic approach: A construction day laborer wasn’t defined by his wages and hours — he also needed an affordable apartment and help applying for a green card. People at progressive unions thought this way, too, especially as the Great Recession and Occupy Wall Street highlighted the larger context for struggles in the workplace. And over the past decade, as a journalist and no longer a lawyer, I’ve seen the progressives’ influence grow.

In 2020, I thought that this increased enthusiasm for organizing, combined with mass death and financial hardship, might bring about a broad ***working-class*** movement. There were hints of ferment in the walkouts of essential workers and the record turnout at protests following the murder of George Floyd. After that, things quieted down — because, I think, of the temporary lift of an enlarged welfare state.

But then, between August and November of 2021, more than four million employees quit their jobs every month — individual actions that expressed a rebellious impulse. I noticed the same confident discontent in organized labor: Last fall, thousands of unionized workers went on strike or were on the verge of striking at John Deere, Kellogg’s, Kaiser Permanente hospitals and clinics and on the sets of Hollywood films. The wave of people leaving their jobs was named the Great Resignation; the agitation from within felt more like a great refusal, a commitment to reject the status quo and demand transformation.

I’ve watched a lot of new campaigns as well (including at The New York Times, where tech workers are fighting to join the union that represents other newspaper employees). For instance, since December, hundreds of Starbucks baristas — many of them young and influenced by Bernie Sanders-style democratic socialism — have announced their intention to join Workers United, an affiliate of the Service Employees International Union. (It’s not the first attempt: The United Food and Commercial Workers and the Culinary Union already represent thousands of baristas in unionized grocery stores, hotels and airports, and the U.F.C.W. and the Industrial Workers of the World organized stand-alone stores in the past.)

So far, workers at two Starbucks locations in Buffalo have formed a union and will eventually bargain for a contract. At least 64 other stores in 20 states are trying to do the same, despite resistance from management. (A company spokesman told me: “We don’t oppose unions. We don’t believe they are necessary at Starbucks.”)

For all the energy around unionizing, it is a daunting time to organize, especially in the private sector. Unions have been weak for decades — and corporations have only become stronger. In 2000, 13.5 percent of the United States work force was unionized; now, only 10.3 percent is. Over the past 20 years, meanwhile, the average revenue of the world’s biggest publicly traded companies has tripled, according to a recent study in the Review of Finance.

Companies are willing and able to pay for union-busting consultants and lobbyists pushing favorable changes to laws and regulations. Since the apex of union membership in the 1950s, the bulk of economic policy has cut against the interests of the poor and ***working class***: tax breaks for the rich; rules favoring large corporations; slashed wages; reduced social services; narrowed opportunities to sue employers for discrimination or fraud.

At the same time, the 1935 National Labor Relations Act — the government’s main tool to make sure workers can effectively organize — has been compromised by subsequent legislation and court decisions. Fewer categories of people can unionize or can do so as quickly or en masse across workplaces. Enforcement of the law has become weaker.

The question is, can store-by-store campaigns “match the scale of corporate power in today’s American capitalism?” a U.F.C.W. official, who wasn’t authorized by the union to speak on the record, told me. Every industry now seems to be dominated by monopolies and global chains. And the United States, unlike much of Asia and Europe, doesn’t have sector-wide bargaining where workers can organize across whole industries. “Walmart, Target, Starbucks — they have immense national and international resources,” the official said. “The National Labor Relations Board isn’t built to help organize workers by the thousands, in many locations, all at once.”

When I asked the labor sociologist Ruth Milkman when she last felt hopeful about the ***working class***, she laughed. “I remember when Obama was elected and I made a fool of myself predicting a big labor resurgence,” she said. But that didn’t materialize: Many workers felt ignored during the Great Recession, and promised labor-law reforms never came to pass. “It’s a story of endless disappointments,” Milkman told me, “and it seems like that’s where we are now, too.”

Short of upending capitalism, shrinking the distance between chief executives and the rank and file would require two fundamental changes: a reduction of corporate power and an expansion of worker power.

The Biden administration could start by using antitrust and tax law to dismantle huge corporations. In a universe of smaller companies, workers would have more options and a better chance at organizing. Requiring better pay and benefits would give people the security they need to seek change; Mindy Isser, a friend who used to organize fast-food workers, said that their poverty wages made long-term campaigns nearly impossible. Fighting misclassification is also critical. Independent contractors like me are excluded from traditional unions.

Workers need to know, too, that they can report unsafe conditions or underpayment and can organize without fear of being fired. The N.L.R.B.’s new general counsel has proposed extending the right to organize to millions more workers and increasing the board’s power to stop union-busting. [*The Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act),*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/09/us/politics/house-labor-rights-bill.html) the most significant omnibus labor bill since the New Deal, would go much further, speeding up the process of union elections, protecting strikers, penalizing bad employers and getting rid of state “right to work” laws that inhibit organizing. The bill passed the House but is marooned in the Senate.

All these changes would require a politics borne of a mass workers’ movement. But they are also prerequisites for expanding that movement. Hence, the temperament of the labor world: always hopeful, always disappointed. In January, [*a labor-studies professor published an opinion essay that compared the nascent Starbucks campaign*](https://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/labor/590090-will-the-starbucks-union-victories-light-a-fuse-of-organizing?rl=1) (hundreds of workers at scattered sites) to the sit-down strikes of the 1930s that forced the Big Three automakers to the table (hundreds of thousands of workers in a few factories). Similarly, journalists on the Amazon-organizing beat have sometimes offered overly buoyant accounts of workers’ prospects. I empathize with this tendency toward grandiosity. Collective action is incredible to witness.

Over the past decade, I have not only covered the labor movement as a journalist but have also participated in it directly, in campaigns at several nonprofit groups and news outlets and now as a member of a nontraditional union of freelancers. The thing about organizing at work is that, because everyone who isn’t in management is in the union, you have to get over your differences — or at least set them on a high shelf. I have learned to organize with people who don’t especially like me and witnessed great tenderness among co-workers with vastly different views of race and gender and electoral politics. That’s why, I think, businesses fight even small unions from the jump. Imagine multiplying such unity, office to store to factory to hospital, in every city and state. What couldn’t we win?

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by María Jesús Contreras FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 17, 2022

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[***Learning Caution From a Late Columnist***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62HV-R331-DXY4-X062-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 20

**Length:** 917 words

**Byline:** By Charles M. Blow

**Body**

There have been many columnists for The New York Times, many of whom I have only heard or read about, some legendary in their skill and influence.

One of those who came before me was a man named Thomas Wicker, a Southerner like myself. He'd been the lone Times reporter accompanying President John F. Kennedy on a trip to Dallas, and dictated the details of the assassination from a phone booth. Wicker, who wrote under the byline Tom Wicker, went on to inherit the column of the retiring Arthur Krock, whom The Times called ''the dean of Washington pundits, who had covered every president since Calvin Coolidge.''

In 1965, The Voting Rights Act, one of the seminal pieces of civil rights legislation in the history of this country, was signed into law. Soon after, in August of that year, Wicker penned a most prescient column, one I have recalled often, which contained some wise caution, but also some naïve optimism.

In it he wrote:

''But since at best the Negroes can make themselves no more than a minority of the Southern electorate, Democratic leaders here are apprehensive on two counts. The least likely is the possibility that the Republican Party, newly resurgent in the South, might seek to isolate Negroes in a hapless Democratic Party and turn itself into a larger white man's party.''

But that is precisely what the Republican Party has done, particularly in the South.

Wicker didn't believe that this would happen, in part because white Southerners also approved and benefited from ''the Democratic approach to welfare and economic problems.'' In his estimation: ''Where the pocketbook collides with the race issue, the pocketbook usually wins.''

Wrong again. History has shown us over and over that white racists will consistently vote and act against their own interest so as to oppose or deny Black people. As Heather McGhee so brilliantly argues in her most recent book, ''The Sum of Us,'' they will drain the pool rather than share it with Black people.

When slavery was ended in this country, it would have been smart for poor whites and Blacks to make common cause because they had common economic interests. America -- and Western culture -- taught white people that there was intrinsic value to whiteness, even if you were poor, that it was a racial Rolex that could always be bartered.

So, the preservation of whiteness is a driving force of the racists' political prerogative, even if they are ***working class***, struggling or poor. As Walter Johnson wrote in the Boston Review in 2018, ''The history of white ***working-class*** struggle, for example, cannot be understood separate from the privileges of whiteness.''

And Wicker continued in his 1965 column:

''Perhaps more immediate is the fear that Negroes will go into the Democratic Party in great numbers but become a sort of outcast 'bullet vote' -- with whites automatically lining up against Negroes in primaries, outvoting them consistently, and thus keeping racist politics alive.''

Instead of this, white racists simply left the Democratic Party for the Republican one, and kept ''racist politics alive'' there.

As Wicker put it, ''Racist politics, in the final analysis, depends on exclusion of Negroes from voting.'' As he summarized:

''The disenfranchisement of Southern Negroes in this century resulted directly from the corrupt and violent competition of Southern Bourbons and Southern agrarians for the Negro vote in the late 19th century. Fearing the Negro would tip the balance against them, the Bourbons raised the flag of white supremacy and aroused the poor-white agrarians against the Negro; Bourbons and agrarians then combined in the name of white solidarity to eliminate the Negro from the electorate as if he did not exist.''

Now you see establishment Republicans joining together to do the very same thing with a wave of voter suppression bills across the country.

And this is not just the work of politicians: A majority of Republican voters are also in favor of many of these voter restrictions that would disproportionately affect Black people. According to a Pew Research Center report issued Thursday, a majority of Republicans and Republican-leaning voters now oppose the automatic registration of all eligible citizens to vote and support more voter identification laws and purging voter lists of voters who haven't recently voted or confirmed their registration.

Wicker ended on a note of optimism, that there would eventually be ''white competition to win the Negro vote,'' and ''if so, the competition surely will mean a new volatility in Southern politics and society, a new freedom for the white politician to move beyond race to the broader issues of national life, and a new opportunity for the Negro to have his needs considered instead of his skin.''

That day never came.

In the moment, Wicker's optimism was understandable. As columnists, we exist and write in the moment, trying our best to view events in context. But, sometimes, too often, we misjudge the meaning of events unfolding around us.

One thing this column by Wicker has taught us was this: no matter how hopeful the moment, no matter how great the advance, never -- ever -- underestimate white supremacy.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/25/opinion/tom-wicker-racism.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/25/opinion/tom-wicker-racism.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY George Tames/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Sex Work, Academia and Pain That Resists Diagnosis; The Shortlist***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66JF-Y771-DXY4-X0CP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 6, 2022 Thursday 21:02 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1192 words

**Byline:** Jessica Ferri

**Highlight:** Three memoirs recount past harm — consensual and not.

**Body**

Chris Belcher’s entertaining debut, PRETTY BABY: A Memoir (260 pp., Avid Reader, $27), recounts how a West Virginia adolescent who read Foucault and Derrida went on to become “L.A.’s renowned lesbian dominatrix.” Her work is as much about money and financial precarity as it is about sex and sexuality, if not more so. Having moved to California for a Ph.D. program in English, Belcher finds herself in her mid-20s “at the end of my financial rope,” collecting food stamps and considering selling her eggs when a new girlfriend, Catherine, suggests she join her in working at a “B.D.S.M. dungeon” on Venice Boulevard. “Needing the money is always more present than anything we might have to bury inside,” Belcher writes. It is the only thing preventing her from having to return to her small town, with its small-town mentality.

But the drag, too, is essential to her survival. After developing her nascent homosexuality in high school and college, when she presumed that queerness required her to be “butch,” she now finds herself reveling in the performance of über-femininity. “Domination is one of the only professions in which femininity is worth more than masculinity,” she writes, “and I was building my femininity to sell.” When Belcher brings Catherine home to meet her parents, her father expresses a new approval of her appearance: She’s slimmed down and grown out her long hair. “I had fashioned my femininity as an appeal to other women’s fathers,” she reflects, but “it also appealed to my own. I had made my way back to him, his pretty baby.”

Juggling her careers in sex work and academia, the author lays bare the soul-crushing difference in pay: “My adjunct professorship at a state college paid me $800 per month,” for hours upon hours of lecturing, reading and grading. By contrast, a single domination client pays her “$1,200 for four hours of cathartic suffering,” and then a few more hours sleeping in a cage.

On one job, Belcher meets a young man at a bar where he’s paid her to publicly reject him. They look as if they could be on a Tinder date, she thinks, until she remembers how a friend told her about a real Tinder date she’d been “afraid” to leave. “Feeling like I’ve just gotten away with something,” Belcher realizes: “It’s not just the money. It’s that I get to say no.”

Speaking up doesn’t come so easily to most. Three months after the 2016 presidential election, Elissa Bassist suffered from blurred vision and debilitating headaches, neither the first nor the last symptoms of a mysterious, chronic illness. In HYSTERICAL: A Memoir (244 pp., Hachette, $29), the author recounts the two years she spent going from one doctor’s office to another, only to receive one diagnosis again and again: “Nothing Is Wrong With You.”

When she complains to two gynecologists that her “vagina is broken,” one prescribes “more sex, a 19th-century recommendation based on curing hysteria,” and the other tells her “it’s psychological.” A third finally determines she has a ruptured cervix. “Being socialized is almost like being gaslit into mental illness,” she writes. It’s no surprise that women are more likely than men to be misdiagnosed or not diagnosed at all. As Bassist’s mother says, about everything from medicine to the fit of a seatbelt, “It’s a man’s world.”

Bassist compares misogyny to an iceberg, whose visible peak represents the more obvious forms of violence like murder and rape. But also damaging is the unseen “gray area” of sexual pressure, rape culture and mansplaining. “Hysterical” was written before Roe v. Wade was overturned, and reading it now feels a bit like an exercise in self-punishment. We know that hetero-patriarchy is all about power and control. But what to do about it? Bassist’s self-deprecating style masks an unwieldy thesis, and both author and reader are left overwhelmed by its lack of focus. In “King Kong Theory,” Virginie Despentes describes the constant scrutiny women writers must endure: “Talking about things that should remain secret, being exposed in the newspapers. … The public shame is comparable to being a whore.”

After nearly giving up on writing (thinking, “Silence is for the best”), Bassist realizes this approach is effectively equivalent to suffering under a false or nonexistent diagnosis. Writing, she reads in psychology studies, even “correlated with improved immune function.”

“It wasn’t only that I thought I was going to die when I was sick,” she writes, “but that I thought I was going to die with so much unsaid.”

In I’M NOT BROKEN: A Memoir (324 pp., Vintage, paperback, $17), Jesse Leon writes that he kept his own silence about his childhood trauma in 1980s San Diego for decades. Bullied by his white classmates for his Mexican, ***working-class*** heritage, at 11 he’s raped and serially assaulted by a shopkeeper who then intimidates him into returning to the shop twice a week for years, so that hundreds of other men can pay to rape him too. When Leon does tell the police and a therapist about the abuse, no one takes action. The shopkeeper vanishes into thin air.

Still in junior high, Leon continues performing sex work because it pays him “more in a few minutes of work than my mom makes in a week with her … minimum-wage job as a school cafeteria worker.” He drinks and does drugs to numb himself to his and his beloved mother’s traumas: A victim of abuse herself, Amá is an Indigenous woman working two jobs while battling serious illness. She tries not to let her son slip through the cracks; but her own cracks are more like canyons.

What saves Leon is his education. After high school he enrolls in a college-prep program, and then goes from community college to Berkeley to a master’s program in public policy at Harvard. His studies help him see the inherited trauma of his culture. “I started to question why, as a person of Mexican descent, I always said ‘Mande’ or ‘Mandeme usted’ instead of ‘\xC2Que?’ as most other Spanish-speaking cultures do,” he writes. “It made me angry to realize how deeply servitude and subservience have been engrained in my people by colonization.” In a book limited by its directness, the reader longs for more reflective moments like this one.

Leon begins each of three sections with a story about his father’s lineage of Mexican revolutionaries from the gold mines of the Sierra Madre. Leon’s healing begins when he is able to choose his own context. Where his “guarded, private, machista” father “rarely talked about his life,” Leon finds relief in confession. He attends Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings while in school, and begins “writing every day.” While studying abroad in Spain — where his ability to speak Spanish belies the foreignness he feels — he comes out as gay, feeling a new freedom to explore his sexuality without the pressures of his culture’s hypermasculinity. “I let go of my perceptions of manhood and machismo and went with the flow,” Leon writes. “It was ecstasy.”

Jessica Ferri is the author of “Silent Cities New York” and “Silent Cities San Francisco.” Her work has appeared in The Los Angeles Times, The Economist and NPR.

PHOTOS This article appeared in print on page BR26.

**Load-Date:** October 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Mugged by Reality, Again***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65MV-8R11-DXY4-X0CR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 8, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 18; BRET STEPHENS

**Length:** 873 words

**Byline:** By Bret Stephens

**Body**

This column has been updated.

Is a decade of destructive progressive ideology finally coming to an end?

That San Franciscans, some of America's most reliably liberal voters, chose on Tuesday to recall District Attorney Chesa Boudin, one of America's most leftward D.A.s, is a sign of hope.

Voter patience for what Mayor London Breed of San Francisco calls ''all the bullshit that has destroyed our city'' -- aggressive shoplifting, rampant car burglaries, open-air drug use, filthy homeless encampments, sidewalks turned into toilets -- is finally running thin.

Progressive overreach has its price. Even for progressives.

What's going on in San Francisco is happening nationwide, and not just in matters of criminal justice and urban governance. In one area after another, the left is being mugged by reality, to borrow Irving Kristol's famous phrase. Consider a few examples:

Inflation. For over a decade, progressives insisted that inflation was a right-wing chimera, ignoring the huge increase in asset prices. Then, last year, they insisted inflation was temporary -- a ''red herring,'' to quote the economist Joseph Stiglitz. Later, as it became clear that inflation was sticking, some took a bolder tack: Inflation is good. As a piece in The Intercept put it last November, ''Inflation is bad for the 1 percent but helps out almost everyone else.''

Really? Usually, it's the 1 percent who can afford to shield their wealth through inflation-protected assets -- a rare violin, a vacation house -- while the less fortunate struggle with triple-digit grocery bills. The left's combination of nonchalance about inflation (it will erase debts!), along with a reluctance to tackle it forcefully, is why the left so often ends up losing ***working-class*** voters to the right.

Energy. It wasn't long ago that progressives bemoaned low gas prices, on the theory that deterring driving would help the climate. Maybe House Democrats should try running on $7 a gallon as an environmental good and see what happens to their majority. Maybe, too, the Biden administration should tell the Saudis where they can stuff their oil, as opposed to beseeching them to pump more.

Or maybe not. The one form of nature progressives reliably fail to understand is human nature. If they ever wonder why their climate fervor hasn't translated into more policy victories, they should grapple with the fact that the rapid decarbonization of the economy is not something for which most people are prepared to pay a high price, at least from their own pocketbooks.

How about working on a different message, one that is measured, adaptive and meliorative, rather than draconian, grim and doomsaying?

The culture. How did progressives come out on the losing end of the culture wars? How did they become the butt of jokes for our era's sharpest comedians, from Bill Maher to Dave Chappelle? Why are lifelong liberals at universities, newspapers and publishing houses constantly whispering under their breath about the rank Maoism of their younger colleagues?

Simple: Progressives went from being all about liberation to being all about imposition. When a trans collegiate swimmer such as Lia Thomas identifies as a woman, that's liberation -- a decision that surely required courage and is worthy of respect.

But when Thomas is allowed to compete in women's races, that's a blatantly unfair act that has given Thomas one victory after another while diminishing the legacy of female athletes. That it has become difficult to even say this out loud merely underscores the point.

Minorities. Remember when the future of American politics was Democratic because the future of American demography would be less white?

That comforting prediction is failing because members of minority groups don't necessarily like being stuffed into the back end of progressive acronyms like BIPOC or being stymied by progressive policies, such as efforts to do away with entrance exams for selective public schools, or neglecting law-and-order priorities in poorer communities that often need them most, including those on the southern border.

The world. Progressives (aided by isolationist Republicans) spent a decade demanding that America disentangle itself from faraway military commitments, particularly in Afghanistan, so that we could do more nation-building at home. Joe Biden made the mistake of believing it, and his presidency hasn't recovered from the strategic and moral debacle of withdrawal.

Nor has the world. The perception of American diffidence and incompetence, which the administration has labored so hard to counteract in Ukraine, is part of what tempted the Kremlin to invade in the first place.

The list goes on, but the message is the same. When Kristol talked about liberals getting mugged by reality, he said it turned them into neoconservatives. It will be enough if today's progressives, in the second mugging, find their way back to liberalism.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/07/opinion/progressives-america.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/07/opinion/progressives-america.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Melina Mara/The Washington Post via Getty Image FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 8, 2022

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[***Learning Caution From a Late Columnist; Charles M. Blow***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62HP-XN41-JBG3-6468-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 25, 2021 Sunday 10:22 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 918 words

**Byline:** Charles M. Blow

**Highlight:** Sometimes we misjudge the meaning of events unfolding around us.

**Body**

There have been many columnists for The New York Times, many of whom I have only heard or read about, some legendary in their skill and influence.

One of those who came before me was a man named Thomas Wicker, a Southerner like myself. He’d been the lone Times reporter accompanying President John F. Kennedy on a trip to Dallas, and dictated the details of the assassination from a phone booth. Wicker, who wrote under the byline Tom Wicker, went on to inherit the column of the retiring Arthur Krock, whom [*The Times called*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/26/us/tom-wicker-journalist-and-author-dies-at-85.html) “the dean of Washington pundits, who had covered every president since Calvin Coolidge.”

In 1965, the Voting Rights Act, one of the seminal pieces of civil rights legislation in the history of this country, was signed into law. Soon after, in August of that year, Wicker penned a most prescient column, one I have recalled often, which contained some wise caution, but also some naïve optimism.

[*In it he wrote:*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/26/us/tom-wicker-journalist-and-author-dies-at-85.html)

“But since at best the Negroes can make themselves no more than a minority of the Southern electorate, Democratic leaders here are apprehensive on two counts. The least likely is the possibility that the Republican Party, newly resurgent in the South, might seek to isolate Negroes in a hapless Democratic Party and turn itself into a larger white man’s party.”

But that is precisely what the Republican Party has done, particularly in the South.

Wicker didn’t believe that this would happen, in part because white Southerners also approved and benefited from “the Democratic approach to welfare and economic problems.” In his estimation: “Where the pocketbook collides with the race issue, the pocketbook usually wins.”

Wrong again. History has shown us over and over that white racists will consistently vote and act against their own interest so as to oppose or deny Black people. As Heather McGhee so brilliantly argues in her most recent book, [*“The Sum of Us,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/26/us/tom-wicker-journalist-and-author-dies-at-85.html) they will drain the pool rather than share it with Black people.

When slavery was ended in this country, it would have been smart for poor whites and Blacks to make common cause because they had common economic interests. America — and Western culture — taught white people that there was intrinsic value to whiteness, even if you were poor, that it was a racial Rolex that could always be bartered.

So, the preservation of whiteness is a driving force of the racists’ political prerogative, even if they are ***working class***, struggling or poor. As Walter Johnson [*wrote in the Boston Review in 2018*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/26/us/tom-wicker-journalist-and-author-dies-at-85.html), “The history of white ***working-class*** struggle, for example, cannot be understood separate from the privileges of whiteness.”

And Wicker continued in his 1965 column:

“Perhaps more immediate is the fear that Negroes will go into the Democratic Party in great numbers but become a sort of outcast ‘bullet vote’ — with whites automatically lining up against Negroes in primaries, outvoting them consistently, and thus keeping racist politics alive.”

Instead of this, white racists simply left the Democratic Party for the Republican one, and kept “racist politics alive” there.

As Wicker put it, “Racist politics, in the final analysis, depends on exclusion of Negroes from voting.” As he summarized:

“The disenfranchisement of Southern Negroes in this century resulted directly from the corrupt and violent competition of Southern Bourbons and Southern agrarians for the Negro vote in the late 19th century. Fearing the Negro would tip the balance against them, the Bourbons raised the flag of white supremacy and aroused the poor-white agrarians against the Negro; Bourbons and agrarians then combined in the name of white solidarity to eliminate the Negro from the electorate as if he did not exist.”

Now you see establishment Republicans joining together to do the very same thing with a [*wave of voter suppression bills*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/26/us/tom-wicker-journalist-and-author-dies-at-85.html) across the country.

And this is not just the work of politicians: A majority of Republican voters are also in favor of many of these voter restrictions that would disproportionately affect Black people. According to a [*Pew Research Center report issued Thursday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/26/us/tom-wicker-journalist-and-author-dies-at-85.html), a majority of Republicans and Republican-leaning voters now oppose the automatic registration of all eligible citizens to vote and support more voter identification laws and purging voter lists of voters who haven’t recently voted or confirmed their registration.

Wicker ended on a note of optimism, that there would eventually be “white competition to win the Negro vote,” and “if so, the competition surely will mean a new volatility in Southern politics and society, a new freedom for the white politician to move beyond race to the broader issues of national life, and a new opportunity for the Negro to have his needs considered instead of his skin.”

That day never came.

In the moment, Wicker’s optimism was understandable. As columnists, we exist and write in the moment, trying our best to view events in context. But, sometimes, too often, we misjudge the meaning of events unfolding around us.

One thing this column by Wicker has taught us was this: no matter how hopeful the moment, no matter how great the advance, never — ever — underestimate white supremacy.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/26/us/tom-wicker-journalist-and-author-dies-at-85.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/2011/11/26/us/tom-wicker-journalist-and-author-dies-at-85.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/26/us/tom-wicker-journalist-and-author-dies-at-85.html).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY George Tames/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 27, 2021

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[***Ruing Senate Loss, Georgia G.O.P. Asks if Runoff Rule Changes Backfired***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:671W-GM01-JBG3-6424-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 8, 2022 Thursday 21:56 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1401 words

**Byline:** Reid J. Epstein

**Highlight:** Some in the party said that additional changes to election rules were likely, after Senator Raphael Warnock’s victory put a new spotlight on a major 2021 voting law passed by the G.O.P.

**Body**

Some in the party said that additional changes to election rules were likely, after Senator Raphael Warnock’s victory put a new spotlight on a major 2021 voting law passed by the G.O.P.

As Georgia Democrats [*won their third Senate runoff election*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/12/06/us/warnock-walker-georgia-senate-runoff) in two years, the party proved it had crafted an effective strategy for triumphing in a decades-old system created to sustain segregationist power and for overcoming an array of efforts to making voting more difficult. Republicans, meanwhile, were quietly cursing the runoff system, or at least their strategy for winning under a state law they wrote after losing the last election.

The various post-mortems over how Georgia’s runoff rules shaped the state’s Senate outcome on Tuesday put a spotlight on a major voting law [*passed by the Republican-led General Assembly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/us/politics/georgia-voting-law-republicans.html) last year. Some Republicans acknowledged that their efforts to limit in-person early voting days might have backfired, while others encouraged lawmakers to consider additional restrictions next year.

With Georgia [*poised to remain a critical political battleground*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/07/us/politics/us-political-map-2024.html) and with Republicans holding gerrymandered majorities in both chambers of its state legislature, some in the party said that additional election law changes were likely.

Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, a Republican who oversees the state’s voting procedures, said in an interview on Wednesday that there would be a debate next year over potential adjustments to Georgia’s runoff laws and procedures after Senator Raphael Warnock’s victory.

Mr. Raffensperger said he would present three proposals to lawmakers. They include forcing large counties to open more early-voting locations to reduce hourslong lines [*like the ones that formed*](https://www.ajc.com/politics/strong-turnout-lines-for-voters-reported-for-the-final-day-of-early-voting/GVQAKNJTTFF6JE5AW3EBZDMXZM/) at many Metro Atlanta sites last week; lowering the threshold candidates must achieve to avoid a runoff to 45 percent from 50 percent; and instituting a ranked-choice instant-runoff system that would not require voters to come back to the polls again after the general election.

“The elected legislators need to have information so they can look at all the different options that they have and really see what they’re comfortable with,” Mr. Raffensperger said.

Republicans are not the only ones hoping to end Georgia’s requirement that a runoff take place if no candidate in a general election wins at least half of the vote. Democrats have long viewed the practice — [*a vestige of racist 1960s efforts*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/12/05/georgia-runoff-history/) to keep Black candidates or candidates backed by Black voters from taking office — as an additional hurdle for ***working-class*** people of color.

Park Cannon, a Democratic state representative from Atlanta [*who was arrested last year*](https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/politics/100000007676451/georgia-representative-cannon-arrest-voting-access.html) after knocking on the closed door behind which Gov. Brian Kemp signed the state’s voting law, said that last Friday, she had driven for 30 minutes and then waited an hour to vote early in person.

Runoffs, Ms. Cannon said, “are not to the benefit of working families.” She added, “It’s very difficult to, within four weeks of taking time off to vote, have to do that again.”

Since the law was passed in 2021, Georgia Democrats have criticized [*the new barriers to voting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/georgia-voting-law-annotated.html) that it set in place. During the runoff, Mr. Warnock, a Democrat, spared no opportunity to highlight the law and characterize it as the latest in a decades-long push to minimize the influence of Black voters and anyone who opposed Republican control.

His stump speech featured a regular refrain reminding supporters that Georgia Republicans had sought to prohibit counties from opening for in-person early voting on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, after the state’s Republican attorney general and Mr. Raffensperger concluded that doing so was in violation of state law. Mr. Warnock and Democrats sued, and [*a state judge agreed to allow for the Saturday voting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/18/us/elections/georgia-runoff-early-voting.html).

“People showed up in record numbers within the narrow confines of the time given to them by a state legislature that saw our electoral strength the last time and went after it with surgical precision,” Mr. Warnock said in his victory speech on Tuesday night in Atlanta. “The fact that voters worked so hard to overcome the hardship put in front of them does not eliminate the fact that hardship was put there in the first place.”

Because of the new voting law, Tuesday’s runoff was held four weeks after the general election, rather than the nine-week runoff period under which Georgia’s high-profile Senate races in early 2021 unfolded. The nine-week runoff period that year had been ordered by a federal judge; runoff contests for state elections have always operated on a four-week timeline.

Tuesday’s contest also included fewer days to vote and new restrictions on absentee ballots — and it ended with virtually the same result.

The [*3.5 million votes*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/12/06/us/elections/results-georgia-us-senate-runoff.html) cast in Tuesday’s runoff amounted to 90 percent of the general-election turnout in the Senate race on Nov. 8. In 2021, when Mr. Warnock first won his seat, runoff turnout was 91 percent of the general-election turnout, which was higher because 2020 was a presidential year. The outpouring of voters in both years was orders of magnitude higher than in any prior Georgia runoff.

The booming turnout this year has led Georgia Republicans to insist that their voting law was not suppressive.

“We had what I think was a nearly flawless execution of two huge elections in terms of turnout and in terms of accuracy and integrity,” said Butch Miller, a Republican leader in the Georgia State Senate who helped write the voting law and is leaving the chamber after losing the primary for lieutenant governor.

Mr. Miller said he “didn’t care for” the way that some counties, including large Democratic-leaning ones in the Atlanta area, had opened for extra early voting days, a sentiment echoed by other Georgia Republicans after Mr. Warnock’s victory.

The new law evidently had an effect on how Georgians voted. In the January 2021 runoffs, 24 percent of the vote came via absentee ballots that had been mailed to voters. On Tuesday, just 5 percent of the vote came through the mail, a result of restrictions on who could receive an absentee ballot and the shortening of the runoff period, which made it more difficult to request and receive a ballot within the allotted time period.

The 2021 law also cut the amount of in-person early voting days to a minimum of five, but allowed Georgia’s counties to add more days before the state’s mandated early-voting week. The Warnock campaign pressed the state’s Democratic counties to open for early voting on the weekend after Thanksgiving, giving voters who were more likely to vote for the senator extra days to do so.

But then Mr. Raffensperger [*sought to enforce a state law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/14/us/politics/georgia-senate-runoff-holiday-rules.html) that forbids in-person early voting on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, leading to Mr. Warnock’s successful lawsuit.

Jason Shepherd, a former chairman of the Cobb County Republican Party, said the push to stop Saturday voting “wasn’t worth the fight” and served to energize Democratic voters.

“You can be completely right and it can send the wrong message, because it plays into the Democrats’ narrative about voter suppression,” Mr. Shepherd said on Wednesday.

In the end, 28 of Georgia’s 159 counties opened for extra in-person early voting days. Of those, 17 ended up backing Mr. Warnock and 11 went for his Republican challenger, the former football star Herschel Walker.

Compared with weekdays, when the entire state was open for in-person early voting, relatively few votes were cast on the extra voting days. Just over 167,000 votes in all were cast combined on the Saturday and Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend, along with the Tuesday and Wednesday before the holiday, when just two counties opened for voting. By contrast, 285,000 to 352,000 votes were cast statewide on each day of weekday early voting.

But voters who cast ballots during those extra in-person early voting days were likely to tilt heavily toward Mr. Warnock.

The largest 14 counties to back Mr. Warnock — including seven in metropolitan Atlanta — all opened for extra early voting days. Just two of the 11 largest counties to back Mr. Walker opened for extra in-person early voting days.

Maya King contributed reporting.

Maya King contributed reporting. Maya King contributed reporting.

PHOTO: The runoff between Senator Raphael Warnock and Herschel Walker generated long lines at some polling places in Atlanta. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A21.

**Load-Date:** December 8, 2022

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[***Pitching Benefits for Families, From a Corner of Conservatism***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67HR-79X1-JBG3-60PJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 11, 2023 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1848 words

**Byline:** By Dana Goldstein

**Body**

Some conservative thinkers are pushing Republicans to move on from Reagan-era family policy and send cash to families. A few lawmakers are listening.

Sending cash to parents, with few strings attached. Expanding Medicaid. Providing child care subsidies to families earning six figures.

The ideas may sound like part of a progressive platform. But they are from an influential group of conservative intellectuals with a direct line to elected politicians. They hope to represent the future of a post-Trump Republican Party -- if only, they say, their fellow travelers would abandon Reaganomics once and for all.

These conservatives generally oppose abortion rights. They're eager to promote marriage, worried about the nation's declining fertility rate and often resist the trans rights movement.

But they also acknowledge that with abortion now illegal or tightly restricted in half the states, more babies will be born to parents struggling to pay for the basics -- rent, health care, groceries and child care -- when prices are high and child care slots scarce.

''A full-spectrum family policy has to be about encouraging and supporting people in getting married and starting families,'' said Oren Cass, executive director of the American Compass think tank. ''It has to be pro-life, but also supportive of those families as they are trying to raise kids in an economic environment where that has become a lot harder to do.''

The idea of spending heavily on family benefits remains an outlier within the Republican Party, which only recently rejected Democrats' attempts to extend pandemic-era child tax credits.

But a number of conservative members of Congress have embraced new benefits for parents, including Mr. Cass's former boss, Senator Mitt Romney of Utah, as well as the senators Marco Rubio of Florida, Josh Hawley of Missouri and J.D. Vance of Ohio.

And in President Biden's State of the Union address on Tuesday, he called on Republicans to join him in providing families with child care, paid leave, child tax credits and affordable housing.

Now, Mr. Cass and conservative allies are hoping to shape ideas for the 2024 Republican presidential primary and beyond, targeting ambitious governors who have emphasized making their states family-friendly, such as Ron DeSantis of Florida, Kristi Noem of South Dakota and Glenn Youngkin of Virginia.

A key priority for this new network of conservative thinkers is for the federal government to send parents cash monthly for each child, a sea change from decades of Republican thinking on family policy. They hope the cash could encourage people to have more children, and allow more parents to stay home full- or part-time when their children are young.

''The work of the family is real work,'' said Erika Bachiochi, a legal scholar who calls herself a pro-life feminist and has written influential essays and books.

She and others debate to what extent benefits should be tied to work requirements, but even the more stringent proposals do not require full-time work. These conservatives believe that many young children are better off at home and are skeptical of policies that would place more in child care centers. And they point to polls that show many parents would prefer to cut their work hours and take care of their babies and toddlers themselves.

In a Republican Party hoping to become the party of parents, these conservative intellectuals do not share the outraged tone of right-wing activists like Christopher Rufo, the ''parental rights'' crusader battling what he sees as leftist ideology in school curriculums.

While they may agree with much of that cultural critique, supporting families financially, they say, is a pragmatic way to prop up conservative values alongside new restrictions on abortion.

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In arguing this, Ms. Bachiochi, Mr. Cass and others in this network are making a big ask: for Republicans to reject what they call the outdated, rigid agenda of the Reagan era, which not only cut working parents from welfare programs, but also vilified mothers receiving public benefits, often in starkly racist terms. If Republicans are to grow support among ***working-class***, multiethnic voters, they say, the party must match pro-family rhetoric with pro-family investments.

The group has founded think tanks, published statements of principle and organized discussions with policymakers to push its cause. Mr. Cass, 39, said his ideas on policy had been shaped by his own family life. His wife has her own career, and they both work from home in the Berkshires of Western Massachusetts.

Mr. Cass served as the domestic policy director for Mr. Romney's 2012 presidential campaign; in 2020, he founded American Compass, a think tank that has tried to build conservative momentum for more generous government support to working families. Its priorities include child cash benefits, wage subsidies and even reviving the labor movement.

That some conservatives have landed on what amounts to a new entitlement program seems to speak to the economic plight of many families. The pressures of wage stagnation, low marriage rates and the opioid epidemic have helped erode Republican anti-government orthodoxy, said Seth Dowland, a historian of the family values movement and professor of religion at Pacific Lutheran University.

''There are some Republicans looking at this and saying, 'We need to invest in rebuilding families and rebuilding communities, because it's dire in some places -- and it's our voters,''' he said.

Ms. Bachiochi, the mother of seven children, 4 to 21, is a fellow at two think tanks, the Abigail Adams Institute and the Ethics and Public Policy Center. Her husband is a tech executive and, she said, much more of a baby person than she is. In an interview, she recalled struggling to get reading and writing done while her babies were napping.

She celebrates mothers finding paid work that adds meaning to their lives, but believes government should help parents of both sexes spend more time on child-rearing.

The job of parents, in her view, is to create ''adults with virtue who can go out and be good friends, spouses, good employees, good citizens.''

The primary problem, she said, is that ''the family is so overtaxed economically that they don't have time with one another to do that work'' of raising children, which is, by nature, time intensive.

Her own ideas have shifted radically over time. In the mid-1990s, as a student at Middlebury College in Vermont, she volunteered for Bernie Sanders, then a congressman. But she also interned for a Washington bipartisan group hoping to shape President Bill Clinton's welfare reforms, which curtailed cash payments to single mothers, while tying remaining benefits to strict work requirements. Through that experience, she said, she came to appreciate that some members of both parties shared a sincere commitment to alleviating poverty.

Since then, Ms. Bachiochi has embraced her Catholic roots, in part through Alcoholics Anonymous. She now considers herself ''center right,'' she said, but more often argues with Republicans than with Democrats.

''The libertarian right is a little bit blind'' to the economic conditions families live under, Ms. Bachiochi said, noting that many parents struggle with the low pay and irregular hours of service jobs, working long days while leaving their children with less-than-ideal care.

Patrick T. Brown, 33, a former congressional staffer and current fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, previously cared for his children full-time. Now, he works part-time from home in Columbia, S.C., and takes charge of his four children after school while his wife works as a college professor. He supports child cash benefits, expanding Medicaid to more mothers and increasing the supply of affordable housing.

''There are definitely some conservatives who still point to the 1950s as a normative vision for family life,'' Mr. Brown said, referencing the ''Leave It to Beaver'' white, suburban family with a stay-at-home wife.

''That debate is stale,'' he added. ''We shouldn't expect we can turn back the clock -- and we shouldn't really want to.''

Mr. Brown, Mr. Cass and Ms. Bachiochi are well known on Capitol Hill.

Their influence can been seen in Mr. Romney's bill to expand the child tax credit, which would provide families earning up to $400,000 with $350 in cash per month for each child under 6, and $250 per month for children 6 to 17.

Mr. Romney and Mr. Rubio, Republican of Florida, have a separate proposal to allow workers to draw from future Social Security payments to fund parental leave.

And last year, Senator Tim Scott, Republican of South Carolina, introduced a bill that would subsidize child care for families earning up to 150 percent of their state's median income, which in some states approaches $200,000 for a family of four.

These proposals have attracted criticism from both conservatives and liberals.

Scott Winship, director of the Center on Opportunity and Social Mobility at the right-leaning American Enterprise Institute, applauded any attempt to move away from conservative social policy based in ''cultural grievance.'' But he argued that many of the proposals were overly generous to middle-class and upper middle-class parents.

''I'd focus much more strongly on low-income families,'' he said. ''We have this huge deficit, and we need to start husbanding our resources in a more serious way.''

A cost-conscious approach has also been embraced by many Republican governors, who over the past year have tried to address child care shortages primarily through deregulation -- increasing class sizes in child care programs, for example.

Both parties are still deeply divided over whether benefits should be tied to work requirements -- a core belief of centrists like Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia, a Democrat, and conservatives like Senator Mike Lee of Utah, a Republican.

When Senator Romney first introduced his Family Security Act in 2021, it offered cash to parents no matter their work history. After an outcry from Republicans and Mr. Cass, he revised the proposal in 2022 to require $10,000 in family income to receive the full benefit.

Senator Hawley of Missouri, a close ally of former President Donald J. Trump, has also proposed monthly cash payments to parents of children younger than 13 who meet a modest work requirement.

Progressives have criticized these plans for favoring married couples and leaving out caregivers without earnings, such as college students, parents with disabilities or retired grandparents.

The family policy ideas in the Democrats' Build Back Better bill were more sweeping. But none became law.

Now, some Republicans and Democrats say that a bipartisan deal on family policy would likely require Republicans to rally around proposals like Senator Romney's -- a difficult goal.

Senator Romney is committed to building support for ''federal policies to be more pro-family,'' he said in a written statement. ''This includes earning support from Republican colleagues.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/10/us/conservatives-child-care-benefits-roe-wade.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/10/us/conservatives-child-care-benefits-roe-wade.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: OREN CASS, executive director of American Compass, a conservative think tank. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LAUREN LANCASTER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

ERIKA BACHIOCHI, a fellow at the Abigail Adams Institute and the Ethics and Public Policy Center. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EMAN MOHAMMED FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14) This article appeared in print on page A1, A14.

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[***The Left Is Being Mugged by Reality, Again; Bret Stephens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65MR-1NN1-JBG3-604F-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 884 words

**Byline:** Bret Stephens

**Highlight:** Progressives are rediscovering the law of unintended consequences.

**Body**

This column has been updated to reflect news developments.

Is a decade of destructive progressive ideology finally coming to an end?

That San Franciscans, some of America’s [*most reliably liberal voters*](https://abc7news.com/election-results-joe-biden-donald-trump-bay-area/7680084/), chose on Tuesday to recall District Attorney Chesa Boudin, one of America’s [*most leftward D.A.s*](https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/chavez-life/), is a sign of hope.

Voter patience for what Mayor London Breed of San Francisco calls “all the bullshit that has destroyed our city” — [*aggressive shoplifting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/21/us/san-francisco-shoplifting-epidemic.html), [*rampant car burglaries*](https://www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/san-francisco-auto-burglary-car-break-in-its-out-of-control/), [*open-air drug use*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/26/us/san-francisco-drug-crisis.html), filthy [*homeless encampments*](https://www.sfexaminer.com/the_fs/fixes/san-francisco-s-broken-promise-to-resolve-homeless-encampments/article_e4d47445-cec3-50c8-be0d-0720012c3d39.html#:~:text=HSOC%20teams%20encountered%205%2C621%20individuals,Francisco%20Department%20of%20Emergency%20Management.), [*sidewalks turned into toilets*](https://www.sfgate.com/bay-area-politics/article/San-Francisco-poop-problem-stats-streets-feces-new-16311073.php#:~:text=An%20SFGATE%20review%20of%20311,waste%20on%20streets%20between%20Jan.) — is finally running thin.

Progressive overreach has its price. Even for progressives.

What’s going on in San Francisco is happening nationwide, and not just in matters of criminal justice and urban governance. In one area after another, the left is being mugged by reality, to borrow Irving Kristol’s famous phrase. Consider a few examples:

Inflation. For over a decade, progressives insisted that inflation was a right-wing chimera, ignoring the [*huge increase in asset prices*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/04/opinion/inflation-federal-reserve.html). Then, last year, they insisted inflation was temporary — a “red herring,” [*to quote the economist Joseph Stiglitz*](https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/us-inflation-red-herring-by-joseph-e-stiglitz-2021-06). Later, as it became clear that inflation was sticking, some took a bolder tack: Inflation is good. As [*a piece in The Intercept*](https://theintercept.com/2021/11/10/inflation-economy-debt-milk-prices/) put it last November, “Inflation is bad for the 1 percent but helps out almost everyone else.”

Really? Usually, it’s the 1 percent who can afford to shield their wealth through inflation-protected assets — a rare violin, a vacation house — while the less fortunate struggle with triple-digit grocery bills. The left’s combination of nonchalance about inflation (it will erase debts!), along with a reluctance to tackle it forcefully, is why the left so often ends up losing ***working-class*** voters to the right.

Energy. It wasn’t long ago that progressives [*bemoaned low gas prices*](https://insideclimatenews.org/news/13082015/americans-cheap-fuel-gas-emissions-rise-climate-suffers/), on the theory that deterring driving would help the climate. Maybe House Democrats should try running on $7 a gallon as an environmental good and see what happens to their majority. Maybe, too, the Biden administration should tell the Saudis where they can stuff their oil, as opposed to beseeching them to pump more.

Or maybe not. The one form of nature progressives reliably fail to understand is human nature. If they ever wonder why their climate fervor hasn’t translated into more policy victories, they should grapple with the fact that the rapid decarbonization of the economy is not something for which most people are prepared to pay a high price, at least from their own pocketbooks.

How about working on a different message, one that is measured, adaptive and meliorative, rather than draconian, grim and doomsaying?

The culture. How did progressives come out on the losing end of the culture wars? How did they become the butt of jokes for our era’s sharpest comedians, from Bill Maher to Dave Chappelle? Why are lifelong liberals at universities, newspapers and publishing houses constantly whispering under their breath about the rank Maoism of their younger colleagues?

Simple: Progressives went from being all about liberation to being all about imposition. When [*a trans collegiate swimmer such as Lia Thomas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/29/us/lia-thomas-women-sports.html) identifies as a woman, that’s liberation — a decision that surely required courage and is worthy of respect.

But when Thomas is allowed to compete in women’s races, that’s a blatantly unfair act that has given Thomas one victory after another while diminishing the legacy of female athletes. That it has become difficult to even say this out loud merely underscores the point.

Minorities. Remember when [*the future of American politics was Democratic*](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/pemanent-democratic-major_n_186257) because the future of American demography would be less white?

That comforting prediction is failing because members of minority groups don’t necessarily like being stuffed into the back end of progressive acronyms like BIPOC or being stymied by progressive policies, such as efforts to do away with entrance exams for selective public schools, or neglecting law-and-order priorities in poorer communities that often need them most, [*including those on the southern border*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/us/politics/border-grievance-politics.html).

The world. Progressives (aided by isolationist Republicans) spent a decade demanding that America disentangle itself from faraway military commitments, particularly in Afghanistan, so that we could do more nation-building at home. Joe Biden made the mistake of believing it, and his presidency hasn’t recovered from the [*strategic*](https://www.commentary.org/articles/bret-stephens/afghanistan-post-pax-americana/) and [*moral*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/21/world/asia/taliban-afghanistan-women-hijab.html) debacle of withdrawal.

Nor has the world. The perception of American diffidence and incompetence, which the administration has labored so hard to counteract in Ukraine, is part of what tempted the Kremlin to invade in the first place.

The list goes on, but the message is the same. When Kristol talked about liberals getting mugged by reality, he said it turned them into neoconservatives. It will be enough if today’s progressives, in the second mugging, find their way back to liberalism.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Melina Mara/The Washington Post via Getty Image FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 9, 2022

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[***The Red Wave Didn’t Just Vanish; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66W6-4TB1-DXY4-X09W-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3173 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** “Apparently, Republicans tacked too hard to the right.”

**Body**

On Election Day, a small but crucial percentage of Republican voters deserted their party, casting ballots for Democratic nominees in several elections that featured Trump-backed candidates at the top of the ticket. These Trump-driven defections wreaked havoc on Republican ranks. At the extreme, a once-strong Republican Party in Michigan was [*shut out at every level*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-republican-wipeout-in-michigan-gretchen-whitmer-tudor-dixon-midterm-election-state-legislature-11668190883) of state government.

Look at key battleground states that were critical to continued Democratic control of the Senate. In Arizona, Nevada, Pennsylvania and New Hampshire, party-line voting among Republicans consistently fell below the party’s national average, according to [*exit poll data*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2022/exit-polls/national-results/house/0).

In [*New Hampshire*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2022/exit-polls/new-hampshire/senate/0) and [*Pennsylvania*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2022/exit-polls/pennsylvania/senate/0), the Republican vote for the Republican Senate candidate was seven percentage points below the national average, and the Republican vote for the Democratic Senate candidate increased by the same amount; in [*Arizona*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2022/exit-polls/arizona/senate), support for the Republican Senate nominee fell among Republicans by six points, and support for the Democratic candidate rose by the same amount again; in[*Nevada*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2022/exit-polls/nevada/senate/0), the drop in support for the Republican candidate was two percentage points, and the increase for the Democratic nominee was once again the same.

Each of these states had a Republican Senate nominee [*closely tied*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2022-election/republicans-denied-questioned-2020-election-on-ballot-rcna55824) to Donald Trump, suggesting that Republican voters jumping ship are far more wary of antidemocratic initiatives than many of their elected leaders, Trump included. The same pattern of Republican defection emerged in contests for the governor’s mansion in states where the Republican nominee was closely identified with Trump, including [*Arizona*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2022/exit-polls/arizona/governor), [*Michigan*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2022/exit-polls/michigan/governor/0), [*Pennsylvania*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2022/exit-polls/pennsylvania/governor/0) and [*Wisconsin*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2022/exit-polls/wisconsin/governor/0).

Three political scientists — [*Sean Westwood*](https://polarizationresearchlab.org/sean-j-westwood/) of Dartmouth, [*Yphtach Lelkes*](https://polarizationresearchlab.org/yphtach-lelkes/) of the University of Pennsylvania and [*Shanto Iyengar*](https://polarizationresearchlab.org/shanto-iyengar/) of Stanford — created the [*Polarization Research Lab*](https://polarizationresearchlab.org/), which conducted weekly surveys with YouGov of a total of 13,000 voters during the final seven weeks of the campaign.

Westwood observed in an email that the major finding of the survey “is that democratic norm violations of the sort many Republicans ran on are an electoral loser.”

Republican candidates, Westwood added, “running on platforms that supported democratic norm violations were standing behind a policy that seems to only resonate with Trump and a small minority of Republican voters.”

While only small percentages of the voters of both parties support violations of election norms, according to Westwood, they “have incredibly distorted views of the other side.”

Both Democrats and Republicans, Westwood said,

overestimate the extent to which the other side supports democratic norm violations by up to five times. There is a real risk that damage to our country could occur not because of support for norm violations but as a pre-emptive strike based on the faulty assumption that the other side has abandoned democracy.

Independent voters, in the polarization lab surveys, were equally hostile to democratic backsliding.

One clear conclusion to be drawn from the 2022 elections is that candidates who supported Trump’s claim that the 2020 election was stolen were soundly defeated in competitive states. In close elections, the importance of seemingly small shifts became magnified, and Democratic gains among independent voters in key states reinforced the effect of Republican defections.

Nationally, independent voters were split 49 to 47 in favor of Democrats, according to exit polls, which are still adjusting their data. In Arizona, they supported Mark Kelly, the Democratic Senate candidate, 55 to 39; in New Hampshire, it was Maggie Hassan at 54 to 43; and in Pennsylvania, independents, who make up a quarter of the state’s electorate, supported John Fetterman over Mehmet Oz 58 to 38, a striking 20-point difference.

The same pattern among independent voters continued in governors’ races in Wisconsin, Arizona, Michigan and [*especially Pennsylvania*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2022/exit-polls/pennsylvania/governor/0), where independent voters backed Josh Shapiro over Doug Mastriano 64 to 33. Trump endorsed the Republican nominee in each of these states.

Lelkes noted in an email that

in a 49 to 51 election, a small percentage of people switching sides combined with independents moving in favor of Democrats is enough. It’s hard to say if this was because the candidates were the ones moving toward the extreme right or if it was because voters shifted closer to the left.

Political parties, Lelkes continued,

constantly try to expand their pool of voters. The process involves a balancing act between tacking to the extremes to pick up additional voters without turning off those marginal voters on the other side of the distribution. Apparently, Republicans tacked too hard to the right.

[*Frances Lee*](https://politics.princeton.edu/people/frances-lee), a political scientist at Princeton, wrote by email that she “was very surprised at the extent to which Democrats overperformed the ‘fundamentals’ that normally predict midterm election outcomes, meaning presidential approval, state of the economy and perceptions of the direction of the country.” She added:

Polarization cannot adequately explain Republicans’ near total failure to make gains in 2022. Undoubtedly, polarization puts a ceiling on the seat swings one could reasonably expect in the current environment, but Republicans held 246 House seats and 54 Senate seats just a couple of election cycles ago. Even in a polarized environment, Republicans had significant room to grow their ranks of officeholders.

Instead, Lee argued:

the election outcomes are consistent with the interpretation that the candidates most closely associated with Trump suffered a penalty. Voters rejected all the Trump-endorsed secretary of state nominees in important swing states. Republicans unexpectedly lost seats in districts where Republican incumbents who supported Trump’s impeachment had been denied renomination. Republicans closely linked to Trump lost elections in winnable swing states, suffering decisive defeats in the gubernatorial elections in Michigan and Pennsylvania and narrow defeats in the Senate elections in Arizona, Nevada and Pennsylvania. Meanwhile, Republicans less closely associated with Trump won their elections without difficulty: Sununu in New Hampshire, DeWine in Ohio, Kemp in Georgia, DeSantis in Florida, among others.

In a [*Nov. 10 post-election email*](https://www.fox17online.com/news/election-2022/scathing-leaked-memo-from-michigan-gop-blames-tudor-dixon-for-midterm-losses) to leaders and donors in his party leaked to the press, Paul Cordes, the chief of staff of the Michigan Republican Party, described the devastating defections, among both voters and donors, that followed the nomination of the Trump-backed candidate Tudor Dixon for governor against Gretchen Whitmer, along with other Trump-endorsed candidates for secretary of state and attorney general.

“Tudor Dixon did nearly eight points worse than the base Republican vote,” Cordes wrote, arguing that her poor showing at the top of the ticket pushed down support for Republican state legislative candidates and noting that in defeat, “House G.O.P. candidates received 161,000 more votes than Tudor statewide and were on average just 1.3 percent behind Democrats” and that “Senate G.O.P. candidates received 150,000 more votes than Tudor, losing by an average of 1.6 percent to Democrats.”

The effect on donors was equally damaging.

“It seems nearly impossible to imagine drawing up a more challenging position for ourselves coming out of the August primary,” Cordes wrote. “Donors for the most part decided against supporting Trump’s handpicked A.G. and S.O.S. candidates from the April convention and also withheld millions in traditional investment into the state party.”

Cordes added:

In what many of them saw as sending a message to Donald Trump and his supporters, longtime donors to the party remained on the sidelines despite constant warnings of the possibility of the outcome we saw coming to fruition on Election Day: a statewide sweep and one-party Democratic rule in Lansing, something that has not been seen in nearly 40 years in Michigan.

Before the election, Cordes wrote, the state party calculated that

if Tudor Dixon could keep the race with 3 to 4 percent, our state House and Senate majorities would be safe. If she lost by 7 to 8 percent, we were going to be in danger of losing one or both chambers. It looks as though Tudor will end up losing by 11 points and Republicans find themselves shut out of every level of power.

[*Jenna Bednar*](https://lsa.umich.edu/polisci/people/faculty/jbednar.html), a political scientist at the University of Michigan, wrote by email to say that the Michigan Republican Party is emblematic of the problems that emerged in the 2022 election. “The Michigan Republican Party is in disarray,” she wrote, noting that Tudor Dixon got “just 44 percent of the vote when state House and Senate candidates took 49 percent statewide. Dixon campaigned on Republican ‘red meat’ issues like critical race theory, parental review of curriculum, transgender athletes and book bans.”

Trump’s allure, Bednar argued,

has faded in many states. Even before the election, we saw signs of voter exhaustion with all things Trump. Here in Michigan, in the final weeks of the campaign many Republican candidates noticeably walked back from touting their Trump endorsements. They were responding to centrist voters who are fed up with the cultural wars, election denials and general antics.

In a separate email, [*Matt Grossmann*](https://polisci.msu.edu/people/directory/grossmann-matt.html), a political scientist at Michigan State, cited the Supreme Court’s abortion ruling as a key factor in the election outcome. The Dobbs decision, he wrote,

changed the usual dynamics of movement against the party of the presidency by giving voters an extremely salient conservative policy shift to react against. There is also some evidence that voters recoiled at the most extreme election-denying Republican candidates, but that might be more attributable to the typical advantages of moderation and experience than to explicit swing voter concern with democratic backsliding.

There were, Grossmann wrote, Republican defections from the party of Trump: “Parts of the Republican electorate certainly want to move on from Trump, if only because he is a continuing electoral drag on the party, but that does not mean the anti-Trump faction will be able to accumulate a primary majority.”

Republican defections at the margins are one of many explanations of the party’s dismal performance on Election Day.

A publicly released post-election analysis by [*Neil Newhouse*](https://pos.org/partners/neil-newhouse/) and [*Jim Hobart*](https://pos.org/partners/jim-hobart/), partners at the Republican polling firm [*Public Opinion Strategies*](file:///C:/Users/Thomas%20Edsall/Desktop/pos.org), found, for example, that a far higher percentage of Democrats, 81 percent, believe “Republicans represent a threat to democracy that, if not stopped, will destroy America as we know it,” than Republicans (69 percent) believe the same thing about Democrats.

In addition, Newhouse and Hobart reported, abortion, which worked to the advantage of Democrats, “was more of a factor than the pre-election polls indicated,” with almost as many voters, 31 percent, saying it was a high-priority issue as the 32 percent who identified rising prices and inflation, an issue that benefited Republicans. Almost identical percentages identified concern over democratic backsliding, at 25 percent, a pro-Democratic issue, as the 26 percent who identified jobs and the economy, a pro-Republican concern.

The two Republican pollsters asserted, “This election was NOT good news for former President Trump.” Not only did many of his handpicked candidates lose, they continued, but “there is clear evidence that G.O.P.ers may be falling out of love with President Trump.”

Independent voters, Newhouse and Hobart wrote, “particularly late deciders who opted for Democratic candidates, could very well have been in reaction to President Trump more aggressively inserting himself into the midterm dialogue.”

Significantly, Newhouse and Hobart provided data showing that through 2020, a larger percentage of Republicans considered themselves “to be more a supporter of Donald Trump” than “a supporter of the Republican Party.” That came to an end in January 2021, and by this month, 67 percent said they were “more a supporter of the Republican Party,” more than double the 30 percent who said they were “more a supporter of Donald Trump.”

Two political scientists, [*Ariel Malka*](https://www.yu.edu/faculty/pages/malka-ariel) of Yeshiva University and [*Paul Frymer*](https://lapa.princeton.edu/people/paul-frymer) of Princeton, each cautioned by email against overinterpreting the results of the elections.

“I am skeptical that concerns about democracy are a great part of the explanation for Republicans’ weak performance,” Malka wrote. He added:

It is heartening that election deniers lost races for key offices in competitive states, but many Republican election deniers [*won*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/11/09/election-deniers-2020-house-senate-races/?itid=lk_inline_enhanced-template) their elections for House seats and state offices. It would be too optimistic to conclude that antidemocratic behavior will itself be a liability for candidates.

Malka wrote that “abortion strikes me as potentially more relevant for explaining the break from historical midterm patterns.” Although it may have energized some Democrats, he added, the key is that “it might have been a decisive factor for a chunk of independents and even some moderate Republicans who oppose strict bans.”

Trump, Malka argued, remains the favorite to win the 2024 nomination: “A strong majority of Republicans are [*favorable*](https://today.yougov.com/topics/politics/trackers/donald-trump-favorability?crossBreak=republican) toward Trump, and this favorability has proven robust in the face of scandals, negative coverage and so on.” Some members of the Republican elite, Malka wrote, “would like their voters to form a stable belief that the midterms showed Trump is a liability for the party. But these elites will have their work cut out for them.”

Frymer wrote:

In general, I think it’s too early to cast broad interpretations of this election. So far, the indications are that these electoral results are not national and likely defy any unifying message as a result. Florida and New York and perhaps Oregon offer notable Republican gains, while California has narrowly avoided the same with a lot of close elections going the Democrats’ way. This was not the red wave that Republicans were hoping for, but they still will likely win the House for the first time since the 2016 elections.

Will Republican voters turn against Trump?

“Maybe a bit,” Frymer wrote,

and maybe some of that will gain momentum with the success of DeSantis and the blaming, in at least some quarters, of Trump for the electoral failures. But it is important to remember that Trump has never been popular outside of his base, never achieved majority support in an election or even a meaningful approval poll.

Frymer continued that Trump remains

what he has always been — widely disapproved by majorities of urban and many suburban areas and notably independent voters. This is hardly the first time it seemed like leading Republicans were ready to abandon Trump.

While “Dobbs appears to have been important,” Frymer stressed his belief that

the story of this election is good local candidates campaigning on popular politics in their areas and contesting national issues within local contexts. Local situations, whether the quality of the candidates, the money targeted or the importance of gerrymandering and/or the ability to ignore the Voting Rights Act, tipped the balance in a multitude of extremely close races. Trump’s popularity (or more importantly, his lack of popularity) seems, at least as of the early indicators, pretty unchanged.

From Nov. 6 to 8, [*Stanley Greenberg*](https://www.greenbergresearch.com/) conducted a survey of 2,520 registered voters for [*Democracy Corps*](https://democracycorps.com/), including a 1,130 oversampling of voters of color, the [*results of which were released*](https://d31hzlhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20221115/1e/fa/3b/36/5b6d93e8833b5320bb93139f/DCorps_Survey_2024_Preview.pdf) on Nov. 15. The conclusions Greenberg drew from the survey and earlier polling this year are a mixed bag for both parties.

“Two-thirds rate the economy negatively,” according to Greenberg, “yet Democrats did not prioritize the economy in this election, and the president is still trying to convince people this is a good economy. This may be the toughest to make progress on.” In addition, the “failure of national Democrats to address the economy meant rural areas and white ***working-class*** communities were a political wasteland.”

The Democratic Party, according to Greenberg, “got respectable support with Hispanics, as well as young people, but women across the whole spectrum played the biggest role. Unmarried women, white college women and under-50, white ***working-class*** women all raised their vote level since October, no doubt motivated by the abortion issue.” But, Greenberg warned, Democrats remain “at risk with Hispanics and Asian voters if they do not rethink what they prioritize, what their policies offer, consciously battling for all in our coalition and acknowledging past mistakes and having an inclusive vision where all make progress in America,” noting that [*the Biden administration’s 2021 expansion*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/child-tax-credit/) of the child tax credit is “uniquely popular among Hispanics.”

Crime, Greenberg wrote,

was a top issue for many Democratic base voters. A quarter of Blacks and half of Hispanics and Asians voters trusted Republicans more than Democrats to address the issue. With Democrats trailing Republicans by 10 points on crime, Democrats have a lot of work to do.

There is another word of caution for Democrats. The party’s single most important achievement in 2022 was to maintain control of the Senate, preventing Republicans from blocking Biden’s judicial and executive branch appointments.

The Senate seats up for [*election on Nov. 8*](https://www.senate.gov/senators/Class_III.htm) gave Democrats many more opportunities, with 21 seats held by Republicans and 14 held by Democrats. In 2024, however, 23 seats in the Democratic caucus will be up for grabs — including two independent seats (Angus King in Maine and Bernie Sanders in Vermont) — making it that much harder for Democrats to keep their thin majority. Eight of these Democratic seats are in purple or red states (Montana and West Virginia, for example), offering multiple opportunities to the Republican Party.

In contrast, all 10 of the Republican-held seats up for election in 2024 are in solidly red states.

There is ample evidence of [*widespread support*](https://www.poynter.org/fact-checking/2022/70-percent-republicans-falsely-believe-stolen-election-trump/) among Republican voters for Trump’s false claim that the 2020 election was stolen, a claim designed to foster not just democratic norm violation but also the violence that burst into view during the Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol.

An overwhelming majority of Republican elected officials have either endorsed the lie or remained acquiescent in the face of crumbling adherence to basic democratic norms. Republican legislators in red states across the nation have enacted legislation to [*restrict voting that leans Democratic*](https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/ensure-every-american-can-vote/voting-reform/state-voting-laws) and [*to transfer power to decide election outcomes*](https://www.democracydocket.com/analysis/the-big-lie-is-transforming-state-legislatures-reveal-how/) from election officials to politicians in state legislatures.

In other words, 2022 produced a significant election that Democrats can legitimately celebrate, but it may have a short half-life.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jay Turner Frey Seawell for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Indian Americans Rapidly Climbing Political Ranks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67N4-TB51-JBG3-62JJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1908 words

**Byline:** Maggie Astor and Jill CowanMaggie Astor covers politics for The Times, focusing on breaking news, policies, campaigns and how underrepresented or marginalized groups are affected by political systems.

**Highlight:** The 2024 cycle reflects huge strides in representation: A decade ago, “it was inconceivable that someone named Raj Goyle — let alone Rajeev Goyle — would run for office in Wichita,” said Mr. Goyle, a former Kansas lawmaker.

**Body**

In 2013, the House of Representatives had a single Indian American member. Fewer than 10 Indian Americans were serving in state legislatures. None had been elected to the Senate. None had run for president. Despite being one of the largest immigrant groups in the United States, Americans of Indian descent were barely represented in politics.

Ten years later, the Congress sworn in last month includes five Indian Americans. Nearly 50 are in state legislatures. The [*vice president*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/kamala-harris-south-asians-indian.html) is Indian American. [*Nikki Haley’s campaign announcement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/kamala-harris-south-asians-indian.html) this month makes 2024 the third consecutive cycle in which an Indian American has run for president, and [*Vivek Ramaswamy’s newly announced candidacy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/kamala-harris-south-asians-indian.html) makes it the first cycle with two.

In parts of the government, “we’ve gone literally from having no one to getting close to parity,” said Neil Makhija, the executive director of Impact, an Indian American advocacy group.

Most Indian American voters are Democrats, and it is an open question how much of their support Ms. Haley might muster. In the past, when Indian Americans have run as Republicans, they have rarely talked much about their family histories, but Ms. Haley is emphasizing her background.

Activists, analysts and current and former elected officials, including four of the five Indian Americans in Congress, described an array of forces that have bolstered the political influence of Indian Americans.

Indians did not begin moving to the United States in large numbers until after a landmark 1965 immigration law. But a number of factors, such as the relative wealth of Indian immigrants and high education levels, have propelled a rapid political ascent for the second and third generations.

Advocacy groups — including Impact and the AAPI Victory Fund — have mobilized to recruit and support them, and to direct politicians’ attention to the electoral heft of Indian Americans, whose populations in states including Georgia, Pennsylvania and Texas are large enough to help sway local, state and federal races.

“It’s really all working in tandem,” said Raj Goyle, a former state lawmaker in Kansas who co-founded Impact. “There’s a natural trend, society is more accepting, and there is deliberate political strategy to make it happen.”

When Mr. Goyle ran for the Kansas House in 2006 as a Democrat against a Republican incumbent, he was told that the incumbent’s reaction to learning she had a challenger had been, “Who is Rod Doyle?”

“It was inconceivable that someone named Raj Goyle — let alone Rajeev Goyle — would run for office in Wichita,” he said. Today, “the average voter’s a lot more familiar with an Indian American face on TV, in their examining room, in their classroom, at their university, leading their company.”

In retrospect, the watershed appears to have been 2016, just after then-Gov. Bobby Jindal of Louisiana became the first Indian American to run for president.

That was also the year Representatives Pramila Jayapal of Washington, Ro Khanna of California and Raja Krishnamoorthi of Illinois were elected, bringing the number of Indian Americans in the House from one — Representative Ami Bera of California, elected in 2012 — to four. It was also the year Kamala Harris became the first Indian American elected to the Senate.

Since then, the number in state legislatures has more than tripled. This January, the four House members — who call themselves the Samosa Caucus — were joined by Representative Shri Thanedar of Michigan.

Political scientists have long found that representation begets representation, and that appears to have been true here.

“Within the Indian American community, political involvement wasn’t really a high priority, because I think people were much more focused on establishing themselves economically and supporting their community endeavors,” said Mr. Krishnamoorthi, the Illinois congressman. “I think that once they started seeing people like us getting elected and seeing why it mattered, then political involvement became a part of their civic hygiene.”

Notably, the increase in Indian American representation is not centered on districts where Indian Americans are a majority. Ms. Jayapal represents a Seattle-based district that is mostly white. Mr. Thanedar represents a district in and around Detroit, a majority-Black city, and [*defeated eight Black candidates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/kamala-harris-south-asians-indian.html) in a Democratic primary last year.

“This is quite a different kind of phenomenon than what we often are seeing from Latino and Black representation,” said Sara Sadhwani, an assistant professor of politics at Pomona College in Southern California and a senior researcher at AAPI Data, a group that provides information about Asian Americans. “It means they’re pulling a coalition of support behind them.”

She and Karthick Ramakrishnan, a professor of public policy at the University of California, Riverside, and the founder of AAPI Data, pointed to characteristics of Indian American communities that may have eased their movement into politics.

Immigrants from India are often highly educated and, because of the legacy of British colonization, often speak English, “which lowers barriers to civic engagement,” Professor Ramakrishnan said.

India is also a democracy, which Professor Ramakrishnan’s research has shown means Indian Americans are more likely to engage in the American democratic system than immigrants from autocratic countries.

By and large, Indian Americans have been elected on the Democratic side of the aisle. All five Indian Americans in Congress, and almost all state legislators, are Democrats. Ms. Haley’s candidacy could be a case study in whether an embrace of Indian immigrant heritage can resonate among Republicans, too.

Before Ms. Haley, the most prominent Indian American to seek office as a Republican was Mr. Jindal, who made a point of discussing his background as little as possible during his presidential run.

“My dad and mom told my brother and me that we came to America to be Americans, not Indian Americans,” Mr. Jindal [*said in a speech in 2015*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/kamala-harris-south-asians-indian.html).

Mr. Ramaswamy, a multimillionaire entrepreneur, author and “anti-woke" activist, has taken a similar tack so far, but Ms. Haley has not. Since her time as governor of South Carolina, she has repeatedly invoked her life experience as the daughter of a man who wore a turban and a woman who wore a sari. In the first line of [*her campaign announcement video*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/kamala-harris-south-asians-indian.html), over images of her hometown, Bamberg, S.C., she told voters: “The railroad tracks divided the town by race. I was the proud daughter of Indian immigrants. Not Black, not white. I was different.”

Mr. Bera, the California congressman, called that “smart politics,” saying Ms. Haley seemed to be tapping into a desire for upward mobility among immigrant communities.

It’s an approach Democrats have taken for some time.

“I ran as an immigrant, South Asian American woman,” Ms. Jayapal said of her first campaign. “I really ran on my story, I ran on my experience, and even though I represent a district that is largely white, I think that that story is a big part of the reason that people elected me.”

But whether Republican voters are interested is an open question, given the party’s criticism of discussions of race and ethnicity as “identity politics.”

Vikram Mansharamani, a New Hampshire Republican who ran for Senate last year and recently hosted an event for Ms. Haley, said that Ms. Haley’s life story — being a child of ***working-class*** immigrants whose parents could never have imagined her success — reminded him of his own, and that this drew him to her. But he didn’t see representation as a goal to strive for.

“Insofar as identity impacts experience, it’s relevant, but I would never lead with identity,” he said.

Harmeet Dhillon, a former co-chair of the election-denying group [*Lawyers for Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/kamala-harris-south-asians-indian.html) and a Republican National Committee member [*who recently lost a bruising battle*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/kamala-harris-south-asians-indian.html) to lead the committee, emphasized that Ms. Haley would be running on her track record as a popular governor of her home state and member of the Trump administration. “I think most Republican voters are not motivated by race or gender,” she said. Although Ms. Dhillon and her parents immigrated from India, she said she did not identify as Indian American.

Indian American voters are overwhelmingly Democratic: 74 percent voted for Joseph R. Biden Jr. in the 2020 presidential race, more than voters of other Asian backgrounds, [*according to a survey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/kamala-harris-south-asians-indian.html) by AAPI Data, APIAVote and Asian Americans Advancing Justice. In primaries, that means fewer Indian American voters for Republicans to draw on. In general elections, it makes it harder for Republicans to tap into a base excited to promote its own representation.

In [*a 2020 study*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/kamala-harris-south-asians-indian.html), nearly 60 percent of Indian Americans did say they would be open to voting for an Indian American candidate “regardless of their party affiliation.”

“Indian Americans really want to see more Indian Americans elected to office, and in the survey that we conducted, that was true even if it meant someone from another party,” said Professor Sadhwani, one of the 2020 study’s authors. “My sense is that there will be a lot of excitement amongst Indian Americans to see Nikki Haley stepping into this role.”

But that willingness is not absolute — particularly if, to compete with former President Donald J. Trump and Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, Ms. Haley adopts more of their anti-immigration rhetoric.

Experts and politicians said support for an easier immigration process, and opposition to nativism and xenophobia, were major factors in Indian Americans’ political preferences. Mr. Makhija said climate change and other scientific issues resonated, too.

Raman Dhillon, chief executive of the North American Punjabi Trucking Association, said his interest in Ms. Haley had been piqued by the fact that her family is from the same city he is, in the northern Indian state of Punjab, where [*a significant portion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/kamala-harris-south-asians-indian.html) of truckers in Canada and the United States trace their roots.

But he had more important questions for politicians than ones about shared heritage: How will the government address a shortage of big-rig parking along Highway 99, a main artery through California’s agricultural heartland? What policies will improve driver retention?

Ironically, the very increase in representation that Ms. Haley is part of could make her ethnicity less compelling to voters not convinced by her policies.

“I do think that the more we have diversity, the more the actual ideological views will be paramount,” Ms. Jayapal said. “Once we’re not sort of wowed by the fact that there’s an Indian American woman running for whatever office it is, I think we’ll be able to focus more on the actual ideas. And that should be the way it is.”

PHOTOS: Representatives Pramila Jayapal of Washington, center, and Raja Krishnamoorthi of Illinois, right, were elected in 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Vice President Kamala Harris became the first Indian American to hold her office, years after breaking that barrier in the Senate. (PHOTOGRAPH BY POOL PHOTO BY HAIYUN JIANG VIA REUTERS); Nikki Haley, left, who is running for president now, met in 2015 with then-Gov. Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, who ran in 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN RAYFORD/GETTY IMAGES); Ro Khanna of California was elected in 2016. After that cycle, the number of Indian Americans in the House rose from one to four. (PHOTOGRAPH BY STEFANI REYNOLDS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A12) This article appeared in print on page A1, A12.

**Load-Date:** November 26, 2024

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[***Democratic Report Raises 2022 Alarm on Messaging And Voter Misinformation***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62VT-0NT1-DXY4-X3NR-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Alexander Burns

**Body**

A new report, in perhaps the most thorough soul-searching done by either party this year, points to an urgent need for the party to present a positive economic agenda and rebut Republican misinformation.

Democrats defeated President Donald J. Trump and captured the Senate last year with a racially diverse coalition that delivered victories by tiny margins in key states like Georgia, Arizona and Wisconsin.

In the next election, they cannot count on repeating that feat, a new report warns.

A review of the 2020 election, conducted by several prominent Democratic advocacy groups, has concluded that the party is at risk of losing ground with Black, Hispanic and Asian American voters unless it does a better job presenting an economic agenda and countering Republican efforts to spread misinformation and tie all Democratic candidates to the far left.

The 73-page report, obtained by The New York Times, was assembled at the behest of three major Democratic interest groups: Third Way, a centrist think tank, and the Collective PAC and the Latino Victory Fund, which promote Black and Hispanic candidates. It appears to be the most thorough act of self-criticism carried out by Democrats or Republicans after the last campaign.

The document is all the more striking because it is addressed to a victorious party: Despite their successes, Democrats had hoped to achieve more robust control of both chambers of Congress, rather than the ultra-precarious margins they enjoy.

In part, the study found, Democrats fell short of their aspirations because many House and Senate candidates failed to match Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s support with voters of color who loathed Mr. Trump but distrusted the Democratic Party as a whole. Those constituencies included Hispanic voters in Florida and Texas, Vietnamese American and Filipino American voters in California, and Black voters in North Carolina.

Overall, the report warns, Democrats in 2020 lacked a core argument about the economy and recovering from the coronavirus pandemic -- one that might have helped candidates repel Republican claims that they wanted to ''keep the economy shut down,'' or worse. The party ''leaned too heavily on 'anti-Trump' rhetoric,'' the report concludes.

''Win or lose, self-described progressive or moderate, Democrats consistently raised a lack of strong Democratic Party brand as a significant concern in 2020,'' the report states. ''In the absence of strong party branding, the opposition latched on to G.O.P. talking points, suggesting our candidates would 'burn down your house and take away the police.'''

Former Representative Debbie Mucarsel-Powell, a Democrat who lost re-election in South Florida in November, said in an interview that she had spoken with the authors of the report and raised concerns about Democratic outreach to Hispanic voters and the party's failure to rebut misinformation in Spanish-language media.

''Unfortunately, the Democratic Party has in some ways lost touch with our electorate,'' Ms. Mucarsel-Powell said. ''There is this assumption that of course people of color, or the ***working class***, are going to vote for Democrats. We can never assume anything.''

The report, chiefly written by a pair of veteran Democratic operatives, Marlon Marshall and Lynda Tran, is among the most significant salvos yet in the Democratic Party's internal debate about how it should approach the 2022 elections. It may stir skepticism from some quarters because of the involvement of Third Way, which much of the left regards with hostility.

A fourth group that initially backed the study, the campaign finance reform group End Citizens United, backed away this spring. Tiffany Muller, the head of the group, said it had to abandon its involvement to focus instead on passing the For the People Act, a sweeping good-government bill that is stuck in the Senate.

Mr. Marshall and Ms. Tran, as well as the groups sponsoring the review, have begun to share its conclusions with Democratic lawmakers and party officials in recent days, including Jaime Harrison, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

The study spanned nearly six months of research and data analysis that scrutinized about three dozen races for the House and the Senate, and involved interviews with 143 people, including lawmakers, candidates and pollsters, people involved in assembling the report said. Among the campaigns reviewed were the Senate elections in Arizona, Georgia and North Carolina, as well as House races in the suburbs of Minneapolis, Los Angeles, Atlanta and Dallas, and in rural New Mexico and Maine.

The study follows an internal review conducted by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee that was unveiled last month. Both projects found that Democratic candidates had been hobbled by flawed polling and pandemic-imposed limitations on campaigning.

In the D.C.C.C. report, the committee attributed setbacks at the congressional level to a surge in turnout by Trump supporters and an inadequate Democratic response to attacks calling them police-hating socialists.

Some lawmakers on the left have complained that criticism of left-wing messaging amounts to scapegoating activists for the party's failures.

Yet the review by Third Way, the Collective PAC and the Latino Victory Fund goes further in diagnosing the party's messaging as deficient in ways that may have cost Democrats more than a dozen seats in the House. Its report offers a blunt assessment that in 2020, Republicans succeeded in misleading voters about the Democratic Party's agenda and that Democrats had erred by speaking to voters of color as though they are a monolithic, left-leaning group.

Representative Tony Cárdenas of California, who last year helmed the Congressional Hispanic Caucus's political action committee, embraced that critique of Democratic messaging and said the party should discard the assumption ''that voters of color are inherently more progressive.''

''That's been a ridiculous idea and that's never been true,'' Mr. Cárdenas said, lamenting that Republicans had succeeded in ''trying to confuse Latino voters with the socialism message, things of that nature, 'defund the police.'''

Quentin James, the president of the Collective PAC, said it was clear that ''some of the rhetoric we see from coastal Democrats'' had been problematic. Mr. James pointed to the activist demand to ''defund'' the police as especially harmful, even with supporters of policing overhauls.

''We did a poll that showed Black voters, by and large, vastly support reforming the police and reallocating their budgets,'' Mr. James said. ''That terminology -- 'defund' -- was not popular in the Black community.''

Kara Eastman, a progressive Democrat who lost her bid for a House seat based in Omaha, said Republicans had succeeded in delivering a ''barrage of messages'' that tarred her and her party as being outside the mainstream. Ms. Eastman said she had told the authors of the 2020 review that she believed those labels were particularly damaging to women.

Matt Bennett, a Third Way strategist, said the party needed to be far better prepared to mount a defense in the midterm campaign.

''We have got to take very seriously these attacks on Democrats as radicals and stipulate that they land,'' Mr. Bennett said. ''A lot of this just didn't land on Joe Biden.''

Democrats maintained a large advantage with voters of color in the 2020 elections, but the report identified telling areas of weakness. Mr. Biden and other Democrats lost ground with Latino voters relative to the party's performance in 2016, ''especially among ***working-class*** and non-college voters in these communities,'' the report found.

The report found that a surge in Asian American turnout appeared to have secured Mr. Biden's victory in Georgia but that Democratic House candidates ran behind Mr. Biden with Asian American voters in contested California and Texas races. In some important states, Democrats did not mobilize Black voters at the same rate that Republicans did conservative white voters.

''A substantial boost in turnout netted Democrats more raw votes from Black voters than in 2016, but the explosive growth among white voters in most races outpaced these gains,'' the report warns.

There has been no comparable self-review on the Republican side after the party's severe setbacks last year, mainly because G.O.P. leaders have no appetite for a debate about Mr. Trump's impact.

The Republican Party faces serious political obstacles, arising from Mr. Trump's unpopularity, the growing liberalism of young voters and the country's growing diversity. Many of the party's policies are unpopular, including cutting social-welfare and retirement-security programs and keeping taxes low for the wealthy and big corporations.

Yet the structure of the American electoral system has tilted national campaigns toward the G.O.P., because of congressional gerrymandering and the disproportionate representation of rural white voters in the Senate and the Electoral College.

Democratic hopes for the midterm elections have so far hinged on the prospect of a strong recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and on voters' regarding Republicans as a party unsuited to governing.

Representative Mikie Sherrill of New Jersey, a moderate Democrat who was briefed on the findings of the report, called it proof that the party needed a strong central message about the economy in 2022.

''We need to continue to show the American people what we've done, and then talk incessantly across the country, in every town, about how Democrats are governing,'' Ms. Sherrill said.

Largely unaddressed in the report is the immense deficit Democrats face among lower-income white voters. In its conclusion, however, Mr. Marshall and Ms. Tran write that Democrats need to deliver a message that includes ***working-class*** whites and matches the G.O.P.'s clear ''collective gospel'' about low taxes and military strength.

''Our gospel should be about championing all working people -- including but not limited to white working people -- and lifting up our values of opportunity, equity, inclusion,'' they write.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/06/us/politics/democrats-2020-election.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/06/us/politics/democrats-2020-election.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Ex-Representative Debbie Mucarsel-Powell, who lost re-election in South Florida last year, is worried about outreach to Latino voters. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SAUL MARTINEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 7, 2021

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[***J.D. Vance’s come-from-behind victory shows the power of Trump’s endorsement.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65CB-FJ51-JBG3-61GM-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The venture capitalist overcame loud reminders by his rivals of how harshly he had once spoken of Donald J. Trump. The former president’s support vaulted Mr. Vance into the lead.

**Body**

The venture capitalist overcame loud reminders by his rivals of how harshly he had once spoken of Donald J. Trump. The former president’s support vaulted Mr. Vance into the lead.

J.D. Vance, the author-turned-venture capitalist, parlayed an endorsement from Donald J. Trump into victory on Tuesday in the race for the Republican nomination for an Ohio Senate seat, beating a crowded field of conservatives vying to carry the former president’s banner into the November election.

Mr. Vance’s come-from-behind victory in the race for the seat of the retiring Senator Rob Portman was a testament to the power Mr. Trump still holds with the Republican voting base in Ohio, a state that voted for Mr. Trump twice. The result on Tuesday night was called by The Associated Press.

For much of the Senate primary race, Mr. Vance, the author of the memoir “Hillbilly Elegy,” trailed the state’s former treasurer, Josh Mandel, and a self-funding businessman, Mike Gibbons, both of whom had used Mr. Vance’s harsh criticism of Mr. Trump in the past — calling him an “idiot” and himself “a never-Trump guy” — to diminish Mr. Vance’s appeal with conservative voters.

But in the sweepstakes for Mr. Trump’s endorsement, [*Mr. Vance got the nod on April 15*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/15/us/politics/ohio-jd-vance-trump-endorsement.html) from the man in Mar-a-Lago, who forgave the past insults and called Mr. Vance “our best chance for victory in what could be a very tough race.” Donald Trump Jr., the former president’s son, then hit the stump with Mr. Vance, as did two avatars of the Republican Party’s far-right fringe, Representatives Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Matt Gaetz of Florida.

The “very tough race” Mr. Trump cited will be against Representative Tim Ryan, a Democrat and longtime voice of the blue-collar workers in his district in and around Youngstown, Ohio. Both Mr. Vance and Mr. Ryan have put themselves forward as the candidate who best understands the struggles of the ***working class***. Both have made lashing out at China central to their appeal in a state whose manufacturing base has been buffeted by international competition.

“If people in Marietta, Ohio, or Portsmouth, Ohio, aren’t in the economic game contributing to rebuild the country, to build things again and build our future, then China, they’re going to win,” Mr. Ryan said in an interview. “We’re not going to win because our grandparents stormed the beaches at Normandy. That was then. Now it’s our turn.”

Mr. Vance attacked Mr. Mandel as “a pro-China establishment hack” [*propped up by the business-backed Club for Growth*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/26/us/politics/ohio-senate-race-trump.html), which he said favored trade with China. He went after Mr. Gibbons as a fat-cat businessman who had taken $1.5 million in pandemic relief money that could have been used at more desperate businesses.

Despite the rough-and-tumble childhood he described in his best-selling memoir, Mr. Vance could find his current vocation a topic for the fall election. After earning a law degree from Yale, he moved to California, where he became a principal at the venture capital firm run by Peter Thiel, the deep-pocketed, pro-Trump financier. Mr. Thiel donated $10 million to a super PAC supporting Mr. Vance in 2021, then $3.5 million more in April after Mr. Vance won Mr. Trump’s endorsement.

The contentious primary campaign also pulled Mr. Vance toward the fringe right, where he embraced figures like Ms. Greene and Mr. Gaetz, who have been shunned by more center-right Republicans. Doing so helped distance Mr. Vance from his harsh condemnations of Mr. Trump in 2016 as “reprehensible,” espousing policies that “range from immoral to absurd.”

Mr. Trump, in an interview with The New York Times last week, said he did not care about criticism that predated his presidency: “If I were to go by that standard, I would never be able to endorse anybody, honestly.”

In what is shaping up as a bad year for Democrats, in a state that gave Mr. Trump 53 percent of the vote in 2020, Mr. Vance’s rush rightward to curry Mr. Trump’s support may well prove worth it. But a tack back to the center will be difficult with the bellicose and outspoken Mr. Ryan having staked out that ground.

PHOTO: J.D. Vance, author of the memoir “Hillbilly Elegy,” leapfrogged to the front of the primary field after being endorsed by former President Donald J. Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Maddie McGarvey for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[***In Post-Roe World, These Conservatives Embrace a New Kind of Welfare***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67HH-MCV1-DXY4-X0RM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US

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**Byline:** Dana Goldstein

**Highlight:** Some conservative thinkers are pushing Republicans to move on from Reagan-era family policy and send cash to families. A few lawmakers are listening.

**Body**

Some conservative thinkers are pushing Republicans to move on from Reagan-era family policy and send cash to families. A few lawmakers are listening.

Sending cash to parents, with few strings attached. Expanding Medicaid. Providing child care subsidies to families earning six figures.

The ideas may sound like part of a progressive platform. But they are from an influential group of conservative intellectuals with a direct line to elected politicians. They hope to represent the future of a post-Trump Republican Party — if only, they say, their fellow travelers would abandon Reaganomics once and for all.

These conservatives generally oppose abortion rights. They’re eager to promote marriage, worried about the nation’s declining fertility rate and often resist the trans rights movement.

But they also acknowledge that with abortion now illegal or tightly restricted in [*half the states*](https://www.kff.org/womens-health-policy/dashboard/abortion-in-the-u-s-dashboard/), more babies will be born to parents struggling to pay for the basics — rent, health care, groceries and child care — when prices are high and child care slots scarce.

“A full-spectrum family policy has to be about encouraging and supporting people in getting married and starting families,” said Oren Cass, executive director of the American Compass think tank. “It has to be pro-life, but also supportive of those families as they are trying to raise kids in an economic environment where that has become a lot harder to do.”

The idea of spending heavily on family benefits remains an outlier within the Republican Party, [*which only recently rejected*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/25/us/politics/child-tax-credit.html) Democrats’ attempts to extend pandemic-era child tax credits.

But a number of conservative members of Congress have embraced new benefits for parents, including Mr. Cass’s former boss, Senator Mitt Romney of Utah, as well as the senators Marco Rubio of Florida, Josh Hawley of Missouri and J.D. Vance of Ohio.

And in President Biden’s [*State of the Union address*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/state-of-the-union) on Tuesday, he called on Republicans to join him in providing families with child care, paid leave, child tax credits and affordable housing.

Now, Mr. Cass and conservative allies are hoping to shape ideas for the 2024 Republican presidential primary and beyond, targeting ambitious governors who have emphasized making their states family-friendly, such as Ron DeSantis of Florida, Kristi Noem of South Dakota and Glenn Youngkin of Virginia.

A key priority for this new network of conservative thinkers is for the federal government to send parents cash monthly for each child, a sea change from decades of Republican thinking on family policy. They hope the cash could encourage people to have more children, and allow more parents to stay home full- or part-time when their children are young.

“The work of the family is real work,” said Erika Bachiochi, a legal scholar who calls herself a pro-life feminist and has written influential essays and books.

She and others debate to what extent benefits should be tied to work requirements, but even the more stringent proposals do not require full-time work. These conservatives believe that many young children are better off at home and are skeptical of policies that would place more in child care centers. And they point to [*polls*](https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/survey-results-what-keeps-employed-parents-out-the-child-care-system/) that show many parents would prefer to cut their work hours and take care of their babies and toddlers themselves.

In a Republican Party hoping to become the party of parents, these conservative intellectuals do not share the outraged tone of right-wing activists like Christopher Rufo, the “parental rights” crusader battling what he sees as leftist ideology in school curriculums.

While they may agree with much of that cultural critique, supporting families financially, they say, is a pragmatic way to prop up conservative values alongside new restrictions on abortion.

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In arguing this, Ms. Bachiochi, Mr. Cass and others in this network are making a [*big ask*](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-02-12/new-conservatism-free-market): for Republicans to reject what they call the outdated, rigid agenda of the Reagan era, which not only cut working parents from welfare programs, but also [*vilified mothers receiving public benefits*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/20/books/review/josh-levin-queen-linda-taylor.html), often in starkly racist terms. If Republicans are to grow support among ***working-class***, multiethnic voters, they say, the party must match pro-family rhetoric with pro-family investments.

The group has founded think tanks, published [*statements of principle*](https://eppc.org/pro-family-policy-principles/) and organized discussions with policymakers to push its cause. Mr. Cass, 39, said his ideas on policy had been shaped by his own family life. His wife has her own career, and they both work from home in the Berkshires of Western Massachusetts.

Mr. Cass served as the domestic policy director for Mr. Romney’s 2012 presidential campaign; in 2020, he founded American Compass, a think tank that has tried to build conservative momentum for more generous government support to working families. Its priorities include child cash benefits, wage subsidies and even reviving the labor movement.

That some conservatives have landed on what amounts to a new entitlement program seems to speak to the economic plight of many families. The pressures of wage stagnation, low marriage rates and the opioid epidemic have helped erode Republican anti-government orthodoxy, said Seth Dowland, a historian of the family values movement and professor of religion at Pacific Lutheran University.

“There are some Republicans looking at this and saying, ‘We need to invest in rebuilding families and rebuilding communities, because it’s dire in some places — and it’s our voters,’” he said.

Ms. Bachiochi, the mother of seven children, 4 to 21, is a fellow at two think tanks, the Abigail Adams Institute and the Ethics and Public Policy Center. Her husband is a tech executive and, she said, much more of a baby person than she is. In an interview, she recalled struggling to get reading and writing done while her babies were napping.

She celebrates mothers finding paid work that adds meaning to their lives, but believes government should help parents of both sexes spend more time on child-rearing.

The job of parents, in her view, is to create “adults with virtue who can go out and be good friends, spouses, good employees, good citizens.”

The primary problem, she said, is that “the family is so overtaxed economically that they don’t have time with one another to do that work” of raising children, which is, by nature, time intensive.

Her own ideas have shifted radically over time. In the mid-1990s, as a student at Middlebury College in Vermont, she volunteered for Bernie Sanders, then a congressman. But she also interned for a Washington bipartisan group hoping to shape President Bill Clinton’s welfare reforms, which curtailed cash payments to single mothers, while tying remaining benefits to strict work requirements. Through that experience, she said, she came to appreciate that some members of both parties shared a sincere commitment to alleviating poverty.

Since then, Ms. Bachiochi has embraced her Catholic roots, in part through Alcoholics Anonymous. She now considers herself “center right,” she said, but more often argues with Republicans than with Democrats.

“The libertarian right is a little bit blind” to the economic conditions families live under, Ms. Bachiochi said, noting that many parents struggle with the low pay and irregular hours of service jobs, working long days while leaving their children with less-than-ideal care.

Patrick T. Brown, 33, a former congressional staffer and current fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, previously cared for his children full-time. Now, he works part-time from home in Columbia, S.C., and takes charge of his four children after school while his wife works as a college professor. He supports child cash benefits, expanding Medicaid to more mothers and increasing the supply of affordable housing.

“There are definitely some conservatives who still point to the 1950s as a normative vision for family life,” Mr. Brown said, referencing the “Leave It to Beaver” white, suburban family with a stay-at-home wife.

“That debate is stale,” he added. “We shouldn’t expect we can turn back the clock — and we shouldn’t really want to.”

Mr. Brown, Mr. Cass and Ms. Bachiochi are well known on Capitol Hill.

Their influence can been seen in Mr. Romney’s bill to expand the child tax credit, which would provide families earning up to $400,000 with $350 in cash per month for each child under 6, and $250 per month for children 6 to 17.

Mr. Romney and Mr. Rubio, Republican of Florida, have a [*separate proposal*](https://www.romney.senate.gov/romney-rubio-reintroduce-bill-giving-parents-option-paid-leave/) to allow workers to draw from future Social Security payments to fund parental leave.

And last year, Senator Tim Scott, Republican of South Carolina, introduced a bill that would subsidize child care for families earning up to 150 percent of their state’s median income, which in some states approaches $200,000 for a family of four.

These proposals have attracted criticism from both conservatives and liberals.

Scott Winship, director of the Center on Opportunity and Social Mobility at the right-leaning American Enterprise Institute, applauded any attempt to move away from conservative social policy based in “cultural grievance.” But he argued that many of the proposals were overly generous to middle-class and upper middle-class parents.

“I’d focus much more strongly on low-income families,” he said. “We have this huge deficit, and we need to start husbanding our resources in a more serious way.”

A cost-conscious approach has also been embraced by many Republican governors, who over the past year have tried to address child care shortages [*primarily through deregulation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/18/us/child-care-state-regulations.html) — increasing class sizes in child care programs, for example.

Both parties are still deeply divided over whether benefits should be tied to work requirements — a core belief of centrists like Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia, a Democrat, and conservatives like Senator Mike Lee of Utah, a Republican.

When Senator Romney first introduced his Family Security Act in 2021, it offered cash to parents no matter their work history. After an outcry from Republicans and Mr. Cass, he [*revised the proposal*](https://www.romney.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/family-security-act-2.0_one-pager_appendix.pdf) in 2022 to require $10,000 in family income to receive the full benefit.

Senator Hawley of Missouri, a close ally of former President Donald J. Trump, has [*also proposed*](https://www.hawley.senate.gov/senator-hawley-introduces-parent-tax-credit-historic-relief-working-families) monthly cash payments to parents of children younger than 13 who meet a modest work requirement.

Progressives have [*criticized*](https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-tax/romney-child-tax-credit-proposal-is-step-forward-but-falls-short-targets-low) these plans for favoring married couples and leaving out caregivers without earnings, such as college students, parents with disabilities or retired grandparents.

The family policy ideas in the Democrats’ Build Back Better bill were more sweeping. But none became law.

Now, some Republicans and Democrats say that a bipartisan deal on family policy would likely require Republicans to rally around proposals like Senator Romney’s — a difficult goal.

Senator Romney is committed to building support for “federal policies to be more pro-family,” he said in a written statement. “This includes earning support from Republican colleagues.”

PHOTOS: OREN CASS, executive director of American Compass, a conservative think tank. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LAUREN LANCASTER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); ERIKA BACHIOCHI, a fellow at the Abigail Adams Institute and the Ethics and Public Policy Center. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EMAN MOHAMMED FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14) This article appeared in print on page A1, A14.

**Load-Date:** February 14, 2023

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[***Your Tuesday Briefing: The U.S. Midterms Loom***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66TB-8TC1-DXY4-X3GT-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1259 words

**Byline:** Amelia Nierenberg

**Highlight:** Plus a warning at COP27 and Kherson in distress.

**Body**

Plus a warning at COP27 and Kherson in distress.

A U.S. midterms overview

Americans will finish voting in midterm elections today, which could change the balance of power in state and federal legislative bodies, influence foreign policy and foreshadow the 2024 presidential race.

Many races are teetering on a knife’s edge, but Democrats are [*bracing for losses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/06/us/politics/election-democrats-republicans-predictions.html) even in traditionally blue areas. Republican control of the House, Senate or both could embolden the far-right and lawmakers in Washington who traffic in conspiracy theories and falsehoods. Here are [*four potential election outcomes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/upshot/election-night-scenarios-midterms.html).

Democrats have depicted Republicans as extreme, while Republicans have portrayed Democrats as out of touch on inflation and immigration. [*Crime is a key issue*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/07/us/election-midterm-news/fear-of-crime-is-a-key-factor-in-the-midterms-here-are-highlights-of-our-coverage?smid=url-share): Many Americans think there’s a surge in violence, which could [*benefit Republicans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/03/us/midterm-elections-republicans-crime.html), even though experts disagree on the data.

It could also [*further politicize the U.S. approach to Iran and the war in Ukraine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/05/us/politics/biden-ukraine-midterm-elections.html) and allow Republicans to slow the torrent of aid to Kyiv. That could benefit Moscow: Russian trolls have stepped up efforts to [*spread misinformation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/06/technology/russia-misinformation-midterms.html?campaign_id=51&amp;emc=edit_mbe_20221107&amp;instance_id=76773&amp;nl=morning-briefing%3A-europe-edition&amp;regi_id=93388816&amp;segment_id=112266&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=e54be69add3d6dc111a82076a341830f) before the midterms, which researchers say is an attempt to influence the outcome.

2024: Donald Trump — [*who may announce a run soon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/06/us/politics/trump-special-counsel.html?campaign_id=51&amp;emc=edit_mbe_20221107&amp;instance_id=76773&amp;nl=morning-briefing%3A-europe-edition&amp;regi_id=93388816&amp;segment_id=112266&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=e54be69add3d6dc111a82076a341830f) — and Gov. Ron DeSantis, the top stars of the Republican Party, held [*competing rallies in Florida*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/06/us/politics/trump-desantis-republicans.html?campaign_id=9&amp;emc=edit_nn_20221107&amp;instance_id=76787&amp;nl=the-morning&amp;regi_id=93388816&amp;segment_id=112281&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=e54be69add3d6dc111a82076a341830f). And President Biden, who hoped to heal America’s divides, [*faces a polarized nation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/06/us/politics/biden-election-midterms-trump.html?campaign_id=9&amp;emc=edit_nn_20221107&amp;instance_id=76787&amp;nl=the-morning&amp;regi_id=93388816&amp;segment_id=112281&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=e54be69add3d6dc111a82076a341830f).

Cost: These midterms have [*shattered all spending records*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/07/us/election-midterm-news/the-midterm-campaign-and-its-high-profile-races-are-shattering-spending-records?smid=url-share) for federal and state elections in a nonpresidential year, surpassing $16.7 billion.

Losing “the fight of our lives”

António Guterres, the U.N. secretary general, gave [*a stark warning*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/07/climate/cop27-climate-summit/cop27-gets-underway-amid-compounding-crises-of-war-warming-and-economic-instability?smid=url-share) in his opening remarks at yesterday’s COP27 session. “We are in the fight of our lives, and we are losing,” he said. “We are on a highway to climate hell with our foot on the accelerator.”

“Loss and damage” — code words for the question of [*which countries will pay for the effects of climate change*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/06/climate/cop27-climate-change-loss-damage.html) — is a key agenda item. Guterres issued an impassioned plea to help Pakistan and other vulnerable countries.

For the first time, “funding arrangements” for loss and damage were included on the formal agenda of the climate talks, overcoming longstanding objections from the U.S. and the E.U.

Costs: On Sunday, the World Meteorological Organization said that the planet had most likely witnessed [*its warmest eight years on record*](https://public.wmo.int/en/media/press-release/eight-warmest-years-record-witness-upsurge-climate-change-impacts). And famous [*glaciers are disappearing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/travel/glaciers-melting-unesco.html).

Tactics: Activists want a “[*fossil fuel nonproliferation treaty*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/07/climate/cop27-climate-summit/activists-call-for-a-fossil-fuel-nonproliferation-treaty-to-end-oil-gas-and-coal-use?smid=url-share).” The U.N. also called for [*an extension of early warning systems*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/07/climate/cop27-climate-summit/whats-a-cheap-way-to-save-millions-of-people-from-climate-disasters-early-warning-systems?smid=url-share), which could save millions from climate disasters. And Belize is working to [*protect its coral reefs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/world/americas/belize-coral-reef-preservation.html) — and simultaneously reduce its debt.

Egypt: Protesters are [*notably absent*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/07/climate/cop27-climate-summit/protesters-are-noticeably-absent-from-this-years-summit?smid=url-share) as Egypt cracks down on dissent. And Alaa Abd El Fattah, one of the country’s most prominent activists, is [*intensifying a hunger strike*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/climate/alaa-abd-el-fattah-cop27-hunger-strike-egypt.html?smid=url-share) to press for his release from prison.

Hard times in Kherson

Russian forces are stepping up efforts to [*make life unbearable for civilians*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/07/world/ukraine-war-news-russia-updates/russian-forces-make-life-gradually-more-unbearable-for-those-left-in-kherson?smid=url-share) in the occupied southern region of Kherson.

Power was cut Sunday night, and Ukrainians say Russian troops have destroyed electrical infrastructure and have placed mines around water towers. An exiled Ukrainian official said that repairs are impossible without specialists and equipment. Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine’s president, said that Russia was planning [*more mass strikes on energy infrastructure*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/07/world/ukraine-war-news-russia-updates/zelensky-says-russia-is-planning-more-mass-strikes-on-ukraines-energy-infrastructure?smid=url-share).

Kherson City is the only regional capital to be captured by Russia, and a battle for its control has loomed for months. Its loss would be [*a major blow to Moscow*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/world/europe/kherson-russia-ukraine-war.html?smid=url-share), and Ukraine says it has no evidence that Russian forces will abandon the region.

Ukraine: The military has reclaimed over 100 towns and villages in the region since it began a counteroffensive in August.

Russia: Kremlin-appointed authorities ordered the “evacuation” of all civilians there last month, and occupation officials have reduced their presence. Since then, Russian personnel have shuttered essential services and [*looted the city,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/03/world/europe/russia-ukraine-kherson-battle.html) according to residents and Ukrainian officials.

Other updates:

* Russia’s Parliament is poised to pass laws that [*intensify an L.G.B.T.Q. crackdown*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/06/world/ukraine-war-news-russia-updates/russias-parliament-is-poised-to-pass-laws-intensifying-an-lgbtq-crackdown).

1. Polls across Europe show a slight dip in popular support for Ukraine, but [*backing remains strong*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/world/europe/europe-ukraine-war-support.html).

THE LATEST NEWS

Around the World

* Chief executives [*seem to think a recession is nigh*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/business/dealbook/chief-executives-recession.html): Of the 409 S&amp;P 500 companies that have held analyst calls this quarter, the word has come up 165 times.

1. Italy’s hard-right government is taking a harder stand against migrants: Authorities are [*refusing to let men leave a ship*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/world/europe/italy-immigrants-ship.html) that arrived from Libya.

Other Big Stories

* Meta is said to be [*planning the biggest layoffs in its history*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/06/technology/meta-layoffs.html?campaign_id=9&amp;emc=edit_nn_20221107&amp;instance_id=76787&amp;nl=the-morning&amp;regi_id=93388816&amp;segment_id=112281&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=e54be69add3d6dc111a82076a341830f) this week.
* Jimmy Kimmel will [*host the Oscars*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/movies/jimmy-kimmel-oscars-host.html) in March.

1. A man in Philadelphia ate 40 chickens in 40 days. He’s done now, though the last few days were intense: “[*My body is ready to repair*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/us/philadelphia-chicken-man.html?campaign_id=9&amp;emc=edit_nn_20221107&amp;instance_id=76787&amp;nl=the-morning&amp;regi_id=93388816&amp;segment_id=112281&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=e54be69add3d6dc111a82076a341830f),” he told The Times.

A Morning Read

The concept of a “[*wood-wide web*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/science/wood-wide-web-trees-fungi-talking.html)” has overturned conventional views of forests. Instead of competing for resources, the theory goes, trees collaborate and communicate underground through fungal filaments.

Although those findings influence Hollywood and forest management discussions alike, the theory is up for debate. Most experts believe that organisms whose members sacrifice their own interests for the community rarely evolve, a result of the powerful force of natural selection.

Lives lived: Ela Bhatt was a champion of gender equality who secured protections for millions of Indian women in the work force. [*She died at 89*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/06/world/asia/ela-bhatt-dead.html#:~:text=NEW%20DELHI%20%E2%80%94%20Ela%20Bhatt%2C%20a,by%20her%20son%2C%20Mihir%20Bhatt.).

TAIWAN DISPATCH

A new life for old bomb shelters

People in Keelung, a port city in Taiwan, have prepared for war for hundreds of years: The city had its first foreign attack, by the Dutch, in 1642.

Those anxieties have left a mark on Keelung, which has the highest density of air-raid shelters of any city on the highly fortified island. Kitchens connect to underground passageways that tunnel into the sandstone. Rusty gates at the ends of alleys lead to dark maws that are filled with memories of war, and sometimes trash or bats — or an altar or restaurant annex.

Now, some of the city’s nearly 700 bomb shelters are being [*renovated and turned into cultural oases*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/06/world/asia/taiwan-bomb-shelters-keelung.html). Some are part of restaurants, while others sprout murals or altars.

“It’s a space for life,” said a breakfast shop owner who uses her bunker for storage. “And a space for death.”

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

If you’re celebrating Thanksgiving, try [*yuca purée*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023627-pure-de-mandioca-creamy-yuca-puree). If you’re not, [*the Brazilian-inspired dish*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/04/dining/thanksgiving-yuca-brazil.html) is still a satisfying and creamy side.

What to Watch

“[*Mood*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/04/arts/television/mood-nicole-lecky.html),” a genre-bending BBC America series, explores online sex work.

What to Read

In his new book, Bob Dylan [*riffs on 66 songs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/books/bob-dylan-philosophy-of-modern-song.html?campaign_id=9&amp;emc=edit_nn_20221107&amp;instance_id=76787&amp;nl=the-morning&amp;regi_id=93388816&amp;segment_id=112281&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=e54be69add3d6dc111a82076a341830f). Dwight Garner writes that the prose sounds “a lot like his own song lyrics, so much so that part of me wanted this to be a new record instead.”

The Cosmos

Astronomers have found [*Earth’s closest known black hole*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/05/science/astronomy-black-hole.html). It’s dormant, at least for now.

Now Time to Play

Play the [*Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Tempted with bait (five letters).

Here are the [*Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html) and 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. See you next time. — Amelia

P.S. My colleague Alexandra Berzon discussed [*election deniers and the U.S. midterm elections*](https://www.npr.org/2022/11/03/1133925138/how-election-deniers-might-impact-the-midterms?campaign_id=9&amp;emc=edit_nn_20221107&amp;instance_id=76787&amp;nl=the-morning&amp;regi_id=93388816&amp;segment_id=112281&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=e54be69add3d6dc111a82076a341830f) on NPR’s “Fresh Air.”

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about the Democrats’ fight for white ***working class*** voters.

You can always reach us at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing@nytimes.com?subject=Briefing%20Feedback).

PHOTO: A person filled out their absent voter ballot at the West Bloomfield Township Clerk’s Office in West Bloomfield Township, Mich., on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Nic Antaya for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 7, 2022

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[***Why This Conservative Wants a More Radical Republican Party***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63YH-3KP1-DXY4-X308-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 29, 2021 Friday 14:37 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 549 words

**Byline:** ‘The Ezra Klein Show’

**Highlight:** Ross Douthat and Sohrab Ahmari debate the future of the American right.

**Body**

“Progressives understand that culture war means discrediting their opponents and weakening or destroying their institutions. Conservatives should approach the culture war with a similar realism,” Sohrab Ahmari [*writes*](https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2019/05/against-david-french-ism). “To recognize that enmity is real is its own kind of moral duty.”

[You can listen to this episode of “The Ezra Klein Show” on [*Apple*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-ezra-klein-show/id1548604447), [*Spotify*](https://open.spotify.com/show/3oB5noYIwEB2dMAREj2F7S), [*Google*](https://www.google.com/podcasts?feed=aHR0cHM6Ly9mZWVkcy5zaW1wbGVjYXN0LmNvbS84MkZJMzVQeA%3D%3D) or [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article).]

Five years ago, Ahmari was a self-described “secular mainstream conservative” working for The Wall Street Journal. Now a contributing editor at The American Conservative and the recently departed op-ed editor at The New York Post, Ahmari has become a fierce critic of the Republican Party as it existed before the rise of Donald Trump, a champion of right-wing populist leaders like Hungary’s Viktor Orban and a devout Catholic who believes social conservatives need to take a far more aggressive posture in the culture war.

Ahmari may be singular, but he is not alone. His political evolution is a microcosm for the ways the American right as a whole has been radicalized in recent decades. Many conservatives today are animated by a profound sense of anxiety about the direction of the country: A feeling that something about the American project has gone deeply, terribly wrong. A visceral fear of a “woke” progressivism with seemingly unmatched cultural power and influence. And a willingness to endorse ideas and leaders once considered fringe.

But Ahmari isn’t just a critic. He’s also one of the leading conservative intellectuals trying to chart a post-Trump future for the Republican Party. One that fuses Bernie Sanders-style economic populism with an aggressive social conservatism that isn’t afraid to use the power of the state to enforce its vision of the common good.

So this conversation begins with Ahmari’s religious and political journey but also explores his heterodox political vision for the Republican Party, the surprising similarities in how radical feminists and religious traditionalists understand the legacy of the sexual revolution, his view that cultural and economic deregulation has decimated the American ***working class***, the possibility of a left-right alliance around banning pornography, and why he views the cultural left and its corporate allies as a greater threat to American democracy than anything Donald Trump can offer.

You can listen to the whole conversation by following “The Ezra Klein Show” on [*Apple*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-ezra-klein-show/id1548604447), [*Spotify*](https://open.spotify.com/show/3oB5noYIwEB2dMAREj2F7S), [*Google*](https://www.google.com/podcasts?feed=aHR0cHM6Ly9mZWVkcy5zaW1wbGVjYXN0LmNvbS84MkZJMzVQeA%3D%3D) or [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article). View a list of book recommendations from our guests [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/ezra-klein-show-book-recs.html).

This episode is guest-hosted by Ross Douthat, a New York Times columnist whose work focuses on politics, conservatism, religion and, more recently, [*chronic illness*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/23/opinion/lyme-disease-chronic-illness.html). He is the author of “[*The Deep Places: A Memoir of Illness and Discovery*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/646761/the-deep-places-by-ross-douthat/)” and “[*The Decadent Society*](https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/The-Decadent-Society/Ross-Douthat/9781476785257).” You can read his work [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/ross-douthat) and follow him on Twitter [*@DouthatNYT*](https://twitter.com/DouthatNYT?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor). (Learn more about the other guest hosts during Ezra’s parental leave [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/15/opinion/ezra-klein-show-guest-hosts.html).)

(A full transcript of the episode is available [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/29/podcasts/transcript-ezra-klein-interviews-sohrab-ahmari.html).)

“The Ezra Klein Show” is produced by Annie Galvin, Jeff Geld and Rogé Karma; fact-checking by Michelle Harris; original music by Isaac Jones; mixing by Jeff Geld; audience strategy by Shannon Busta. Special thanks to Kristin Lin.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Brian Zak FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***The Last Time America Broke***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63YY-KPM1-JBG3-648N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 31, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 2; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 2011 words

**Byline:** By Jon Grinspan

**Body**

What happened to normal politics? I've spent the past five years commuting between two centuries, trying to find out.

As a curator of political history at the Smithsonian, I have attended protests and primaries, talked politics at Bernie Sanders rallies and with armed Ohio militiamen. Again and again, 21st-century Americans wonder at a democracy that looks nothing like the one they grew up with.

I've asked the 19th century the same question. Heading into the Smithsonian's secure collections, past recently collected riot shields and tiki torches, I've dug into the evidence of a similar crisis in the late 1800s. Ballots from stolen elections. Paramilitary uniforms from midnight rallies. Diaries and letters, stored elsewhere, of senators and saloonkeepers and seamstresses, all asking: Is democracy a failure?

These artifacts suggest that we're not posing the right question today. If we want to understand what happened to 20th-century politics, we need to stop considering it standard. We need to look deeper into our past and ask how we got normal politics to begin with.

The answer is that we had to fight for them. From the 1860s through 1900, America was embroiled in a generation-long, culturewide war over democracy, fought through the loudest, roughest, closest elections in our history. An age of acrimony when engaged, enraged participation came to seem less like a ''perversion of traditional American institutions,'' as one memoirist observed, and more like ''their normal operation.''

The partisan combat of that era politicized race, class and religion but often came down to a fundamental debate about behavior. How should Americans participate in their democracy? What was out of bounds? Were fraud, violence and voter suppression the result of bad actors, or were there certain dangerous tendencies inherent in the very idea of self-government? Was reform even possible?

Ultimately, Americans decided to simmer down. After 1900, a movement of well-to-do reformers invented a style of politics, a Great Quieting aiming for what The Los Angeles Times called ''more thinking and less shouting.'' But ''less shouting'' also meant less turnout, less participation, less of a voice for working people. ''Normal'' politics was invented to calm our democracy the last time it broke.

Over a century of relative peace, politically speaking, this model came to seem standard, but our embattled norms are really the cease-fire terms of a forgotten war.

This period from the Civil War to World War I is often quickly explained with history textbook abstractions like ''industrialization,'' ''urbanization'' and ''immigration,'' but those big social forces had intimate effects on Americans. Living in a time of incredible disruption, instability and inequality pushed unsteady citizens into partisan combat. Nervous people make nasty politics, and the churn of Gilded Age life left millions feeling cut loose and unprotected. During this era, Americans saw weaker family ties, had fewer communal institutions and spent more time alone. Though we associate the Gilded Age with packed factories and tenements, loneliness and isolation were driving social and political forces in this shaken nation. Americans ''had to cling to something,'' observed the writer Walter Weyl, and in the absence of their old folk customs or local institutions, ''the temptation to cling to party became ruthless.''

The parties were willing to oblige. The only thing Gilded Age life seemed to want from struggling Americans was their hard labor. But the Democratic and Republican Parties wanted their voices at rallies, their boots on the cobblestones, their stomachs at barbecues, their fists at riots and their votes on Election Day. Richard Croker, a Tammany Hall boss -- once jailed for an Election Day stabbing -- called his machine America's ''great digestive apparatus,'' capable of converting lonely immigrants into active citizens.

Likewise, people needed the parties. Some had concrete goals, like the Black politician and Philadelphia barber Isaiah C. Wears, who explained that he did not love the Republican Party -- it was merely the most useful tool in his community, the ''knife which has the sharpest edge and does my cutting.'' Others needed something more emotional. Many sought the community that came from marching together or sharing the party's lager or guffawing at the same political cartoons. And because participation was so social and so saturating, even the women, young people and minorities denied the right to vote could still feel palpably engaged without ever casting a ballot.

But their efforts resolved little. Voter turnouts climbed higher than in any other period in American history, and the results were closer than ever, too, but neither party won lasting mandates or addressed systemic problems. Every few years, some bold new movement pointed to the issues Americans were not addressing -- inequality, immigration, white supremacy, monopoly -- only to be laughed off as cranks by swelling multitudes that preferred parties that, as one Tammany operative said, did not ''trouble them with political arguments.''

Even those on the front lines of the era's violent politics wondered what it was all for. One African American reverend pointedly asked Black Republicans fighting to hold on to voting rights, ''With all your speaking, organizing, parading in the streets, ballyhooing, voting and sometimes fighting, what do you get?''

The more demands Americans put on their democracy, the less they got. By centering politics on what The Atlantic Monthly called ''the theater, the opera, the baseball game, the intellectual gymnasium, almost the church of the people,'' by making it the locus for a culture war, a race war and a class war, by asking it to provide public entertainment and small talk and family bonding, progress became impossible. Little changed because so many were participating, not in spite of that.

''Government by party is not a means of settling things,'' as the muckraker Henry Demarest Lloyd said. ''It is the best of devices for keeping them unsettled.''

Over the years, politics alienated widening circles. On the right, America's old aristocrats -- like the revered Boston historian Francis Parkman -- hissed that the very idea of majority rule was a scheme to steal power from ''superior to inferior types of men.'' On the left, Populists and socialists denounced political machines that had hoodwinked ***working-class*** voters. These populations would never agree on what should come next but had a consensus on what had to end.

After 1890 or so, a new alliance began working toward the secret cause of making politics so dry and quiet that fewer of those ''inferior types'' wanted to participate, often explicitly viewing mass turnout as harmful. Many cities, scarred by the rising labor movement, banned public rallies without permits, hoping to shove public political expressions back into ''the private home,'' as the Republican National Convention chairman put it. They closed saloons on Election Day, shuttering those key ***working-class*** political hubs. And they replaced public ballot boxes with private voting booths, turning polling places from vibrant, violent gatherings into a confessional box.

Though each change felt small, taken together, they amounted to a revolution in political labor. Campaign work once done in the streets by many ordinary volunteers was now done in private by a few paid professionals.

What came next was predictable. Voter turnout crashed by nearly a third in presidential elections from the 1890s through the 1920s, falling from roughly 80 percent to under 50 percent. Voting decreased most among ***working-class***, young, immigrant and Black citizens (even in Northern states where African Americans maintained the ability to vote). For the first time, wealth and education correlated with turnout. To this day, class remains the largest determiner of participation, above race or age.

There were some benefits to these quieter elections. Political violence became rare and shocking. Between 1859 and 1905, one congressman was murdered every seven years, and three presidents were killed in just 36 years. In the subsequent century, the nation suffered one presidential assassination and the murder of a congressman every 25 years. In this cooler political environment, lawmakers were finally able to pass long-delayed Progressive reforms. Women's suffrage, federal protections for workers, direct elections of senators, progressive income taxes and regulations on industry, transportation, food and drugs all finally passed -- after decades of failure -- once electoral politics quieted. American lives improved more in this period than in any other, and yet it all coincided with a crash in participation.

But this early-20th-century democracy was also more distant from ordinary life. These are the years when it became impolite to talk politics at the dinner table, when growing numbers struggled to distinguish between the parties, when incumbent politicians began to hold on to office for decades. The number of seats in the House of Representatives, which had always expanded with the population, permanently froze in 1911 at 435, even though our population has tripled since then.

And this is the same ugly era when Southern states began an onslaught on the million Black voters who participated in many elections during Reconstruction. States from Mississippi to Virginia passed repressive new constitutions between 1890 and 1910, essentially killing democratic participation in much of the South. Though that was far more extreme, all these changes grew from a new climate of restraint that quieted politics nationwide in the new century.

Political objects can tell the story of this change. From 1860 to 1900, parties held torch-lit midnight marches to rally the faithful. In 1900, after a sweltering Republican convention in Philadelphia where participants wore straw hats, the jaunty boater became the new icon of a cooler approach to politics. A glance at political cartoons from 1920 or 1960 or even 2000 finds caricatures still wearing boaters -- a style far removed from the torch-lit democracy of the 1800s.

The Smithsonian has steel drawers full of such boaters (made from straw, plastic and Wisconsin cheesehead foam). My colleagues and I have spent the past few years shuttling between these collections and contemporary political events, trying to identify objects that might embody the change we've witnessed in our democracy, that might go behind museum glass in a century to help explain 2016 or 2021. And wondering what these eras might say to each other. When it comes to electoral politics, our problems are different from those Americans dealt with 150 years ago, but the 19th century does have a surprisingly hopeful takeaway to offer the 21st.

We're not the first generation to worry about the death of our democracy. Grappling with this demanding system of government is, well, normal. It's partly because we're following the unusually calmed 20th century that we don't feel up to the task today. Our deep history shows that reform is possible, that previous generations identified flaws in their politics and made deliberate changes to correct them. We're not just helplessly hurtling toward inevitable civil war; we can be actors in this story. The first step is acknowledging the dangers inherent in democracy. To move forward, we should look backward and see that we're struggling not with a collapse but with a relapse.

Jon Grinspan, a curator of political history at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, is the author of ''The Age of Acrimony: How Americans Fought to Fix Their Democracy, 1865-1915.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/29/opinion/normal-politics-gilded-age.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/29/opinion/normal-politics-gilded-age.html)

**Graphic**

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[***What Has Happened to My Country?; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66T8-CWX1-JBG3-6415-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 7, 2022 Monday 21:04 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1328 words

**Byline:** Margaret Renkl

**Highlight:** The vertigo of our democratic crisis is impossible to escape.

**Body**

NASHVILLE — There I was, snug in my own bed in the middle of the night, turning to sleep on my side, when wham! the room slid sideways. Then it took off, spinning and spinning as though a sadistic carnival barker had flipped a switch and pushed the speed to max.

Reader, I will spare you the details except to say that I have lately learned how delicate an instrument is the human ear, how many ways there are to disrupt its functions. As when, say, a lump of wax detaches itself from the ear canal through an exactly wrong combination of angles and gravity, lodges itself in the eardrum, and transforms the human vestibular system into a Tilt-a-Whirl. For days I lay in bed, trying not to move my head and reciting to myself lines from “[*The Second Coming*](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43290/the-second-coming),” a poem by the Irish poet William Butler Yeats:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre/The falcon cannot hear the falconer.

At the otolaryngologist’s office, the source of my torture finally emerged after half an hour of patient manipulations by a doctor wielding tiny power tools. In the newly stationary room, I looked at it, amazed. How fragile the human body is that it can be thrown into chaos by something so small!

The same can be said for the body politic. Right-wing politicians and media outlets have turned American democracy upside down through nothing more than a lie. They put forth Supreme Court candidates [*who assure Congress that they respect legal precedent*](https://www.npr.org/2022/05/03/1096108319/roe-v-wade-alito-conservative-justices-confirmation-hearings) but who vote to overturn Roe v. Wade the instant they have a majority on the court. They endorse political candidates who openly state that they will accept only poll results leading to their own election.

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;/Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.

They denounce calamities where no calamities exist, turning public schools into battlegrounds and library books and bathrooms into weapons. But their “answer” to the real calamity of children being slaughtered in their classrooms is to arm teachers, to bring even more guns into the classroom. Political [*violence and threats are rising*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/29/us/politics/paul-pelosi-political-violence.html), and so is the [*intimidation of voters and voting officials*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/03/us/politics/voting-intimidation-democracy.html?searchResultPosition=1).

The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere/The ceremony of innocence is drowned.

Here in blue Nashville, the Tennessee General Assembly [*carved the city into three different voting districts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/31/opinion/nashville-gerrymander-voting-jim-cooper.html?searchResultPosition=2) this year, hoping to send yet another Republican to Congress from a state where both senators are Republicans, and the entire congressional delegation, not counting the current representatives from Memphis and Nashville, is Republican.

Seeing the handwriting on the wall, Representative Jim Cooper, a Blue Dog moderate, opted not to run for re-election, but Heidi Campbell, a state senator, stepped up. Ms. Campbell is a progressive who has [*significantly outpaced her MAGA opponent in fund-raising*](https://wpln.org/post/democrat-heidi-campbell-outpaces-republican-andy-ogles-in-district-5-fundraising/), but it would take a miracle turnout in Nashville for her to win in a district expressly drawn to make her lose.

While Republicans are skilled at suppressing votes in districts that don’t favor Republicans, they have proven to be incompetent at administering the vote in these newly redrawn districts, which divide neighborhoods and sprawl out into the surrounding red counties. Last week, Nashville election officials — and keep in mind that the Davidson County Election Commission is regulated by the Republican state government and controlled by a Republican majority — distributed the wrong ballots to at least 200 Nashville voters. The error was caught not by voting officials [*but by The Associated Press*](https://apnews.com/article/2022-midterm-elections-legislature-tennessee-nashville-9553e4e8966cf8196287aa914f0d7b4a).

This may well be an honest mistake. Nevertheless, when you gerrymander a district out of recognizability with the express purpose of subverting the will of the political majority, and yours is the party screaming nonstop about nonexistent voter fraud, and you send people to the wrong district to vote, too, you deserve to be held accountable.

On Friday, [*ACLU Tennessee filed a lawsuit*](https://www.aclu-tn.org/aclu-tn-victorious-lawsuit-protect-davidson-county-voters-wake-ballot-errors/) on behalf of [*the League of Women Voters and two voters affected by the error*](https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/victory-league-women-voters-tennessee-protects-voters-wake-ballot-errors). By Friday night, election officials had agreed to abide by a court order to address the error, though [*the solutions are complicated*](https://wpln.org/post/nashville-voters-read-these-instructions-if-you-worry-officials-misassigned-your-voting-district/) and will no doubt leave votes uncounted anyway.

This chaos could’ve been avoided simply by allowing Nashville to continue to vote as a district and by honoring the will of the voters. “This is the result of a racist, bigoted, money-hungry Republican Legislature who is doing everything to hoard power to keep the system rigged against everyday ***working-class*** people,” [*said Odessa Kelly*](https://tennesseelookout.com/2022/11/02/democrats-blame-republican-supermajority-for-davidson-county-election-ballot-foul-up/), the Democratic candidate in the redrawn Seventh Congressional District.

Surely some revelation is at hand;/Surely the Second Coming is at hand.

Americans belong to an electorate in which those who are most affected by [*voter suppression laws*](https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/ensure-every-american-can-vote/vote-suppression) and [*extreme gerrymandering*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/23/us/politics/voting-democracy-wisconsin-senate.html?searchResultPosition=1) are so full of despair they may see no point in trying. Meanwhile, in the rest of America, [*voters aren’t especially concerned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/18/us/politics/midterm-election-voters-democracy-poll.html?searchResultPosition=2) about the possibility of losing their own democracy.

The best lack all conviction, while the worst/are full of passionate intensity.

People often think I’m an optimist because I believe that human beings are mostly good, because I know that reasons for hope are everywhere if you look for them.

The good people of Kansas voted to preserve abortion rights, for instance, and polls indicate that [*they would be far from alone*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/04/upshot/kansas-abortion-vote-analysis.html) if other red-state voters were given the chance to choose. The chaos agent formerly known as Kanye West has discovered [*the cost of antisemitism in the wide world*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2022/10/25/adidas-kanye-west-partnership-ends/), even if it mostly goes unchallenged in his squalid corner of the political sphere. The chaos agent known as [*Elon Musk may be on track to kill the hellsite*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/01/opinion/elon-musk-twitter-advertisers.html?searchResultPosition=8) known as Twitter. Best of all, a new report suggests that [*we haven’t yet lost the chance*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/10/26/magazine/climate-change-warming-world.html?campaign_id=253&amp;emc=edit_dww_20221027&amp;instance_id=75799&amp;nl=david-wallace-wells&amp;regi_id=17059472&amp;segment_id=111234&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=ceb5062ca8bea55a94044448ea5aab57) to prevent this verdant and teeming planet from becoming completely uninhabitable.

Even so, I am not an optimist. I spend much of my life with my heart in my throat, and at this moment I am terrified. What has happened to my country that 20 percent of Americans [*believe political violence is justified*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/20/us/politics/political-violence-survey-united-states.html)? That an entire political party increasingly relies on lying and cheating to win elections? That Vladimir Putin, of all people, has become [*a Republican hero*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/briefing/republican-party-putin-wing.html)

And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,/Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

“I get why people are anxious,” Barack Obama [*said last week on the stump for Democrats in Georgia*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/10/31/obama-tells-democrats-dont-give-up-politics/). “I get why you might be worried. I understand why it might be tempting sometimes just to tune out, to watch football or ‘Dancing With the Stars.’ But I’m here to tell you that tuning out is not an option. Despair is not an option.”

Despair is not an option, but vertigo appears to be inescapable.

My mother, too, was prone to both debilitating vertigo and frequent dizzy spells. At Mass one Sunday, in line for communion, she stepped up to the priest and started to tilt. Before she even had time to stumble, I put my hands on her shoulders and gently righted her. The priest looked over her head and met my eyes in understanding. Elder care is hard, he seemed to be saying, but this is what we do for one another. Somebody begins to fall. Somebody else catches the falling one.

If only it were so in other realms. If only we could be counted on to catch one another before we fell. If only American voters will stand up for democracy and vote to restore the equilibrium of our fragile body politic. That would be the true answered prayer.

Margaret Renkl, a contributing Opinion writer, is the author of the books “[*Graceland, at Last: Notes on Hope and Heartache From the American South*](https://milkweed.org/book/graceland-at-last)” and “[*Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss*](https://milkweed.org/book/late-migrations).”

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[***At 83, a Versatile Star Still 'Thrilled by Acting'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:671F-5WJ1-DXY4-X4GB-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Chris Vognar

**Body**

The buzzy series is one of several featuring the actor, who at 83 is finding some of the most satisfying work of his career. ''I still am thrilled by acting,'' he said.

Not long ago the venerable actor F. Murray Abraham wanted to get lunch at a favorite restaurant in Greenwich Village. Unfortunately the place was overrun by New York University students shooting a film. As the Oscar-winning star of ''Amadeus,'' ''Angels in America'' and dozens of other movies, plays and TV series stood on the outside looking in, one of the students turned to another and expressed his outrage: ''Don't you know who this is? This is the voice of Khonshu!''

Abraham laughed. He gets a kick out of telling the story and the fact that, to many youngsters, he's best known as a mask-wearing, staff-wielding Egyptian god in the Marvel fantasy series ''Moon Knight.'' He gets a kick out of a lot of things. He loves that, at age 83, he's still working regularly, including a plum, often hilarious role on the hit HBO series ''The White Lotus'' and a far different, darker turn in the Netflix horror anthology ''Guillermo del Toro's Cabinet of Curiosities.'' He also made his mark on two seasons of the Apple TV+ workplace comedy ''Mythic Quest'' as C.W. Longbottom, the head writer on a hit video game.

He punctuates sentences with superlatives -- ''Isn't that fabulous?'' -- and he always sounds like he means it.

''I still am thrilled by acting,'' he said in a recent video interview from his Manhattan home. ''I still can't wait for the next project. There's more work to be done.''

For now, he's more than happy to be a key part of one of television's buzziest series. In ''The White Lotus'' he plays Bert Di Grasso, one of several deeply flawed tourists vacationing at a luxury resort in Sicily. With a glimmer in his eye and a gift for saying the wrong thing at the wrong time (much like Abraham's ''Mythic Quest'' character), Bert is traveling with his son, Dominic (Michael Imperioli), and grandson, Albie (Adam DiMarco), hoping to find some distant relatives in the old country. Dominic is a serial philanderer, a trait he seems to have inherited from his dad.

In the second episode of the current season, as the three men and a new female friend named Portia (Haley Lu Richardson) soak up the ancient atmosphere of the Greek theater at Taormina, Bert is compelled to share the story of how, in Greek mythology, Hades raped Persephone nearby. As he keeps repeating the word ''rape,'' the other characters (and viewers) cringe, much to Bert's obliviousness. The moment is both painfully awkward and brutally funny, and Abraham sells it for all it's worth, gusto and wonder in his voice.

The scene is an encapsulation of what inspired the ''White Lotus'' creator, Mike White, to cast Abraham in the role.

''Bert says a lot of questionable things and has kind of a problematic attitude toward sex and women and relationships,'' White said in a telephone interview. ''I just thought it'd be funny to have an actor who also has this kind of buoyancy and a 'What me worry?' type of attitude. There's something very mischievous about Murray, and he could obviously play the villain. But he also has this likable, unsinkable quality to him.''

That unsinkable quality was an integral part of his otherwise macabre role in ''The Autopsy,'' one of eight episodes in ''Cabinet of Curiosities,'' which debuted in October. In it, he plays Dr. Carl Winters, a medical examiner called upon by an old friend (Glynn Turman) to conduct post-mortem procedures on some unusual patients. Dr. Winters carries his own burden into the operating theater: He has cancer, and only a few months left to live.

''It was not an easy performance,'' he said. ''I see an end. I mean, I'm 83. And when it becomes a reality like that, when you face that and then you try to take that feeling to a script like this, where a man is going to die in six months, that really begins to cloud everything you do.''

Abraham was born in Pittsburgh and raised in El Paso; his father was a Syrian immigrant, and his mother was the daughter of Italian immigrants. As a teen he worked in his father's auto garage and never thought about acting. Then he enrolled in what looked like the easiest high school class available: speech and drama. He fell under the spell of a teacher, Lucia Hutchins, who taught him that acting could be more than an easy A.

''She introduced me to Shakespeare,'' he recalled. ''She introduced me to Arthur Miller.'' He remembers performing a monologue by Mitch, Stanley Kowalski's buddy in Tennessee Williams's ''A Streetcar Named Desire.'' It all went against his ***working class*** upbringing: ''Acting in our family? Get out of here.'' He studied for a year at Texas Western College (now the University of Texas at El Paso), then, under the influence of Jack Kerouac, hitchhiked to Los Angeles, where he began pursuing his career in earnest before relocating to New York and studying under Uta Hagen at the HB Studio.

Small parts in film followed. He was one of the cops who busted the Watergate burglars in ''All the President's Men'' (1976) and an antagonist of Al Pacino's in ''Scarface'' (1983). His big break, and the role that won him an Oscar, was Antonio Salieri, Mozart's obsessed nemesis in ''Amadeus'' (1984). ''I just understood the script instantly,'' he said.

''Apparently it's so clear that kids love that movie,'' he added. ''Isn't that extraordinary? They like that, and they like Khonshu.''

But Abraham still considers himself a creature of the theater. He has been a regular in the plays of Terrence McNally, including ''The Ritz'' (made into a film, starring Abraham, in 1976). He played Roy Cohn in ''Angels in America'' on Broadway. He hated the man, but the role taught him a valuable lesson: Don't worry about being liked. If you're playing a bad guy, make him bad.

For Abraham, the theater is like a love affair that never ends.

''Eight times a week, you get to do it again and again,'' he said. ''If it's bad, then that's horrible. But when it's good, there's nothing like it. It's like really good sex: Give me more.'' He paused. ''I sound like Bert.''

Imperioli, who also comes from a theater background but is best known for his roles in ''The Sopranos'' and ''GoodFellas,'' found a friend and kindred spirit in Abraham. On off days in Sicily, they would organize impromptu rehearsals with DiMarco and sometimes Richardson.

''We would just read the characters and talk about them,'' Imperioli said in a video interview. ''He has this command of craft, yet also this incredible depth of soul and truth and honesty. It's a combination that I very rarely have seen, and I've never seen it come to fruition as it does in Murray.''

Abraham and Imperioli ended up getting Covid-19 at the same time, confining them to their hotel rooms. ''I had such a bad sore throat I couldn't even talk,'' Imperioli said. ''And I could hear Murray upstairs doing his vocal warm-ups every day. Singing. This is an 82-year-old guy with Covid.'' Abraham has memorized more than 50 of Shakespeare's sonnets, which, as Imperioli observed, he recites regularly to keep his memory sharp.

For Abraham, the ''White Lotus'' experience was among the best of his career, thanks largely to White's writing. ''It's his sense of humanity,'' he said. ''He's written real people. I think Bert is absolutely legit -- you know he's for real. I grew up with people like that.''

The whole sun-dappled Sicily thing wasn't bad, either.

''I got to tell you, man, if there was some way to make it happen, I'd shoot this whole thing all over again,'' he said. ''The thing about some of these interviews, which I've done for many years, is that you try to make nice: You think of the good things that happened; you don't want to talk about the crap. But this was all good.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/05/arts/television/f-murray-abraham-white-lotus.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/05/arts/television/f-murray-abraham-white-lotus.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The Oscar-winning actor F. Murray Abraham in the West Village this month. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA MESSINGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C1)

F. Murray Abraham, who along with his career in film and theater has been memorable in TV series including ''Mythic Quest'' and ''Moon Knight.'' Right, Abraham and Michael Imperioli as philandering father and son in ''The White Lotus.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA MESSINGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

HBO) (C10) This article appeared in print on page C1, C10.

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[***A Fight Against Sludge***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67H9-X1K1-DXY4-X02S-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1847 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** Why the Biden administration is trying to crack down on those sneaky fees charged by hotels, rental cars, internet providers and more.

**Body**

Why the Biden administration is trying to crack down on those sneaky fees charged by hotels, rental cars, internet providers and more.

Sneaky fees have become a big part of America’s consumer economy.

Hertz charges almost $6 a day simply for using a toll transponder in a rental car. Marriott and Hilton add nightly “resort fees” to the bill even at hotels that nobody would consider to be resorts. American, Delta and United list one airfare when you first search for a seat — and then add charges for basic features like the ability to sit next to your spouse.

Ticketmaster is especially aggressive about imposing fees, as I experienced recently while buying two tickets to a football game. When I initially selected my seats on Ticketmaster’s online stadium map, they cost $48. The bill at checkout was more than one-third higher — $64.40.

President Biden has announced a crackdown on these fees (which his administration calls “junk fees”), and he devoted a section of [*his State of the Union address*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/us/politics/biden-state-of-the-union-transcript.html) to them. “Look, junk fees may not matter to the very wealthy, but they matter to most other folks in homes like the one I grew up in,” he said Tuesday night. “I know how unfair it feels when a company overcharges you and gets away with it.”

Today, I want to explain why anybody is even worrying about this problem. After all, in a competitive capitalist economy like ours, shouldn’t the market have already solved it?

‘Sludge’

The market solution to sneaky fees seems straightforward. When Marriott starts charging $50 nightly “resort fees,” Hilton can call out its competitor and try to steal Marriott customers. And some companies do take this approach: Southwest Airlines advertises a “Bags Fly Free” policy, an obvious swipe at rivals.

But the mushrooming number of fees has made clear that competition does not usually eliminate the practice. Why not? Academic research has suggested that there are two main reasons.

First, human beings are not the efficiently rational machines that economic theory pretends they are. An entire branch of the field, behavioral economics, has sprung up in recent decades to make sense of our limited attention spans.

If you are familiar with the best-selling book [*“Thinking, Fast and Slow,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/24/sports/baseball/thinking-fast-and-slow-book.html) by Daniel Kahneman, you will recognize these ideas. We lead busy lives that keep us from analyzing every purchase, and we get distracted by salient but misleading information (like a low list price). Big companies, with the resources at their disposal, have learned to take advantage of these limitations. The economist Richard Thaler refers to practices like these as “sludge,” the evil counterpart to nudges that use behavioral economics to improve life.

True, one company could call out another for using sludge. But doing so often requires a complex marketing message that tries to persuade people to overcome their psychological instincts (like the appeal of a low list price). For that reason, Hilton can probably make more money by charging its own sneaky resort fees than by criticizing Marriott’s.

“Once some subset of hotels start charging these fees and generating a significant amount of revenue,” Bharat Ramamurti, a Biden adviser, told me, “that creates pressure on hotels to do this, or otherwise they’re getting left behind.”

No choices

The second major reason is monopoly power. In some markets, consumers don’t have much choice. Ticketmaster’s fees outrage many people. But I didn’t have any choice when I bought those football tickets. There was no rival service selling them.

In recent decades, many American industries have become more concentrated, partly because Washington became more lax about enforcing antitrust laws. Thomas Philippon, an N.Y.U. economist, has estimated that increased corporate concentration costs the typical American household [*more than $5,000 a year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/10/opinion/big-business-consumer-prices.html).

In some industries, sludge and monopoly power feed off each other. The small number of dominant internet providers, for instance, reduces the chances that a new entrant can design a business strategy around undercutting Comcast’s and Verizon’s sneaky fees. Those new entrants don’t exist. Comcast and Verizon have also figured out how to make the cancellation of internet service unpleasant and time-consuming. Airlines — another concentrated industry — use frequent-flier programs in a similar way, effectively punishing customers for switching to a different carrier.

The crackdown

The Biden administration is trying to address both causes of sneaky fees. On antitrust, it has adopted [*a policy more confrontational*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/13/opinion/biden-executive-order-antitrust.html) than that of any other administration in decades. That effort is in its early stages, without many big victories. Still, the administration does seem to be taking corporate concentration seriously.

As for the sludge itself, the administration has already taken steps to restrict a few examples, such as charges for late payments on credit cards. Biden has asked Congress to pass a law with stricter rules for other industries.

The administration’s bigger focus for now is on disclosure — requiring companies to tell consumers up front what the full cost will be. The Transportation Department has proposed such a rule for airlines.

Disclosure rules often have the advantage of being easier to enforce than outright bans on sneaky fees: If the government bans one kind of fee, companies can often repackage it in another way. “The best we could hope for is that consumers see the full costs transparently and that the government facilitates that,” Thaler, a Nobel laureate in economics, told me.

Ramamurti, the Biden adviser, put it this way: “We don’t want firms to be competing with each other to be hiding the true price of their product.”

How much of a difference Biden’s actions will make remains unclear. But [*the administration’s effort*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/blog/2022/10/26/the-presidents-initiative-on-junk-fees-and-related-pricing-practices/) is based on an idea supported by a lot of evidence: The free market doesn’t solve all problems.

The U.S. government over the past half-century has moved toward an economic policy that often allows corporations to behave as they want, based on the theory that the free market will solve any excesses. The results haven’t been very good. During that same half century, economic growth has slowed, [*corporate profits*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/24/opinion/income-inequality-upper-middle-class.html) have risen faster than wages, [*income inequality*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/08/07/opinion/leonhardt-income-inequality.html) has soared, and [*living standards*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/03/06/opinion/working-class-death-rate.html) have grown slowly.

Sneaky fees turn out to be a small but telling example of why the modern economy isn’t working so well for many Americans.

More on Biden

* Biden’s State of the Union address [*focused on taxing the rich*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/us/politics/biden-state-of-the-union-spending.html) and creating new government programs. It’s part of a bid to win back ***working-class*** voters [*through their wallets*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/us/politics/biden-blue-collar-white-voters.html).

1. “[*Lots of luck in your senior year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/us/politics/biden-lots-of-luck-senior-year.html)”: decoding a Bidenism from the State of the Union.

THE LATEST NEWS

Turkey Earthquakes

* Millions of people are [*suffering from cold and grief*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/world/middleeast/turkey-syria-quake.html) as they wait for help. Syria could receive its first aid delivery today, but destroyed roads and a lack of fuel are slowing rescue efforts.

1. The quakes have killed [*at least 17,000*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2023/02/09/world/turkey-syria-earthquake/heres-the-latest-on-the-earthquakes-aftermath?smid=url-share) people in Turkey and Syria.
2. Footage [*shows people digging a mass burial site*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2023/02/09/world/turkey-syria-earthquake/d39b123e-b12c-5948-9898-b9b020a27e26?smid=url-share) in Syria.

Tech

* Bing (yes, Bing) has [*made search interesting again*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/technology/microsoft-bing-openai-artificial-intelligence.html) by integrating A.I., The Times’s Kevin Roose writes.

1. Researchers warn that A.I. chatbots are an effective tool for [*creating disinformation and conspiracies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/technology/ai-chatbots-disinformation.html).
2. Disney will [*lay off as many as 7,000 employees*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/business/disney-earnings.html).

International

* It’s not just in the U.S.: China uses spy balloons to [*gather information on militaries*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/us/politics/china-spy-balloons.html) around the world.

1. Russia’s increased trade with Asia has kept [*cash from oil flowing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/07/business/russia-oil-embargo.html) to the Kremlin.
2. Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine’s president, [*asked Britain for fighter jets*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/world/europe/zelensky-britain-ukraine-sunak-planes.html) during a two-day visit to Western allies.
3. High-rise hog farms ([*giant towers full of pigs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/business/china-pork-farms.html)) have sprung up in China in a drive to enhance the country’s agricultural competitiveness.

Other Big Stories

* New York City, which has struggled to house an influx of migrants, is [*buying bus tickets*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/nyregion/migrants-new-york-canada.html) for those who want to seek asylum in Canada.

1. A Texas man who killed 23 people in El Paso in 2019, the deadliest anti-Latino attack in recent U.S. history, [*pleaded guilty to hate crimes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/us/texas-walmart-shooting-suspect-plea.html).
2. A new drug [*quashes all Covid variants*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/health/covid-drug-eiger-interferon.html). Regulatory hurdles make it unlikely to reach the U.S. anytime soon.

Opinions

Your height — and your children’s height — [*shouldn’t matter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/09/opinion/height-shortness-growth-hormones.html), Mara Altman argues on a podcast.

Don’t give advice, do acknowledge reality: David Brooks reflects on how to support someone in despair after [*losing a friend to suicide*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/09/opinion/despair-friendship-suicide.html).

MORNING READS

Strike out: A softball team for [*retired Japanese gangsters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/world/asia/japan-yakuza.html) helps them stay out of trouble.

Space mystery: There’s a ring around this dwarf planet. [*It shouldn’t be there*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/science/quaoar-rings-roche-limit.html).

Resort parking lots: Where [*#vanlife meets #skibum*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/07/travel/vanlife-skiing-oregon.html).

The no-jet set: Some people [*have given up flying*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/06/travel/travel-climate-no-fly-pledge.html) to help lower carbon emissions.

Advice from Wirecutter: [*Charge your phone faster*](https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-wired-fast-chargers/).

Lives Lived: Mukarram Jah was the heir of India’s richest royal family, but he abandoned his throne and became a sheep farmer in Australia. He [*died at 89*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/07/world/asia/mukarram-jah-dead.html).

SPORTS NEWS FROM THE ATHLETIC

N.B.A. trades: The Nets [*agreed to send Kevin Durant to the Phoenix Suns*](https://theathletic.com/4170997/2023/02/09/kevin-durant-trade-nets-suns-jae-crowder/), days after the team traded Kyrie Irving. And the Los Angeles Lakers helped engineer a [*three-team trade*](https://theathletic.com/4168855/2023/02/08/lakers-trade-russell-westbrook-dangelo-russell/), acquiring D’Angelo Russell of Minnesota and shipping Russell Westbrook to Utah.

First time in 30 years: Marquette’s women’s basketball team upended No. 4 UConn last night, [*giving the Huskies back-to-back losses*](https://theathletic.com/4170700/2023/02/08/marquette-upsets-uconn-womens-basketball/) for the first time since 1993.

ARTS AND IDEAS

Take the plunge

Every morning at 9 a.m. sharp, around a dozen New Yorkers meet to jump into the icy Atlantic Ocean. They’re part of the New York Dippers Club, one of the many cold water therapy groups that began this winter.

Cold plunges are having a moment, [*Alyson Krueger writes in The Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/07/style/cold-plunge.html). But the idea isn’t new: The ancient Greek physician Hippocrates believed that water therapy could alleviate fatigue. Modern fans of the practice say it improves mental clarity or alleviates pain. The science behind it, however, [*isn’t clear*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/20/well/mind/cold-water-plunge-mental-health.html).

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

These [*garlic shrimp*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023811-hawaii-style-garlic-shrimp) are a taste of Hawaii’s food truck cuisine.

What to Read

“I know this sister”: A trailblazing Black cartoonist’s work is [*full of relatable characters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/07/books/barbara-brandon-croft-where-im-coming-from.html).

What to Watch

Winnie the Pooh and Piglet are coming back to the big screen. [*It’s going to be terrifying*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/09/movies/winnie-the-pooh-blood-honey-horror.html).

Late Night

The State of the Union [*wasn’t as boring*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/09/arts/television/chelsea-handler-marjorie-taylor-greene-state-of-the-union.html) as Chelsea Handler thought it would be.

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was dormitory. Here is [*today’s puzzle*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Rapper Rick \_\_\_ (four letters).

And here’s [*today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow.

P.S. The Times gained more than one million digital-only subscribers last year and now has [*9.6 million paying subscribers in total*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/business/media/new-york-times-earnings.html). Thank you, readers.

Here’s [*today’s front page*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/2023/02/09/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about San Francisco’s downtown.

Matthew Cullen, Lauren Hard, Lauren Jackson, 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).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Paul Sakuma/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***He Survived the Trade Center Bombing. ‘I Always Knew They’d Be Back.’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67MY-N241-JBG3-60F2-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** NYREGION

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**Highlight:** Thirty years ago today, Tim Lang was injured in the first attack on the twin towers, an ominous but often overlooked prelude to 9/11. He does not forget.

**Body**

Thirty years ago today, Tim Lang was injured in the first attack on the twin towers, an ominous but often overlooked prelude to 9/11. He does not forget.

Thirty years ago today, terrorists left a bomb weighing more than a half-ton in a rented van parked beneath the World Trade Center, a workplace for tens of thousands. Its smoldering fuse took about 12 minutes to close the gap between the everyday and the horrific.

The lunchtime blast left a crater several stories deep, sent acrid smoke up the center’s north tower and killed six people. More than 1,000 others were injured that day, including a dark-haired trader just yards from the underground detonation.

Eight years later, that same man, Tim Lang, fled Lower Manhattan as terrorists struck the World Trade Center again, this time with jetliners. He saw the first of its two towers buckle and fall in an attack that killed nearly 3,000 people, including those dear to him.

Mr. Lang is 69 now, with shock-white hair and photos of grandchildren stored in his smartphone. He describes himself as an unremarkable man. Yet he is also an everyman through-line between two remarkable events: the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, which upended world politics, and the bombing of Feb. 26, 1993, which is less indelibly burned into collective memory but stands as ominous prelude.

“Just about everybody forgets about it,” he said.

Not Mr. Lang. He continues to process what happened — while working to push against feelings of hate that might consume him as easily as the burning hole left by the bomb. “There’s a saying,” he said. “Resentment is like taking poison and hoping the other person dies.”

Still, that February Friday and that September Tuesday have become part of him. He dreads the anniversaries.

“In the days leading up to it, I don’t sleep,” Mr. Lang said. “And that’s already begun. February’s here. So I have trouble.”

In the winter of 1993, Mr. Lang was succeeding on Wall Street and foundering in nearly everything else. He was the about-to-be-divorced father of two boys and two girls, alienated from devout Roman Catholic parents who believed in the sanctity of marriage. Now Tim, the fourth of the dozen children they had raised in ***working-class*** Brooklyn, was living alone and feeling alone.

He hadn’t wanted to go into the city that day, but his partner insisted he was needed at a 12:30 meeting. A reluctant Mr. Lang left his New Jersey condo and drove his Toyota 4Runner through the cold, late-morning gray.

As he headed down a ramp into the World Trade Center’s underground garage, a zooming Ford Taurus cut ahead of him. After a brief wait, the two vehicles entered the garage, the Ford making a right and the Toyota turning left.

If Mr. Lang saw the Ryder van parked on the same level, he took no notice. He pulled his S.U.V. beside a concrete wall, got out and opened a back-seat door to collect his coat and some documents. Then came a crack like a lightning strike.

He felt his entire body compress as he was lifted and thrown. His head hit something, and he was out.

Mr. Lang awoke to blackness, thick smoke burning his throat and dozens of car alarms bleating in his ear. He checked his legs and arms and felt a sticky wetness at the back of his head. His inability to see had him briefly thinking, of all things, that he was now the second blind bagpiper in his pipe band.

Thoughts like these jumbled in his mind. Had the car beside him exploded? Was this mob-related? What about that page from a calendar of biblical sayings he had stuck in his wallet that morning? Genesis: Do not be afraid.

Coughing and too dizzy to stand, Mr. Lang crawled through the jagged debris to a distant light — he could see! — coming from what turned out to be his Toyota. He climbed inside to drive away, only to realize it was crumpled.

Low to the ground and with his sweater pulled up over his nose, he tried to find an exit. Familiar with the garage’s layout, he made his way toward the destroyed manager’s office to find a phone, fell on a dead body, then crawled to the edge of the smoldering chasm created by the explosion.

“So if things were bad where I was before, this pit is spewing out stuff from the bottom of hell,” Mr. Lang recently recalled on “[*Operation Tradebom*](https://www.apple.com/tv-pr/originals/operation-tradebom/),” a podcast about the bombing.

He crawled away, lay down by a car, prayed for his children and for the courage to die. A calm began to settle over him. Then a bang sounded in the distance.

“And I screamed out,” he said.

Someone hearing his cries alerted two members of the New York Police Department’s Emergency Services Unit who arrived early to the scene: Detective Edward Joergens and Officer Cory Cuneo. Wearing air packs and using a fire hose spooled near a door as a tether, they inched through the consuming darkness.

“We carried these huge flashlights, and still you couldn’t see six inches in front of you,” Mr. Cuneo recalled.

Their lifeline of a fire hose ran out, but sporadic calls for help beckoned above the car-alarm cacophony. They pushed on.

Minutes later, a rescuer’s boot illuminated by a flashlight appeared before Mr. Lang, and he grabbed it. Finally: connection.

The hope that he might survive competed with the fear that he couldn’t breathe — and what he was breathing was toxic. He clutched Mr. Cuneo’s hand.

“I would not let go of his hand,” Mr. Lang recalled. “I was shaking and crying and would never let go of his hand.”

With two supporting one, the men stumbled and banged their way through the murk. Finally, they reached a stairwell, and daylight and Liberty Street, where the soot-covered man in shock was gently lowered to the sidewalk.

After several hours in the hospital, Mr. Lang returned to his isolation along the Jersey Shore. “It was the darkest time of my life,” he said. “Now, I can look back and say, you know, the Lord can nudge you along, or he could have you blown up to make it right.”

Mr. Lang would sit at water’s edge, grateful to be alive — glad just for the coffee in his hand — but grieving, too, for the loss of other lives, for the state of things, for his own state. He thought about that line from Genesis and about that driver of the Taurus who had cut him off, turned right and was killed. Sometimes he cried.

“Whatever my priorities were, they changed when I came out,” he said. “Like so many balls thrown up in the air and landing in a different order.”

It took time to understand the new order. He found a therapist. He committed himself more deeply to his faith. He reconciled with his parents and siblings. He remarried and became the father of two more girls.

He also did a lot of reading about radical Islam. “Who are these people?” Mr. Lang said he wanted to know. “And why did they try to kill me?”

He learned that the mastermind of the bombing, Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, had been disappointed with its death toll and had hoped that the north tower would topple into the south tower.

“I always knew they’d be back,” Mr. Lang said.

Mr. Yousef, who fled the United States hours after the bombing, would team up with his maternal uncle, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, who had sent money by wire transfer to one of Mr. Yousef’s co-conspirators. Plots of terror continued.

Mr. Yousef was captured in 1995 and eventually convicted in the trade center bombing and a subsequent plot to down several American airplanes. He is serving life without parole in a federal “supermax” penitentiary in Colorado.

But his uncle continued to elude capture. And on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, Mr. Lang and his brother Richard were walking into their Lower Manhattan building when someone said a plane had hit the World Trade Center’s north tower. Hustling out to Rector Street, they saw the point of impact and the ensuing fire — just below where their sister Rosanne worked as an equities trader.

The brothers raced up to their high-rise office and tried telephoning her. No answer. They then heard a tremendous ground-rattling sound and looked out to see the second jetliner fly past and into the south tower.

Fearing more attacks, the Lang brothers made it to Pier 11 at the eastern end of Wall Street and boarded one of the first ferries evacuating people to New Jersey. As the vessel pulled away, they saw the south tower fall.

“We have to pray,” Mr. Lang recalled saying.

The men did not yet know that their nephew Brendan, 30, a project manager for a construction company, was among those killed in the south tower’s collapse. And as their ferry approached the dock in Highlands some 40 minutes later, the captain announced that the north tower had fallen as well.

Four of the Lang brothers — Tim, Richard, Donald and Marty, a just-retired New York firefighter — headed out the next day to Lower Manhattan, hoping to find their loved ones alive. But they knew.

Rosanne Lang, 42, was the divorced mother of a teenage son. A glimpse of her effect on others came when Mr. Lang and a brother went to collect her Mercedes at her usual parking lot in Jersey City. He pointed out the car and the attendant burst into tears.

Federal authorities have identified Mr. Yousef’s uncle, Mr. Mohammed, as the principal architect of the Sept. 11 attacks. Captured in 2003, he has been held since 2006 at a military prison in Guantánamo Bay, where efforts to prosecute him have been delayed by a host of complications, including his torture at the hands of the C.I.A.

In 2019, Mr. Lang was part of a group invited by the federal government to observe proceedings at Guantánamo Bay. Seeing Mr. Mohammed up close, in custody, he felt no hate, he says — only a deep sadness over lost lives, wasted lives and belief systems that allow for the killing of innocent people in retaliation.

“There’s a complexity to other people’s lives that is beyond my own understanding,” he said.

These days, Mr. Lang runs an equity trading firm, Global Liquidity Partners, from an office near his home in Monmouth Beach. He golfs, attends a men’s prayer group, plays the bagpipes, marches in parades and enjoys the company of his seven grandchildren, all boys.

The years come and go, as do anniversaries.

A few days ago, on Ash Wednesday, Mr. Lang went to a Catholic church and received the gray smudge on his forehead to remind him of, among other things, his mortality. Two other days on his calendar do the same.

PHOTOS: Smoke spewed from the north tower of the World Trade Center after a bomb exploded on Feb. 26, 1993. Six people were killed. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARILYNN K. YEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES; BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); A memorial for Brendan M. Lang in a park in Red Bank, N.J. He died on Sept. 11. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Mr. Lang, center, shortly after being rescued from the garage by Detective Edward Joergens, left, and Officer Cory Cuneo. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA NEW YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT) (A16) This article appeared in print on page A1, A16.

**Load-Date:** February 26, 2023

**End of Document**



[***F. Murray Abraham Would Make ‘The White Lotus’ All Over Again***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6719-03C1-DXY4-X458-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 5, 2022 Monday 15:22 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 1364 words

**Byline:** Chris Vognar

**Highlight:** The buzzy series is one of several featuring the actor, who at 83 is finding some of the most satisfying work of his career. “I still am thrilled by acting,” he said.

**Body**

The buzzy series is one of several featuring the actor, who at 83 is finding some of the most satisfying work of his career. “I still am thrilled by acting,” he said.

Not long ago the venerable actor F. Murray Abraham wanted to get lunch at a favorite restaurant in Greenwich Village. Unfortunately the place was overrun by New York University students shooting a film. As the Oscar-winning star of “Amadeus,” “Angels in America” and dozens of other movies, plays and TV series stood on the outside looking in, one of the students turned to another and expressed his outrage: “Don’t you know who this is? This is the voice of Khonshu!”

Abraham laughed. He gets a kick out of telling the story and the fact that, to many youngsters, he’s best known as a mask-wearing, staff-wielding Egyptian god in the Marvel fantasy series “Moon Knight.” He gets a kick out of a lot of things. He loves that, at age 83, he’s still working regularly, including a plum, often hilarious role on the hit HBO series “The White Lotus” and a far different, darker turn in the Netflix horror anthology [*“Guillermo del Toro’s Cabinet of Curiosities.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/24/arts/television/guillermo-del-toro-cabinet-of-curiosities-review-netflix.html) He also made his mark on two seasons of the Apple TV+ workplace comedy “Mythic Quest” as C.W. Longbottom, the head writer on a hit video game.

He punctuates sentences with superlatives — “Isn’t that fabulous?” — and he always sounds like he means it.

“I still am thrilled by acting,” he said in a recent video interview from his Manhattan home. “I still can’t wait for the next project. There’s more work to be done.”

For now, he’s more than happy to be a key part of one of television’s buzziest series. In “The White Lotus” he plays Bert Di Grasso, one of several deeply flawed tourists vacationing at a luxury resort in Sicily. With a glimmer in his eye and a gift for saying the wrong thing at the wrong time (much like Abraham’s “Mythic Quest” character), Bert is traveling with his son, Dominic ([*Michael Imperioli*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/14/arts/television/michael-imperioli-the-white-lotus.html)), and grandson, Albie (Adam DiMarco), hoping to find some distant relatives in the old country. Dominic is a serial philanderer, a trait he seems to have inherited from his dad.

In the second episode of the current season, as the three men and a new female friend named Portia (Haley Lu Richardson) soak up the ancient atmosphere of the Greek theater at Taormina, Bert is compelled to share the story of how, in Greek mythology, Hades raped Persephone nearby. As he keeps repeating the word “rape,” the other characters (and viewers) cringe, much to Bert’s obliviousness. The moment is both painfully awkward and brutally funny, and Abraham sells it for all it’s worth, gusto and wonder in his voice.

The scene is an encapsulation of what inspired the “White Lotus” creator, Mike White, to cast Abraham in the role.

“Bert says a lot of questionable things and has kind of a problematic attitude toward sex and women and relationships,” White said in a telephone interview. “I just thought it’d be funny to have an actor who also has this kind of buoyancy and a ‘What me worry?’ type of attitude. There’s something very mischievous about Murray, and he could obviously play the villain. But he also has this likable, unsinkable quality to him.”

That unsinkable quality was an integral part of his otherwise macabre role in “The Autopsy,” one of eight episodes in [*“Cabinet of Curiosities,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/24/arts/television/guillermo-del-toro-cabinet-of-curiosities-review-netflix.html) which debuted in October. In it, he plays Dr. Carl Winters, a medical examiner called upon by an old friend (Glynn Turman) to conduct post-mortem procedures on some unusual patients. Dr. Winters carries his own burden into the operating theater: He has cancer, and only a few months left to live.

“It was not an easy performance,” he said. “I see an end. I mean, I’m 83. And when it becomes a reality like that, when you face that and then you try to take that feeling to a script like this, where a man is going to die in six months, that really begins to cloud everything you do.”

Abraham was born in Pittsburgh and raised in El Paso; his father was a Syrian immigrant, and his mother was the daughter of Italian immigrants. As a teen he worked in his father’s auto garage and never thought about acting. Then he enrolled in what looked like the easiest high school class available: speech and drama. He fell under the spell of a teacher, Lucia Hutchins, who taught him that acting could be more than an easy A.

“She introduced me to Shakespeare,” he recalled. “She introduced me to Arthur Miller.” He remembers performing a monologue by Mitch, Stanley Kowalski’s buddy in Tennessee Williams’s “A Streetcar Named Desire.” It all went against his ***working class*** upbringing: “Acting in our family? Get out of here.” He studied for a year at Texas Western College (now the University of Texas at El Paso), then, under the influence of Jack Kerouac, hitchhiked to Los Angeles, where he began pursuing his career in earnest before relocating to New York and studying under Uta Hagen at the HB Studio.

Small parts in film followed. He was one of the cops who busted the Watergate burglars in “All the President’s Men” (1976) and an antagonist of Al Pacino’s in “Scarface” (1983). His big break, and the role that won him an Oscar, was Antonio Salieri, Mozart’s obsessed nemesis in “Amadeus” (1984). “I just understood the script instantly,” he said.

“Apparently it’s so clear that kids love that movie,” he added. “Isn’t that extraordinary? They like that, and they like Khonshu.”

But Abraham still considers himself a creature of the theater. He has been a regular in the plays of Terrence McNally, including “The Ritz” (made into a film, starring Abraham, in 1976). He played Roy Cohn in “Angels in America” on Broadway. He hated the man, but the role taught him a valuable lesson: Don’t worry about being liked. If you’re playing a bad guy, make him bad.

For Abraham, the theater is like a love affair that never ends.

“Eight times a week, you get to do it again and again,” he said. “If it’s bad, then that’s horrible. But when it’s good, there’s nothing like it. It’s like really good sex: Give me more.” He paused. “I sound like Bert.”

Imperioli, who also comes from a theater background but is best known for his roles in “The Sopranos” and “GoodFellas,” found a friend and kindred spirit in Abraham. On off days in Sicily, they would organize impromptu rehearsals with DiMarco and sometimes Richardson.

“We would just read the characters and talk about them,” Imperioli said in a video interview. “He has this command of craft, yet also this incredible depth of soul and truth and honesty. It’s a combination that I very rarely have seen, and I’ve never seen it come to fruition as it does in Murray.”

Abraham and Imperioli ended up getting Covid-19 at the same time, confining them to their hotel rooms. “I had such a bad sore throat I couldn’t even talk,” Imperioli said. “And I could hear Murray upstairs doing his vocal warm-ups every day. Singing. This is an 82-year-old guy with Covid.” Abraham has memorized more than 50 of Shakespeare’s sonnets, which, as Imperioli observed, he recites regularly to keep his memory sharp.

For Abraham, the “White Lotus” experience was among the best of his career, thanks largely to White’s writing. “It’s his sense of humanity,” he said. “He’s written real people. I think Bert is absolutely legit — you know he’s for real. I grew up with people like that.”

The whole sun-dappled Sicily thing wasn’t bad, either.

“I got to tell you, man, if there was some way to make it happen, I’d shoot this whole thing all over again,” he said. “The thing about some of these interviews, which I’ve done for many years, is that you try to make nice: You think of the good things that happened; you don’t want to talk about the crap. But this was all good.”

PHOTOS: The Oscar-winning actor F. Murray Abraham in the West Village this month. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA MESSINGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C1); F. Murray Abraham, who along with his career in film and theater has been memorable in TV series including “Mythic Quest” and “Moon Knight.” Right, Abraham and Michael Imperioli as philandering father and son in “The White Lotus.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA MESSINGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; HBO) (C10) This article appeared in print on page C1, C10.

**Load-Date:** December 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Bombing Became a Historical Footnote, but He Will Never Forget***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67MY-NY51-JBG3-60N4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 26, 2023 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1726 words

**Byline:** By Dan Barry

**Body**

Thirty years ago today, Tim Lang was injured in the first attack on the twin towers, an ominous but often overlooked prelude to 9/11. He does not forget.

Thirty years ago today, terrorists left a bomb weighing more than a half-ton in a rented van parked beneath the World Trade Center, a workplace for tens of thousands. Its smoldering fuse took about 12 minutes to close the gap between the everyday and the horrific.

The lunchtime blast left a crater several stories deep, sent acrid smoke up the center's north tower and killed six people. More than 1,000 others were injured that day, including a dark-haired trader just yards from the underground detonation.

Eight years later, that same man, Tim Lang, fled Lower Manhattan as terrorists struck the World Trade Center again, this time with jetliners. He saw the first of its two towers buckle and fall in an attack that killed nearly 3,000 people, including those dear to him.

Mr. Lang is 69 now, with shock-white hair and photos of grandchildren stored in his smartphone. He describes himself as an unremarkable man. Yet he is also an everyman through-line between two remarkable events: the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, which upended world politics, and the bombing of Feb. 26, 1993, which is less indelibly burned into collective memory but stands as ominous prelude.

''Just about everybody forgets about it,'' he said.

Not Mr. Lang. He continues to process what happened -- while working to push against feelings of hate that might consume him as easily as the burning hole left by the bomb. ''There's a saying,'' he said. ''Resentment is like taking poison and hoping the other person dies.''

Still, that February Friday and that September Tuesday have become part of him. He dreads the anniversaries.

''In the days leading up to it, I don't sleep,'' Mr. Lang said. ''And that's already begun. February's here. So I have trouble.''

In the winter of 1993, Mr. Lang was succeeding on Wall Street and foundering in nearly everything else. He was the about-to-be-divorced father of two boys and two girls, alienated from devout Roman Catholic parents who believed in the sanctity of marriage. Now Tim, the fourth of the dozen children they had raised in ***working-class*** Brooklyn, was living alone and feeling alone.

He hadn't wanted to go into the city that day, but his partner insisted he was needed at a 12:30 meeting. A reluctant Mr. Lang left his New Jersey condo and drove his Toyota 4Runner through the cold, late-morning gray.

As he headed down a ramp into the World Trade Center's underground garage, a zooming Ford Taurus cut ahead of him. After a brief wait, the two vehicles entered the garage, the Ford making a right and the Toyota turning left.

If Mr. Lang saw the Ryder van parked on the same level, he took no notice. He pulled his S.U.V. beside a concrete wall, got out and opened a back-seat door to collect his coat and some documents. Then came a crack like a lightning strike.

He felt his entire body compress as he was lifted and thrown. His head hit something, and he was out.

Mr. Lang awoke to blackness, thick smoke burning his throat and dozens of car alarms bleating in his ear. He checked his legs and arms and felt a sticky wetness at the back of his head. His inability to see had him briefly thinking, of all things, that he was now the second blind bagpiper in his pipe band.

Thoughts like these jumbled in his mind. Had the car beside him exploded? Was this mob-related? What about that page from a calendar of biblical sayings he had stuck in his wallet that morning? Genesis: Do not be afraid.

Coughing and too dizzy to stand, Mr. Lang crawled through the jagged debris to a distant light -- he could see! -- coming from what turned out to be his Toyota. He climbed inside to drive away, only to realize it was crumpled.

Low to the ground and with his sweater pulled up over his nose, he tried to find an exit. Familiar with the garage's layout, he made his way toward the destroyed manager's office to find a phone, fell on a dead body, then crawled to the edge of the smoldering chasm created by the explosion.

''So if things were bad where I was before, this pit is spewing out stuff from the bottom of hell,'' Mr. Lang recently recalled on ''Operation Tradebom,'' a podcast about the bombing.

He crawled away, lay down by a car, prayed for his children and for the courage to die. A calm began to settle over him. Then a bang sounded in the distance.

''And I screamed out,'' he said.

Someone hearing his cries alerted two members of the New York Police Department's Emergency Services Unit who arrived early to the scene: Detective Edward Joergens and Officer Cory Cuneo. Wearing air packs and using a fire hose spooled near a door as a tether, they inched through the consuming darkness.

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It took time to understand the new order. He found a therapist. He committed himself more deeply to his faith. He reconciled with his parents and siblings. He remarried and became the father of two more girls.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/25/nyregion/world-trade-center-1993.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/25/nyregion/world-trade-center-1993.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Smoke spewed from the north tower of the World Trade Center after a bomb exploded on Feb. 26, 1993. Six people were killed. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARILYNN K. YEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

A memorial for Brendan M. Lang in a park in Red Bank, N.J. He died on Sept. 11. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Mr. Lang, center, shortly after being rescued from the garage by Detective Edward Joergens, left, and Officer Cory Cuneo. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA NEW YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT) (A16) This article appeared in print on page A1, A16.

**Load-Date:** February 26, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Un Film Dramatique***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6238-KS41-JBG3-63RN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 26, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 6; CRITIC'S PICK

**Length:** 330 words

**Byline:** By Teo Bugbee

**Body**

This documentary gives middle school children a chance to show their experiences.

In the documentary ''Un Film Dramatique,'' the artist Éric Baudelaire fulfills a commission to make a dedicated artwork for Dora Maar, a newly constructed middle school in the Saint-Denis suburb of Paris. For the project, Baudelaire filmed 21 students across four years, and he encouraged them to take up the camera themselves. The finished film demonstrates the liveliness and generosity that can come from civic-minded art.

The movie passes by in informal episodes. The filmmakers set up games and debates, encouraging classmates to discuss what they think the movie will be about. The students consider what it means to be the subjects and creators of a documentary, and in turn, they reckon with how their school fits into the world around them.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

These adolescents are ***working class***, often the children of immigrants, and they scoff at the rough reputation that Saint-Denis carries in Paris. With cameras in their hands, they build their own records about what life is like in the suburbs. They dance, they sing, they offer house tours. Each child is confident, curious and collaborative.

The movie has a patchwork quality that comes from jumping in and out of different people's vantage points. Some scenes are riveting, as when the French-Romanian student Gabriel-David debates his French-Ivorian classmate, Guy-Yanis, over what it means to have a country of origin if you've never lived there. But just as many sequences are banal -- kids filming themselves watching TV as if they were streaming on Instagram Live.

It's the cumulative effect of seeing the world through the eyes of these children that makes this movie so deeply joyful. This is a heartening project, a philosophical excavation of a school that abounds with playful optimism.

Un Film DramatiqueNot rated. In French, with subtitles. Running time: 1 hour 54 minutes. Watch through virtual cinemas.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/movies/un-film-dramatique-review.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/movies/un-film-dramatique-review.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mohammed Samassa, left, and Fatimata Sarr in the documentary ''Un Film Dramatique.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY Cinema Guild FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Your Friday Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67C1-FR31-JBG3-64TB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 20, 2023 Friday 00:19 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1685 words

**Byline:** Natasha Frost

**Highlight:** A meeting in Germany of Ukraine’s allies.

**Body**

A meeting in Germany of Ukraine’s allies.

Ukraine’s allies pledge military aid

Around 50 allies of Ukraine will meet at Ramstein Air Base in Germany today to chart the next steps in the defense of Ukraine. Already, they have made it clear that they [*intend to furnish a major infusion of military aid*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/world/europe/ukraine-weapons-allies.html) that is expected to total billions of dollars’ worth of matériel to help the country fend off Russian aggression as the war nears its first anniversary.

Ukraine has redoubled its pleas for more advanced weapons, like tanks and air defense missiles, ahead of an expected Russian springtime offensive that could be decisive in the war.

The countries that signed a pledge of support after the meeting, including Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Denmark, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands and Slovakia, said in a joint statement that they were committed to “collectively pursuing delivery of an unprecedented set of donations” in support of Ukraine.

Germany: One big question remains: Will Berlin in the end agree to send advanced, German-made battle tanks to Ukraine? Or at least allow other countries that now have them to do so?

Details: U.S. officials said they planned to send nearly 100 Stryker combat vehicles as part of a roughly $2.5 billion shipment of arms and equipment. Estonia said it would send its largest military aid package, worth about $122 million. And Britain reiterated its commitment to sending Challenger 2 tanks and also said it would supply 600 Brimstone missiles.

‘Extraordinary measures’ as the U.S. hits its debt limit

The U.S. [*reached its $31.4 trillion debt cap yesterday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/us/politics/debt-limit-economy.html), the total amount it can borrow. The country is now gearing up for [*a bitter partisan battle*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/us/politics/republicans-democrats-debt-ceiling.html) over raising the cap, as the Treasury Department begins using a series of accounting maneuvers to ensure the federal government can keep paying its bills — and federal workers — ahead of what’s expected to be a protracted fight over whether to increase the borrowing cap.

The milestone is a product of decades of tax cuts and increased government spending by both Republicans and Democrats. But at a moment of heightened partisanship and divided government, it is also a warning of the entrenched battles that are set to dominate Washington and could end in economic shock.

Newly empowered House Republicans have vowed that they will not raise the borrowing limit again unless President Biden agrees to steep cuts in federal spending. He, in turn, has said he will not negotiate conditions for a debt-limit increase, arguing that lawmakers should lift the cap with no strings attached to cover spending that previous Congresses authorized.

Letter to Congress: “The period of time that extraordinary measures may last is subject to considerable uncertainty, including the challenges of forecasting the payments and receipts of the U.S. government months into the future,” wrote Janet Yellen, the Treasury secretary. “I respectfully urge Congress to act promptly to protect the full faith and credit of the United States.”

Warnings: Economists said that the nation risks a financial crisis and other immediate economic pain if lawmakers do not raise the limit before the Treasury Department exhausts its ability to buy more time.

Over a million protest Macron’s pension plan

More than a million protesters, chanting slogans like “retirement before arthritis,” took to the streets in France to [*protest the government’s plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/world/europe/france-strikes-macron-retirement-age.html) to raise the legal age of retirement to 64 from 62. Striking workers across the country closed schools, stopped many trains, disrupted the Paris Metro, lowered electricity output and curtailed flights.

Emmanuel Macron, France’s centrist president, who is in the first year of his second and final term, wants to push through an overhaul of what he views as an untenable pension system. But in a country where work is viewed by many as a burden rather than an opportunity, and retirement as the panacea beyond it, his determination has ignited fierce resistance.

Labor unions, from the extreme left to the moderate center, united behind the protests, as did often splintered left-of-center political parties. Marine Le Pen, the leader of the extreme-right National Rally party that has attracted growing support among the ***working class***, also called for “an unjust reform” to be blocked.

What’s next: A long confrontation, involving further strikes, seems inevitable. For the French left, which has failed to reach even the runoff round of the last two presidential elections, defeating pension changes amounts to a critical test of its heft and ultimately of its eventual capacity to return to power.

THE LATEST NEWS

* Israel’s right-wing government and the country’s judiciary are [*locked in a standoff*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/world/middleeast/israel-netanyahu-minister-deri.html) after the prime minister delayed in complying with a Supreme Court ruling that called for the dismissal of a government minister.

1. Weary of crackdowns and lockdowns, businesspeople are moving out of China and taking their wealth with them. Many have found [*a new home in Singapore*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/business/china-singapore-immigration-entrepreneurs.html).
2. A video featuring Ranjit Singh Veer driving his bus in the West Midlands of Britain and leading a Punjabi bhangra dance crew has [*drawn tens of thousands of views*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/world/europe/uk-bus-driver-music-video.html).

* An internal investigation failed to identify [*the person who leaked a draft*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/us/politics/supreme-court-leak-roe.html) of the ruling overturning Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court said.

1. The Supreme Court is poised to [*reconsider rules around online speech*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/technology/supreme-court-online-free-speech-social-media.html), potentially leading to the most significant reset since the 1990s.
2. Support for Donald Trump is [*wavering among the nation’s evangelical leaders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/us/politics/trump-evangelicals-2024.html), who provided crucial backing in his ascent to the White House.
3. The State Department has a new typeface: It will [*replace Times New Roman*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/us/politics/state-department-times-new-roman-calibri.html) with the sans-serif Calibri to help with readability.
4. A storied surfing competition in Hawaii is held only when the conditions are exactly right. [*Last week, the call went out*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/sports/eddie-aikau-big-wave-invitational.html).

* Since the arrest earlier this week of the accused Italian mafia boss Matteo Messina Denaro, a [*picture of his time on the lam is starting to take shape*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/world/europe/matteo-messina-denaro-italy-mafia.html).

1. Harvard will [*offer a fellowship*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/arts/harvard-israel-antisemitism-roth.html) to Kenneth Roth, a critic of Israel and a former executive director of Human Rights Watch, after an earlier rejection stirred an intense debate.
2. The only H.I.V. vaccine [*in advanced trials has failed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/health/hiv-vaccine-janssen.html). Progress could be set back by five years, experts said.

* Alec Baldwin will be [*charged with involuntary manslaughter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/arts/rust-shooting-charges-alec-baldwin.html) in the fatal shooting on the “Rust” film set.

1. Madonna [*announced*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBUpN99s1Hg) her 12th world tour — a spin across 40 cities and through four decades of hits, titled “Celebration.”
2. The British actor [*Julian Sands has been reported missing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/us/julian-sands-missing-hiker.html) while hiking in the San Gabriel Mountains in Southern California following bad weather in the area.
3. “All Quiet on the Western Front,” a German-language remake set during World War I, [*leads the BAFTA nominees*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/movies/bafta-nominations-2023.html).
4. A small city in northern France lost a painting more than a century ago — and residents think [*Madonna may have it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/world/europe/madonna-missing-painting-france.html).

For inveterate drinkers, Dry January is an opportunity to take a break and rethink less healthy habits. For the owners of bars, the voluntary month of sobriety is [*a collective financial drain*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/nyregion/dry-january-bars-liquor-stores.html), coming at a time when business is already slow because of cold weather and holiday fatigue.

“I’m willing to advocate for a dry June — our business can better take the hit then,” one owner said, laughing. “Or maybe people can take turns stopping to drink?”

Related: Research makes it clear that [*any amount of drinking can be detrimental*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/13/well/mind/alcohol-health-effects.html) to your health. Here’s why you may want to cut down on your consumption beyond the end of this month.

SPORTS NEWS FROM THE ATHLETIC

What Cristiano Ronaldo should expect in the Saudi Pro League: The former Manchester United star is swapping the Premier League for one ranked 58th-best. He should have [*no trouble scoring goals*](https://theathletic.com/4103375/2023/01/19/cristiano-ronaldo-saudi-pro-league/) — lots of them.

How Chelsea is following baseball’s lead: The London soccer club’s new owners are signing players to exceptionally long contracts. It’s [*a big bet*](https://theathletic.com/4097587/2023/01/19/chelseas-long-contracts-explained-baseball/) for the new regime.

From The Times: LIV Golf, a new tour that is bankrolled by Saudi Arabia’s sovereign wealth fund, [*signed a TV deal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/sports/golf/liv-televison-cw.html).

Australian Open: Andy Murray’s [*stirring five-set comeback*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/sports/tennis/murray-australian-open-djokovic-nadal.html) against Thanasi Kokkinakis of Australia ended a day that also saw the men’s singles favorite Novak Djokovic win while playing with a hamstring injury.

ARTS AND IDEAS

A tiger rivets South Africa

South Africa is never boring. At the moment, there’s an energy crisis and plenty of political drama. But people here had something more unusual to talk about this week: a tiger on the loose in a residential area south of Johannesburg.

Sheba, an 8-year-old female, escaped from her enclosure on a private farm in the Walkerville area last weekend. The news spread panic in the neighborhood and gripped South Africans throughout the nation. Sheba mauled a 39-year-old man and killed two dogs and a pig. Even with a police helicopter circling over the area, she [*evaded searchers*](https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/terror-screams-and-death-the-mission-to-catch-tiger-sheba-and-calls-to-tighten-wild-pet-laws-20230119) until the early hours of Wednesday morning, when she was shot and killed.

South Africa is a nature lover’s paradise, but every now and again two worlds collide. In 2021, [*a lost hippopotamus*](https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/hippo-on-the-loose-in-fourways-in-joburg-20210111#:~:text=The%20Gauteng%20Department%20of%20Agriculture%20has%20warned%20residents%20to%20be,to%20help%20locate%20the%20animal.) turned up in northern Johannesburg and wandered through backyards, cooling itself in swimming pools until it was captured. And last year in Pringle Bay, a vacation spot outside Cape Town, [*troops of baboons terrorized visitors*](https://www.news24.com/news24/video/southafrica/news/watch-baboons-gatecrash-gathering-to-bounce-on-pringle-bay-familys-trampoline-20201117). — Lynsey Chutel, a Briefings writer in Johannesburg.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Kick off your weekend with [*gingerbread pancakes*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1019065-gingerbread-pancakes).

What to Read

The writer Paul Theroux suggests [*books to take you through Boston*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/books/boston-books-paul-theroux.html).

Travels

[*Seoul’s cozy cocktail bars*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/travel/seoul-hidden-bars-restaurants-clubs.html) hide down secret lanes.

Now Time to Play

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Swim competition (four letters).

And here are [*today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html) and [*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. Have a fabulous weekend, and I’ll see you next week. — Natasha

P.S. Paul Mozur will be our new [*global technology correspondent*](https://www.nytco.com/press/new-role-for-paul-mozur/).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about why the U.S. is sending weapons to Ukraine.

You can reach Natasha and the team at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing@nytimes.com?subject=Europe%20Briefing%20Feedback).

PHOTO: Leopard 2 tanks. Allies are pressuring Germany to allow them to be supplied to Ukraine. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Pavel Golovkin/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2023

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[***Where Did All the Bargain Bourbon Go? Blame the Whiskey Mania.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:676B-WF61-JBG3-600J-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** DINING; drinks

**Length:** 1511 words

**Byline:** Clay Risen

**Highlight:** Bourbon and rye used to be workaday drinks, but prices are being driven way up by speculators, a scramble for bragging rights and a large shot of hype.

**Body**

Bourbon and rye used to be workaday drinks, but prices are being driven way up by speculators, a scramble for bragging rights and a large shot of hype.

In June, two men in Virginia were charged with an unusual form of insider trading: selling information about when and where rare bottles of whiskey were going to appear in state-run liquor stores.

To an outsider, their scheme may sound strange. To many bourbon collectors, it is just another cautionary tale from today’s frenetic whiskey market — and one that some probably wish they had thought of first.

According to prosecutors, Edgar Garcia, an employee of Virginia’s alcohol control board, fed the confidential information to Robert Adams, a private collector, who sold the list to scores of people on Facebook for up to $400 each.

Virginia requires that hard liquor be sold at government-owned outlets, where it is priced significantly lower than in most other states. To control the inevitable rush by bourbon lovers to snap up sought-after bottles for less, the state keeps distribution details a secret, announcing the releases at random times via email and on the board’s Facebook page. Fans then stampede to the stores, and every minute counts.

“I was there within 20 minutes,” wrote one buyer on Facebook after a release in November, only to find the shelves already picked over. “At least 10 people in the store when I got there.”

The willingness of Mr. Garcia and Mr. Adams (who both pleaded guilty) to commit a felony just to sell information, and the apparent eagerness of others to buy it, is a measure of how much the decade-long bourbon boom has turned into a mania.

Bourbon and rye, the leading styles of American whiskey, have long been considered workaday drinks, sold at ***working-class*** prices. As recently as the early 2010s, it was hard to find a bottle priced above $100, and most sold below $50. Even as the market for six-figure single-malt Scotches boomed, collectors largely shunned American whiskey, aside from a few standouts like Pappy Van Winkle.

That has all changed. At an auction at Sotheby’s last spring, several bottles of Michter’s bourbon [*sold for more than $20,000 apiece.*](https://www.sothebys.com/en/buy/auction/2022/american-muscle-rare-whiskey-bourbon-rye?lotFilter=AllLots) A new brand, [*the Macklowe*](https://themacklowe.com/), is selling its American single malt for $1,500. And a bottle of [*LeNell’s Red Hook Rye*](https://bourbonpursuit.com/2020/01/30/238-the-story-of-lenells-and-red-hook-rye/), an extremely rare whiskey bottled in the late 2000s by a Brooklyn liquor-store owner, LeNell Camacho Santa Ana, [*can go for more than $90,000*](https://www.wine-searcher.com/find/le+nell+red+hook+straight+rye+whisky+kentucky+usa/1/usa-ny-y).

The price leap is not just at the luxury level. Everyday bourbons like Buffalo Trace or Eagle Rare, which once sold for about $35, now often go for twice that.

“Today, $75 is the new $35,” said Dixon Dedman, who created [*Kentucky Owl*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/02/business/kentucky-owl-bourbon-tourism-napa.html), one of the first luxury American whiskeys not called Pappy. Mr. Dedman and his partners sold Kentucky Owl to Stolichnaya for an undisclosed sum in 2017, and he just introduced [*a new brand, 2XO*](https://2xowhiskey.com/), with a retail price starting at $95.

The craze drives collectors to extreme lengths. Like music fans eager to snag tickets to an upcoming show, some will camp overnight outside liquor stores, hoping to grab a limited release from cult distilleries like Buffalo Trace and Four Roses.

It’s hard to pinpoint when the bourbon boom went into overdrive. [*The Distilled Spirits Council of the United States*](https://www.distilledspirits.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/American-Whiskey-2022.pdf), a trade group, says sales of all American whiskeys have grown at a steady pace over the last decade, from 16 million to 30 million nine-liter cases.

For most of that time, the volume of sales was consistent across all price categories, from cheaper to so-called super-premium bottles costing more than $50.

Then, around 2016, sales of super-premium whiskey took off, while those of cheaper whiskey slowed. Over the next five years, sales of so-called value whiskey, priced under $20, rose just 4.2 percent, while sales of super-premium rose more than 129 percent.

Bourbon fans were becoming better educated, and with that education came a willingness to pay more for higher quality and, even more important, exclusivity. In response, distilleries began to offer limited-release bottles with unusual qualities — drawn from a single barrel, for example, or bottled at high proof — which fueled interest.

Supply became an issue as well. Whiskey has to age, so production can’t simply ramp up to meet demand. The amount of whiskey on the shelf today is a function of decisions made five or more years ago.

The pandemic drove demand higher by combining unexpected free time, in the form of quarantines, with unexpected money, from a booming stock market and government stimulus checks.

Social media then amplified the hype. For many, the so-called [*crotch shot*](https://www.facebook.com/whiskeytangocharlie/photos/a.270263200421635/661633241284627/?type=3), in which a lucky buyer posts a photo on Instagram of his latest find, ideally taken from the driver’s seat just after leaving a liquor store, has become a status symbol. Depending on the bottle, it can be as potent as a Rolex-clad wrist.

While some people will drink those bottles, others will flip them on the illegal secondary market, often for much more than they paid, or hold onto them as an investment.

“There’s some poor guy out there whose wife has been nagging them about the 120, 200 bottles in the basement,” said Taylor Cope, who edits [*the website Malt Review*](https://malt-review.com/). “And he says, ‘No, you don’t understand, I paid X for these and they’re worth 2X or 5X or whatever,’ and maybe for him that’s some weird nest egg or retirement savings.”

For many veteran collectors, the mania has become a turnoff. What was once a geeky niche community has been replaced by an aggressive world of very wealthy collectors and speculators, driving up prices beyond what most people can afford. These longtime collectors even have a special insult for fans of overhyped whiskey — “taters” (which may be short for potato, though no one is quite sure).

“Today it is so competitive, and that’s not what the spirit is all about,” said Mason Walker, a bourbon collector in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Mr. Walker said he was recently approached by a New York auction house interested in selling his collection of almost 1,000 rare bottles. Despite a lucrative offer — he declined to say how much — and against his wife’s better judgment, he decided to keep them, for fear that they would end up in a vault somewhere, never to be opened.

Mr. Walker is not alone in feeling torn by the bourbon craze. Many longtime collectors have grown frustrated, even exhausted. They talk about moving on to something else: Bas Armagnac is frequently mentioned as the next trendy spirit.

“A little bit of the chase is fun,” Mr. Cope said. “The full-time-occupation chase is not that fun. People miss being able to go into a store and discover something new, and so maybe they move on.”

Still, he added, there is also a more positive way to look at the mania.

For too long, whiskey fans grumbled about bourbon being underappreciated, that a typical $35 bottle was just as good as a single-malt Scotch priced twice as high, or more.

And just maybe, Mr. Cope said, what’s happening now is not a bubble in bourbon, but a leveling up in the public’s appreciation for it. True, there’s a lot of frustrating froth — no one wants to see more crotch shots — but behind it may be a justifiable readjustment of bourbon’s public image.

In the early 1980s, Elmer T. Lee, an unassuming Kentuckian who worked as the distillery manager at what is now called Buffalo Trace, told his bosses that American whiskey was every bit as nuanced and elegant as single-malt Scotch, and in the right packaging could be sold at luxury prices. The owners, desperate for money, asked him to prove it.

He responded with Blanton’s, the first single-barrel bourbon. He had a bottle custom-made, complete with a metal-and-cork top, and in 1984 he released it at about $30. For decades, that’s roughly where it sat, creeping up with inflation to about $60 in 2018.

Then, suddenly and for reasons no one can quite explain, Blanton’s went viral. Podcasters talked it up. Instagrammers hyped it. Customers lined up to buy bottles, even after store owners tripled or quadrupled the price. In New York, it often sells for more than $300.

[*Mr. Lee died in 2013*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/22/business/elmer-t-lee-whose-premium-bourbon-revived-an-industry-dies-at-93.html), and so never got to see his bourbon achieve its stratospheric valuation. Would he be proud of its success, or repelled by its luxury status, realizing too late that he had created a monster?

Both answers seem possible — which speaks volumes about the fractious state of American whiskey and its legions of fans.

Follow [*New York Times Cooking on Instagram*](https://www.instagram.com/nytcooking/), [*Facebook*](https://www.facebook.com/nytcooking/), [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/nytcooking), [*TikTok*](https://www.tiktok.com/@nytcooking?lang=en) and [*Pinterest*](https://www.pinterest.com/nytcooking/). [*Get regular updates from New York Times Cooking, with recipe suggestions, cooking tips and shopping advice*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/cooking).

PHOTOS: Right, from top: customers waiting in line for the release of limited-supply whiskeys and bourbons at the Montgomery County Liquor &amp; Wine store in Gaithersburg, Md.; Darren Higgins, left, and Mason Walker, with Mr. Walker’s bourbon collection in 2021; at Montgomery County Liquor, Greg Leonard, left, and Jerome Peters looked over the selection of limited-supply whiskeys and bourbons (below). (PHOTOGRAPHS BY T.J. KIRKPATRICK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DARREN HIGGINS) This article appeared in print on page D7.

**Load-Date:** January 3, 2023

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[***As Remote Workers Flock to Mexico City, Airbnb and Housing Prices Soar***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6764-X8V1-DXY4-X4PY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 28, 2022 Wednesday 19:12 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1498 words

**Byline:** David Shortell and Alejandro Cegarra

**Highlight:** American and Europeans are using Airbnb to find long-term rentals in Mexico’s capital, pushing housing costs higher and, critics say, forcing out local residents.

**Body**

MEXICO CITY — Karina Franco’s ornate Art Deco building in the historic center of Mexico City has long been the heart of a downtown lifestyle, housing families of artists and activists and supporting an ecosystem of street vendors.

But as the pandemic upended office norms, a wave of remote workers from around the world descended on Mexico City, the country’s capital. The flow of foreigners has yet to slow down, causing housing costs to rise, displacing residents and upending the fabric of neighborhoods.

In August, Ms. Franco and the other tenants in her building were told by their landlord that their leases would not be renewed. Some units soon appeared on Airbnb — at rates more than four times the monthly rent — and new neighbors, mostly speaking English, now fill the hallways.

“It was very shocking at first,’’ said Ms. Franco, 47, a migrant rights worker who found a new apartment in a different part of the city. “Then I felt angry.’’

Since the pandemic, Mexico City has become a leading global hub for foreigners unshackled from their offices by work-from-home policies and drawn to the kind of comfort a salary paid in dollars or euros can afford.

Between January and October, more than 9,500 permits were issued to Americans allowing them to temporarily reside in Mexico City, according to federal immigration statistics, nearly double the 5,400 issued in the same period in 2019. Many more entered on tourist visas, which allow them to work from Mexico for up to six months as long as they are paid abroad.

The influx has been a boon for business owners in areas popular with foreigners and landlords taking advantage of record demand for long-term stays on platforms like Airbnb. It has also helped Mexicans with spare rooms to earn extra income amid soaring inflation.

But the surge has jolted the already tightening housing market, threatening to make large swaths of the city, where [*the average monthly salary is $220*](https://datamexico.org/es/profile/geo/ciudad-de-mexico-cx), unaffordable to many locals.

Mexico City’s leftist mayor, Claudia Sheinbaum, has sought to navigate the changing market by embracing the transplants and partnering with Airbnb on a campaign that promotes the city as a “capital for creative tourism” that encourages foreigners to spend money in less well-off neighborhoods.

But as the jump in American and European visitors fuels a rapid expansion of Airbnb, the mayor’s alliance with the rental giant has ignited an argument that’s enveloped the platform in other major cities, from London to New York to San Francisco, where critics have accused it of driving up housing costs.

Housing activists, wary of gentrification and a shortage of rental housing in the sprawling capital, have accused city leaders of spurring a modern day “colonization” that is pricing out many Mexicans.

Sergio González, a housing activist, said there would be a “big problem” if the city government did not regulate the housing market at a time when remote workers are leading to the “forced displacement of families.”

Amid the backlash, the mayor has acknowledged that American and European remote workers may be putting pressure on housing prices and has directed the city’s housing authority to study the effect of Airbnb.

“The digital nomads are arriving,” Ms. Sheinbaum told reporters in November. “Obviously, we don’t want this to mean gentrification or price increases.”

According to Airbnb, between April and June of this year, the number of stays booked in Mexico City on the platform for longer than a month increased by 30 percent compared with the same period in 2019, making the city one of the more popular destinations worldwide among long-term renters.

In the Condesa and Roma neighborhoods, whose lush streetscapes and dynamic food scenes have long made them attractive to wealthier residents, co-working spaces offering free coffee and cubicles have proliferated.

English speakers pour out of cafes and, on Sundays, cantinas are packed with young people in sports jerseys, the televisions switched from soccer to American football.

The city’s campaign with Airbnb, which is scheduled to fully roll out on the platform’s website early next year, is meant to spread out the crowds. It will promote guided activities, designed with the help of UNESCO, the United Nations’ cultural organization, in neighborhoods that do not typically receive a high number of visitors, according to the company and city officials. Airbnb will also provide information on moving to Mexico, including visa requirements.

Miroslava Miyarath Lazcano Cruz, who has offered tours through Airbnb since 2019, started a new tour on Airbnb in October of Xochimilco, the ***working-class*** neighborhood where she lives, that is serving as a model for the program.

The tour includes preparing tamales from handpicked ingredients and floating along the neighborhood’s famous network of ancient canals.

The experience has seen high demand, introducing tourists to the markets and customs of a part of the capital that’s not widely explored by outsiders. Ms. Lazcano Cruz said the visitors who have come through Airbnb have “a vision and a thirst to get to know the space in a different way.”

Suvi Haering, a Finnish creative director who arrived in Mexico City in November after two months working remotely in France, said working and living in Mexico “pushes you to challenge your own thinking.”

“It’s the polar opposite of where I come from, hence it’s the most inspiring place I can go to,” said Ms. Haering, as she ate at a restaurant in the Roma neighborhood with a friend, a project manager from Denmark, who was staying with her in a nearby Airbnb.

The increase in the number of foreigners living in Mexico City has coincided with a rise in rents. Average monthly rents citywide have jumped from $880 in January 2020 to $1,080 in November, according to data from Propiedades.com, a real estate website.

The uptick has been higher in more upscale neighborhoods. In a slice of Condesa that borders Chapultepec Park, one of the city’s larger green spaces, monthly rents rose from $1,610 in January 2020 to $2,250 in November, driven mostly by the arrival of remote workers, said Leonardo González, an analyst at Propiedades.com.

Many are finding homes on a short-term basis on Airbnb, which is squeezing the available stock of long-term rentals, housing experts said.

Cities around the world, including Barcelona, London and New York, where housing costs have increased sharply, have targeted Airbnb by imposing stricter rules for short-term rentals.

In Mexico, a spokesman for Airbnb said the company was working with government officials “to be part of the solution to the challenges faced by communities in Mexico City.”

The company also stressed the financial benefits for people who rent out rooms on the platform: More than half of Airbnb hosts recently surveyed by the company in Mexico City said the extra earnings helped cover an increase in food costs driven by inflation.

For Leonor González, the income from an Airbnb she began renting in 2020 in a state that borders Mexico City allowed her to keep paying her employees during the pandemic when her business setting up convention spaces ground to a halt.

Later that year, she also listed a new apartment, a stylish loft in Mexico City, for $71 a night on Airbnb. It’s been booked almost nonstop, Ms. González said, usually by Americans working remotely for longer than a week.

“The truth is that there aren’t any locals renting here now,” she said of her Condesa neighborhood. “It’s just foreigners.”

Mexico City officials argue that high housing costs in parts of the capital are the result of years of gentrification that started in the 1980s, when a wave of new construction following a devastating earthquake ushered in younger, deeper-pocketed residents.

Still, Diana Alarcón, a top mayoral adviser, acknowledged that remote workers are also contributing to rising housing rates.

“Certainly the fact that a large number of people with higher incomes are arriving in a single area can result in an increase in prices,” she said. “That’s precisely the reason it’s important to show visitors that there are many other areas to discover in Mexico.”

Ximena Gómez Gutiérrez, a 24-year-old who commutes an hour from her family home in a neighboring state to her job at a reproductive rights organization in Mexico City, took part in a recent protest over the new Airbnb program and the city’s lack of affordable housing.

Living near her job and being able to enjoy a vibrant urban lifestyle has long been a dream, Ms. Gutiérrez said.

“But my salary isn’t enough to be able to even think about living” in the capital, she said.

PHOTOS: Mexico City, above, has become a leading global hub for remote workers. From top left: Karina Franco was forced from her apartment to make way for short-term rentals. The building that housed the Trevi Cafe was sold in 2018 to create a co-working space. The Palace of Fine Arts. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEJANDRO CEGARRA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A4.

**Load-Date:** January 3, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Bill to Prevent Railroad Strike Clears Congress***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:670K-CDK1-DXY4-X365-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 2, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1422 words

**Byline:** By Emily Cochrane

**Body**

Bipartisan coalitions in the House and Senate pushed through a bill that would impose an agreement between rail companies and their workers.

WASHINGTON -- The Senate on Thursday voted overwhelmingly to impose a labor agreement between rail companies and their workers who have been locked in a stubborn stalemate, moving with uncommon speed to avert a potential holiday season rail strike that would jeopardize shipping across the country.

Passage of the measure cleared it to be signed by President Biden, who just days ago made a personal appeal for Congress to act to impose a labor agreement that his administration helped negotiate earlier this year but that had failed to resolve the dispute. He was expected to sign the bill quickly, racing to stave off any economic fallout that could come from a work stoppage in the coming days.

It was the first time since the 1990s that Congress has used its power under the Constitution's commerce clause, which allows it to regulate interstate commerce, to intervene in a national rail labor dispute to head off a strike. The step was a remarkable one for Mr. Biden, who vowed to be ''the most pro-union president you've ever seen,'' and for Democrats in control of Congress, who count organized labor among their most loyal constituencies.

In recent days, Mr. Biden and his allies on Capitol Hill have put aside those considerations in favor of a resolution that they have argued is needed to prevent painful consequences for Americans.

''I know that many in Congress shared my reluctance to override the union ratification procedures,'' Mr. Biden said in a statement after the vote. ''But in this case, the consequences of a shutdown were just too great for working families all across the country.''

The action came a day after the House overwhelmingly approved the measure, which would force the companies and their workers to abide by the tentative agreement reached in September. That deal includes a 24-percent increase in wages over five years, more schedule flexibility and one additional paid day off. Several rail unions had rejected it because it lacked paid sick leave.

Senate Democrats, under pressure from progressives to insist on the additional compensated time off for workers, tried and failed to push through a House-passed measure to add seven days of paid medical leave to the agreement. It was defeated 52 to 43, failing to secure the necessary 60 votes needed to pass and prompting multiple liberal senators to oppose the agreement altogether.

Republicans failed to win adoption of their proposal to extend the Dec. 9 negotiation deadline by 60 days, to provide a cooling-off period and avoid congressional intervention in the dispute. The proposal fell on a vote of 70 to 25.

Ultimately, a broad bipartisan group set aside reservations about inserting Congress into the labor dispute and backed the agreement that the Biden administration negotiated. The vote was 80 to 15, with Senator Rand Paul, Republican of Kentucky, voting ''present.''

Mr. Biden had championed the negotiations that led to the tentative agreement, which his administration helped strike under the Railway Labor Act, a 1926 law that allows the president to intervene in rail labor disputes that threaten to cut off essential commerce or transportation service.

But while the resulting deal provided higher pay and more schedule flexibility, multiple unions voted against its ratification in recent weeks because it failed to include paid sick leave, and would force workers to take unpaid time off to attend medical appointments. Many employees argued it did not go far enough to address the toll of their difficult and unpredictable schedules.

With a railway strike possible in the coming days, Mr. Biden turned to Congress to intervene. He stressed his reluctance to override the will of union workers seeking basic workplace rights but said it was necessary to address the threat of economic calamity by a disruption to the nation's rail system and an inability to swiftly transport goods and services across the country.

At a news conference at the White House on Thursday, Mr. Biden bristled at a question about why he had not insisted on more paid leave for rail workers in the deal, saying that he had ''negotiated a contract no one else can negotiate.'' He said he would continue to fight for paid leave for all Americans.

On Capitol Hill, Democrats also said they would have preferred to avoid stepping into the middle of a railroad labor dispute, something Congress has done 18 times in the past century. They groused about being called upon to embrace a deal that went against what workers were demanding. Pressing to overcome those concerns, Mr. Biden dispatched Martin J. Walsh, the labor secretary, and Pete Buttigieg, the transportation secretary, to the Capitol on Thursday to meet with Democratic senators during a private lunch ahead of the votes.

''The consequences of inaction would be severe,'' said Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York and the majority leader, on the Senate floor Thursday morning. He ticked through a list of what he described as the ''serious problems that would occur if there's a rail shutdown.''

Republicans, too, griped about the position they had been placed in, questioning why Mr. Biden had not allowed for a few more days to resolve the dispute before involving Congress.

The final vote reflected the unusual coalition brought together in opposition to imposing the agreement. Multiple liberal senators, including Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, joined some of the most conservative Republicans, such as Senator Josh Hawley of Missouri, in voting ''no.''

''If DC Republicans want to be a ***working class*** party, they might want to do something for workers,'' Mr. Hawley wrote on Twitter. He was among the conservative senators who backed the paid leave measure, but opposed imposing the agreement without it.

To quell concerns in both parties and speed the measure through the Senate, leaders agreed to first consider the G.O.P. proposal for a cooling-off period and the House-passed proposal to add the paid leave.

''Less than 36 hours ago, we were asked to decide on issues that are complicated, that are important, without necessary deliberations,'' said Senator Dan Sullivan, Republican of Alaska, who sponsored the deadline extension. He said his measure would ''give negotiators more time to get to an agreement and it will not make Congress the entity of last resort in these kind of negotiations.''

Other senators, including some Republicans, said the threat of damage to the nation's economy at a moment when inflation remains high drove their votes to implement the tentative agreement.

''While this position is undesirable, Congress must act,'' Senators Cynthia Lummis of Wyoming and Kevin Cramer of North Dakota, both Republicans, wrote in a joint letter to their colleagues. ''Implementing an agreement that roughly half of the unionized workers support, along with all their leadership, is the most responsible path forward.''

But Ms. Lummis and Mr. Cramer, like the majority of Republicans, argued against adding the paid leave proposal and said Congress should abide by the terms of the tentative agreement.

''It is in the best interest of all parties that the railroads, not Congress, work through issues such as paid leave directly with their employees,'' the two senators wrote.

Liberals, some of whom were frustrated at the push to impose the tentative agreement on workers, argued that the paid leave proposal was a necessary addition championed by union workers. Only one Democrat, Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, voted against the measure on the floor.

''While I am sympathetic to the concerns union members have raised, I do not believe it is the role of Congress to renegotiate a collective bargaining agreement that has already been negotiated,'' he said in a statement explaining his vote.

Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, an independent and chairman of the Budget Committee, had warned he would block the overall agreement without a vote to add paid leave.

''This is not a radical idea, it's a very conservative idea,'' Mr. Sanders said in a speech on the Senate floor. He added, ''I would hope that we would have strong support.''

The proposal drew a majority, but not the supermajority needed for passage.

Noam Scheiber, Stephanie Lai and Zolan Kanno-Youngs contributed reporting.Noam Scheiber, Stephanie Lai and Zolan Kanno-Youngs contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/01/us/politics/senate-rail-strike.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/01/us/politics/senate-rail-strike.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Supporters of railroad unions protesting at the Capitol. (A1)

''The consequences of inaction would be severe,'' said Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York and the majority leader.

It was the first time since the 1990s that Congress has used its power to intervene in a national rail labor dispute to head off a strike. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HAIYUN JIANG/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13) This article appeared in print on page A1, A13.

**Load-Date:** December 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***LaSalle Is Rejected by New York Senate Panel in a 10-9 Vote***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67BM-93T1-JBG3-62KP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 18, 2023 Wednesday 09:18 EST

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**Byline:** Luis Ferré-Sadurní and Jesse McKinley

**Highlight:** Gov. Kathy Hochul’s choice of Justice Hector LaSalle to become the state’s top judge caused an intraparty Democratic battle that divided a judicial hearing on Wednesday.

**Body**

Gov. Kathy Hochul’s choice of Justice Hector LaSalle to become the state’s top judge caused an intraparty Democratic battle that divided a judicial hearing on Wednesday.

ALBANY, N.Y. — Gov. Kathy Hochul’s embattled nominee to become New York State’s top judge was rejected on Wednesday, an unprecedented repudiation that underscored a deep division among Democrats on the direction of the state’s judicial system.

After a combative hourslong hearing, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted 10-9 against the nomination of Justice Hector D. LaSalle, whose nomination was strongly opposed by progressives who saw him as too conservative.

The committee’s rejection — the first time that New York lawmakers have voted against a governor’s choice for chief judge — laid bare how vulnerable Ms. Hochul, a Buffalo-area Democrat, may be to a challenge from her own party. All 10 senators who voted against the judge were Democrats; two Democrats voted in favor of Justice LaSalle, while one Democrat and all six Republicans on the committee voted in favor “without recommendation.”

The rejection does not necessarily mean that the LaSalle saga is over. The governor has not ruled out taking legal action to force a vote on Justice LaSalle’s nomination on the full Senate floor, raising the specter of a constitutional showdown.

The fight over the chief judge nomination, usually a noncontentious ordeal, has become the most consequential political challenge of Ms. Hochul’s first full term after being elected in November. The quarrel has set her against more progressive Democrats in the State Senate, testing her relationship with lawmakers as she begins to push her [*recently unveiled policy agenda*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/10/nyregion/hochul-ny-state-of-state.html) in Albany.

Justice LaSalle, who was vying to become the first Latino chief judge, always faced an uphill climb. His nomination in December was immediately opposed by several unions, reproductive rights groups and community organizations, which pointed to cases that they said revealed he was anti-union and anti-abortion.

A large contingent of Democrats in the State Senate had already said they opposed him — many others raised their objections in private — with many arguing that the judge’s elevation would help perpetuate the court’s conservative tilt.

In his first public remarks since emerging as a political flashpoint, Justice LaSalle sought on Wednesday to dispel what he said were unfair characterizations of his judicial record, vowing to “set the record straight.”

“I only ask that this body look at my entire record, not just the record that certain advocates have chosen to look at,” Justice LaSalle said in an unusually crowded legislative hearing room, arguing that some of his cases had been the target of “mischaracterization simply to derail my nomination.”

Quizzed by lawmakers about his judicial philosophy, Justice LaSalle argued that many of the cases that had been singled out had hinged on procedural questions, and did not necessarily reflect his underlying beliefs on larger bellwether issues involving union rights and abortion.

Indeed, citing his upbringing in a union and ***working-class*** household, Justice LaSalle repeatedly leaned on his personal life story, casting his judicial career as one centered on breaking down barriers affecting marginalized communities.

“When you talk about labor, those are the people that raised me,” Justice LaSalle said, describing how he walked “the picket line with my abuela.”

He also reaffirmed his belief in a woman’s right to abortion services, saying, “I do not want my daughter to have fewer rights than her mother.”

Justice LaSalle is the presiding justice of the Appellate Division of the Second Judicial Department of the New York State Supreme Court, which handles civil and criminal appeals from Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, Westchester County and a half-dozen other counties.

He was considered among the more moderate potential nominees from a list of seven candidates Ms. Hochul was given to choose from by a special commission as she looked to replace Janet DiFiore, who resigned last year. The chief judge leads the Court of Appeals and oversees the state’s vast and complex court system.

Even with the committee’s rejection of Justice LaSalle, there’s a chance that the clash over his nomination could end up in the courts. The governor has argued that a committee vote is irrelevant and that, according to her reading of the State Constitution, her nominee must be subject to a full vote on the Senate floor.

The governor on Wednesday criticized the hearing as unfair, claiming that “the outcome was predetermined” after the State Senate suddenly expanded the committee this month to add more Democrats, all three of whom voted against Justice LaSalle.

While Ms. Hochul did not say whether she would pursue litigation, she said she believed “the Constitution requires action by the full Senate.”

Shortly after, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the Democratic majority leader in the State Senate, seemed to rule out that scenario, adding that her conference was interested in a chief judge who could “change the trajectory” of the Court of Appeals’ conservative-leaning rulings in recent years.

“It’s clear that this nominee was rejected and that’s it,” she said. “We have to find a nominee that will be supported by the majority of the Senate and then get on with that.”

The State Constitution says that a governor must make judicial appointments with the “advice and consent of the Senate.” Ms. Hochul, as well as some legal experts and Senate Republicans, have interpreted that to mean that the entire Senate, not just a committee, must vote on her nominee.

A floor vote could arguably favor Ms. Hochul, who would have greater flexibility to cobble together enough votes from Democrats and even some Republicans in the minority to confirm Justice LaSalle.

Senate Democrats have defended the committee vote — the process routinely used to move legislation to the floor — by arguing that the Senate can determine its own procedural rules, especially since the Constitution does not explicitly say a candidate must be voted on by the full State Senate.

In explaining his vote against Justice LaSalle, Senator Andrew Gounardes, a Democrat from Brooklyn, used a baseball analogy, saying that “It’s not just whether a judge can call balls and strikes, but more importantly it’s how they view the strike zone.”

“After reviewing Judge LaSalle’s record in case after case, I believe that he has a conservative view of what the strike zone is,” he said.

Many Democratic lawmakers raised concerns about a 2015 defamation case where Justice LaSalle and a majority of the appellate court held that while state law prohibits companies from suing unions and their representatives for labor-related activities, such lawsuits are allowed if companies can show that the representatives were acting in their personal capacity.

“Any suggestion that I’m anti-union or anti-labor is absolutely untrue,” Justice LaSalle said, adding that he “agreed full heartedly with the concept that big business should not be using litigation to chill the voices of organized labor.”

In his line of questioning, Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal, a Democrat from Manhattan who chairs the Judiciary Committee, sought to tie Justice LaSalle to Ms. DiFiore, who was reviled by many Democrats, noting cases in which she had reached the same conclusion as Justice LaSalle.

He also questioned Justice LaSalle, who is a former prosecutor, on instances where he had sided with the prosecution, saying that “it would seem to me that one could make the claim that you lean toward prosecution and against civil rights.”

Justice LaSalle said he “did not recognize the person” that some of his opponents had made him out to be, saying that he understood “what people deal with every day in the U.S., with police engagements, with the law.”

Other lawmakers asked Justice LaSalle about a unanimous opinion he joined in 2017 that ordered the New York attorney general to narrow a subpoena issued to the operator of anti-abortion “crisis pregnancy centers.” The case had led to accusations that Justice LaSalle was hostile to abortion rights.

“Based on your record, I think that it’s not unfair for people to project what some of your decisions might be,” Senator John Liu, a Democrat from Queens, said, raising concerns about the case.

Justice LaSalle reiterated that he strongly believed in “a woman’s right to make her own reproductive decisions,” arguing that the case in question centered on prosecutorial overreach.

In an unusual twist, it was Republicans who gave Justice LaSalle a far warmer reception, with many saying that his confirmation had devolved into an intensely politicized process.

Senator Anthony H. Palumbo, a Republican from Long Island, told the judge that Justice LaSalle represented “the embodiment, in my opinion, of the American dream.”

Despite pressure on her to withdraw her nomination, the governor has forcefully defended Justice LaSalle. Over the weekend she rallied support alongside other top Democrats, including Representative Hakeem Jeffries, the U.S. House minority leader, stressing the symbolic importance of elevating a jurist of Puerto Rican descent to the upper echelons of state government.

Indeed, Justice LaSalle’s nomination has split Latino elected officials, with some suggesting that he was subjected to a double standard because of his ethnicity.

Senator Luis Sepúlveda, a Democrat from the Bronx who is Puerto Rican and voted in favor of Justice LaSalle, said the judge had been the target of a “character assassination” because he was Latino.

After the hearing, Mr. Hoylman-Sigal, the committee chairman, implored the governor to avoid taking legal action, warning of a potential “constitutional crisis.”

“It’s obviously the governor’s decision, but we have so much work to do in Albany,” he said. “To be distracted by a lawsuit would be a travesty for the people of New York.”

PHOTO: “I only ask that this body look at my entire record,” Justice Hector D. LaSalle said on Wednesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CINDY SCHULTZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18) This article appeared in print on page A1, A18.

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Sprawling Fury Tests How a Booming Area Handles Natural Disaster***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66GY-5101-JBG3-6420-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 29, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1068 words

**Byline:** By Jennifer Reed, Charles Ballaro and Jack Healy

**Body**

Communities like Cape Coral and Fort Myers, south of Tampa Bay, suddenly found themselves at the center of the hurricane.

FORT MYERS, Fla. -- Jessica Cosden's family was huddled together at home as roofs rattled, trees crashed down and surging waters filled the 400 miles of canals lacing their city.

Then everything went dark.

''We just lost power,'' Ms. Cosden said. ''My 3-year-old son is freaking out.''

As Hurricane Ian charged ashore along Florida's southwest coast on Wednesday, it turned a laid-back stretch of suburban shoreline known for tiki bars, golf-course retirement communities and stone-crab fishing havens into a strand of destruction and chaos.

With no electricity, the Cosden family waited together into the night on Wednesday in a single candlelit room in their house in Cape Coral, a fast-growing city of 205,000 near Fort Myers. Hannah, 12, felt OK but worried about her family getting hurt. Jacob, 10 and living through his first real hurricane, stood in a corner and closed his eyes.

''I'm super shaken up,'' Jacob said. ''I just want this to be over. I'd rather be at school.''

Cities along Florida's Southwest Coast, pounded by storm surge and 150 mile-per-hour wind gusts from Ian, can feel like sleepier cousins to the high-rise multicultural pulsations of Miami. The region skews older, whiter and more conservative than Florida's denser Atlantic coast. Places like Cape Coral have long drawn Midwesterners hunting for an affordable slice of Florida shoreline.

But on Wednesday, much of that had been shattered. There were reports of roofs ripped off homes in Cape Coral. In the wealthy coastal enclave of Naples, a resident said he had three feet of water in his home.

In Everglades City, a mecca for stone-crab fishing, some residents who had barely finished rebuilding after the devastation of Hurricane Irma in 2017 had lost everything once more, said Holly Dudley, whose family runs a crabbing business. Ms. Dudley said streets were flooding, cars were floating and fishermen were anxious about whether their boats had survived.

''I know God has a plan,'' Ms. Dudley said. ''We're thick-skinned and he makes us resilient. But at some point, when will it end?''

In Cape Coral, Hurricane Ian's sprawling fury reminded some longtime residents of Hurricane Donna, which pummeled the city in 1960 when it was barely a developer's dream on a map, marketed as a Waterfront Wonderland where hundreds of miles of canals had been carved into the land.

''There was nobody here,'' said Gloria Raso Tate, a city councilwoman whose family arrived in 1960, right in the middle of Hurricane Donna.

On Wednesday, she had fled her home along the swelling Caloosahatchee River, which runs nearby, in the hopes of finding safety farther inland at her sister's house in a different neighborhood of Cape Coral. Ms. Raso Tate said she worried her house might not survive the storm.

''We're in the middle of it,'' she said.

The hurricane posed a menacing test of whether a fast-growing city could handle one of the worst storms to strike the coast in decades.

''We're swamped with people,'' Ms. Raso Tate said. ''That's the issue right now. Most of our residents are new and have never had to go through a hurricane. There's been some panic.''

Late Wednesday, city officials said there had been no reports of injuries or deaths in Cape Coral, but the toll of the storm was still unclear. Police officers, firefighters and medics were not responding to 911 calls on Wednesday until the winds eased off.

Some city officials said they believed that as many as half of the city's 205,000 residents may have decided to stay in their homes, despite mandatory evacuation orders for much of the city that had been issued on Tuesday. The brunt of the storm was initially expected to hit farther north, in Tampa.

Shelters that could hold 40,000 people were only about one-tenth full, and some residents who stayed home had been calling to ask about shelters only after it was too dangerous to venture onto the roads, city officials said.

''I think a lot of people just hunkered down,'' said Melissa Mickey, a spokeswoman for Cape Coral. ''That's a concern.''

As a storm surge forecast to reach 12 feet or more washed into nearby Fort Myers, churning whitecaps in people's front yards, residents and city officials in Cape Coral were nervously watching the levels of the Caloosahatchee River and 400 miles of freshwater and saltwater canals across the city.

The canals threaded through Cape Coral had been dug with no permits and little regard for the environment, city officials said, but they were crossing their fingers that the web of waterways normally used for boating and fishing might act as a shock absorber for the storm surge and help drain some of the rain and flooding.

Officials in Lee County, which includes Fort Myers and Cape Coral, had been opening up low dams to drain waterways ahead of the storm.

Real estate values in the Fort Myers area, where a majority of residents are white, peaked and then crashed in the 2008 recession, but the region has boomed in recent years.

The area's Latino residents have been growing in numbers, and big new corporate arrivals like Hertz and a medical-device manufacturer have revved up an economy that is still powered by tourism and housing.

''When I was growing up it was all retired people,'' said Ms. Cosden, who is on the Cape Coral City Council. ''The population has quadrupled since I was born. It's a lot more families, middle and ***working class***.''

In Charlotte Harbor, about 30 miles north, Jeannie Croke, 50, had decided to ride out the storm at her home along a canal, though it was a decision she made when Hurricane Ian was still expected to strike the Tampa Bay area. Some of her neighbors changed their minds and fled for safer ground as the storm barreled toward them earlier on Wednesday.

''We just saw two of them in the past hour decide to leave. We may be one of the few remaining,'' Ms. Croke said. ''We've tied down the boat and did everything we could do. Pray for us.''

Jennifer Reed reported from Fort Myers, Fla., Charles Ballaro from Lehigh Acres, Fla., and Jack Healy from Phoenix. Robert Gebeloff contributed reporting from New York.Jennifer Reed reported from Fort Myers, Fla., Charles Ballaro from Lehigh Acres, Fla., and Jack Healy from Phoenix. Robert Gebeloff contributed reporting from New York.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/28/us/hurricane-ian-southwest-florida-cape-coral.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/28/us/hurricane-ian-southwest-florida-cape-coral.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: In Fort Myers, a flashlight was necessary to navigate a darkened hallway during a power outage as Hurricane Ian made landfall on Wednesday. The storm left many Floridians without electricity. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCO BELLO/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Phony Coronavirus Class War***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YXW-17F1-DXY4-X391-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 985 words

**Byline:** Michelle Goldberg

**Highlight:** Defiance of public health directives has become a mark of right-wing identity.

**Body**

Defiance of public health directives has become a mark of right-wing identity.

A [*Washington Post article*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true) on Sunday described people in a posh suburb of Atlanta celebrating liberation from coronavirus lockdown. “I went to the antique mall yesterday on Highway 9 and it was just like — it was like freedom,” said a woman getting a pedicure.

“Yeah, I’m going to do the laser and the filler,” said a woman at a wine bar, looking forward to cosmetic dermatology. “When you start seeing where the cases are coming from and the demographics — I’m not worried,” said a man lounging in a plaza.

Only one person was quoted expressing trepidation: a masked clerk in a shoe store. “I live an hour away and was driving in this morning, only me on the road, and I was thinking, ‘Am I doing the right thing?’” she said.

Lately some commentators have suggested that the coronavirus lockdowns pit an affluent professional class comfortable staying home indefinitely against a ***working class*** more willing to take risks to do their jobs.

Writing in The Post, [*Fareed Zakaria*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true) tried to make sense of the partisan split over coronavirus restrictions, describing a “class divide” with pro-lockdown experts on one side and those who work with their hands on the other. On Fox News, Steve Hilton decried a “37 percent work from home elite” punishing “real people” trying to earn a living. In a column titled “Scenes From the Class Struggle in Lockdown,”   [*The Wall Street Journal’s Peggy Noonan wrote*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true): “Here’s a generalization based on a lifetime of experience and observation. The ***working-class*** people who are pushing back have had harder lives than those now determining their fate.”

The assumptions underlying this generalization, however, are not based on even a cursory look at actual data. In a recent [*Washington Post/Ipsos survey*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true), 74 percent of respondents agreed that the “U.S. should keep trying to slow the spread of the coronavirus, even if that means keeping many businesses closed.” Agreement was slightly higher — 79 percent — among respondents who’d been laid off or furloughed.

Researchers at the University of Chicago have been tracking the impact of coronavirus on a representative sample of American households. [*They’ve found that*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true) when it comes to judging policies on the coronavirus, “politics is the overwhelming force dividing Americans,” and that “how households have been economically impacted by the Covid crisis so far” plays only a minimal role.

Donald Trump and his allies have polarized the response to the coronavirus, turning defiance of public health directives into a mark of right-wing identity. Because a significant chunk of Trump’s base is made up of whites without a college degree, there are naturally many such people among the lockdown protesters.

But it’s a mistake to treat the growing ideological divide over when and how to reopen the country as a matter of class rather than partisanship. The push for a faster reopening, even in places where coronavirus cases are growing, has significant elite support. And many of those who face exposure as they’re ordered back to work are rightly angry and terrified.

Because here’s the thing about reopening: It’s liberation to some, but compulsion to others. If your employer reopens but you don’t feel safe going to work, you can’t continue to collect unemployment benefits. In The Texas Tribune, a waitress in Odessa spoke of her fear when she was called back to work at a restaurant that hadn’t put adequate social distancing measures in place. “It scared me, so I left,” [*she said*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true). “Then I had to remember that if I do quit, I would have to lose my unemployment.”

Meatpacking workers have been sickened with coronavirus at wildly disproportionate rates, and all over the country there have been [*protests outside*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true) of   [*meatpacking plants*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true) demanding that they be temporarily closed, sometimes by the   [*workers’ own children*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true). Perhaps because those demonstrators have been unarmed, they’ve received far less coverage than those opposed to lockdown orders.

Indeed, across America there’s been a surge in labor activism as people made to work in unsafe conditions stage strikes, walkouts and sickouts. “It sounds corny, but we’re moving towards a worker rebellion,” Ron Herrera, president of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, [*told The Los Angeles Times*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true).

Meanwhile, financial elites are eager for everyone else to resume powering the economy. “‘People Will Die. People Do Die.’ Wall Street Has Had Enough of the Lockdown,” was the [*headline on a recent Vanity Fair article*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true). It cited a banker calling for “broad legal indemnification for employers against claims related to the virus” so that employees can’t sue if their workplace exposes them to illness. Here we see the real coronavirus class divide.

In some ways I can relate to the exultant Georgians who’ve decided to deny the danger of coronavirus. I too hate life under lockdown and I yearn for some social distance from my children; every day I scan the news for information about whether schools will reopen in the fall. I’d love a pedicure, or a drink with a friend. And I know that plenty of people desperate to escape these grim new limits on our lives have far more urgent needs: to save a business or support their families.

But when it comes to the coronavirus, willingness to ignore public health authorities isn’t a sign of flinty ***working-class*** realism. Often it’s the ultimate mark of privilege.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true) 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/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/17/coronavirus-reopening-shopping-mall-georgia/?arc404=true).

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PHOTO: Protesting coronavirus restrictions in Harrisburg, Pa., on Friday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jonathan Ernst/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***On the Edge of His Seats in London Theaters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66S6-1121-JBG3-611N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 2, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 1223 words

**Byline:** By Alex Marshall

**Body**

One family firm supplies seating for most of the West End's theaters, from flexible new spaces to Victorian treasures. Its chief designer reveals some tricks and traps of the trade.

LONDON -- Earlier this month, during the first performance at the West End's newest theater, @sohoplace, the audience repeatedly cheered the actors performing ''Marvellous,'' a comedy about a British eccentric. At one point, several hundred theatergoers even applauded a technician who came on to clean the floor.

But there was one person key to the evening whom no one cheered, whooped or even politely clapped. And Andrew Simpson, the designer of the theater's seats, was happier that way.

''If a seat's good, you don't notice it,'' he said. ''You only notice it when it's bad.'' In the world of theater seating, he added, ''No news is good news.''

Simpson, 62, is in a position to know. He is the lead designer at Kirwin & Simpson, a family firm his grandfather founded that started out patching upholstery in a local movie house during World War II and now supplies the seats for most West End theaters. (It works with some in New York, too, including the Hudson Theater and St. Ann's Warehouse.)

The West End is challenging territory for a seating designer. Many of the London theaters Simpson caters for are Victorian jewel-boxes: tight, ornate spaces built with more attention to gradations of social class than to comfort.

Originally, according to David Wilmore of Theatresearch, a company that restores historic theaters in Britain, they would have had a few front rows of luxurious armchairs -- known as fauteuils -- for their wealthiest patrons. Everyone else sat on wooden benches. When middle-class visitors were finally accorded seats, Wilmore said, theaters preserved their old sightlines by forcing the sitters bolt upright -- ''part of that Victorian strictness in all areas: 'You jolly well better sit up and listen!'''

That won't do for seats that now often cost hundreds of dollars to occupy.

A recent tour of Kirwin & Simpson's works in Grays, a ***working-class*** town east of London, included a room filled with rolls of multicolored cloth and a shed where five men were busy screwing, stapling and gluing sleek maroon seats for the forthcoming Ronald O. Perelman Performing Arts Center in New York. One warehouse is filled with emergency replacements, so that if a seat rips at, say, the Victoria Palace Theater -- the London home of ''Hamilton'' -- a new, perfectly matching one can be installed within hours.

Each theater needs many types of seats. The new, 602-capacity @sohoplace has 12 types, according to Simpson, all removable to allow different styles of staging, but some tricky older spaces require far more.

There are high chairs with built-in footrests, to give a clear view from the back of Victorian balconies where front-row patrons would once have sat directly on a low step. There are chairs with wide backs, but smaller seats, designed to fit perfectly into tight curves, and others with hinged armrests that can be raised so wheelchair users to slip into them. And there may be any number of things in between. Andrew Lloyd Webber's Theater Royal, Drury Lane, has over 160 different designs, with widths and angles tweaked to ensure the best view.

The seats themselves have become less cluttered over time, losing accessories like ashtrays and wire cages for men to store their top hats. But in the most cramped spaces, Simpson still sometimes employs an illusion. Short armrests make a narrow aisle feel wider, he said, because visitors don't have to squeeze past them to get to their places, and they are then less inclined to start thinking about how little legroom they have. ''It's all psychology,'' he added.

It similarly helped if the show was a hit. ''If the stuff onstage is really good,'' he said, ''then people don't mind what they're sitting on. If it's anything less than that, then the surroundings come into focus, shall we say.''

Even with the good will of a good show, it can be tough to accommodate theatergoers of varying shapes, sizes and tastes. Nica Burns, the chief executive of Nimax Theaters, the company behind @sohoplace, said she wanted the seats in all her venues to be comfortable for short people like her (she's 5 foot 2 inches), who don't want their feet to dangle in midair, and for tall people like her 6 foot 3 inch husband. While the theater was being designed, she kept two Kirwin & Simpson seats in her office and asked visitors try them. But, she said, ''you'll never find a seat that suits everybody.''

One demand that Simpson hears increasingly is for wider seats. Last year, Sofie Hagen, a popular comedian, began a campaign on Twitter, urging theaters to publish details of seat widths on their websites, to help larger people like her decide if they wanted to attend. ''The amount of times I've gone to see a musical only to be in constant, excruciating pain,'' Hagen wrote. ''Once I had to leave before the show even started because the seat was too narrow.''

Hagen said in a telephone interview that every venue on her current British tour had agreed to display details of the width of their seats and she hoped more would follow. ''If theaters had signs up saying 'Fat people are not welcome,' people would be like, 'What?','' she said, ''but that's subliminally the message we're being told.''

At @sohoplace, some dozen seats at the orchestra level and balcony discreetly offer an extra three inches of width, on top of the standard 20 or so. Simpson, the designer, said that during a test event he had happily shared one with his 27-year-old son.

For some, however, a big seat might be a little too much comfort. Seats that leave theatergoers ''practically rubbing shoulders with one another'' make for more of a communal experience, Wilmore, the theater restorer, said.

Michael Billington, who resigned in 2019 after nearly 50 years as The Guardian's chief theater critic, said he felt ''a degree of austerity'' helped keep audiences awake. For example, Shakespeare's Globe in London has both Elizabethan-style standing space and backless wooden benches: Billington described those benches as ''a form of terror,'' but added that he certainly paid attention whenever he sat on one.

The new seats at @sohoplace drew typically mixed reviews from some of their first paying users. In interviews with a dozen audience members at the recent ''Marvellous'' performance, seven were glowing. John Yee, 22, visiting from Canada and sitting in the balcony, said they were ''comfy as hell.''

Josh Townsend, who had a spot in the orchestra level, said he was 6 foot 2 and often struggled with seats that lacked legroom, yet @sohoplace's were ''really good.'' The week before, he had watched ''Dear Evan Hansen'' in London's Noël Coward Theater -- whose seats are also by Kirwin & Simpson -- and his legs were jammed against the seat in front. This was a huge improvement, he said.

But though she had loved the show, Ayesha Girach, 26, a doctor, said the seats were so hard they were ''probably the most uncomfortable'' she had ever sat in. She then praised those at the Gillian Lynne Theater, just a few blocks away, where she'd recently seen ''The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.'' ''Those were really comfy,'' she said. They were Kirwin & Simpson seats, too.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/24/theater/theater-seats-sohoplace-marvellous.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/24/theater/theater-seats-sohoplace-marvellous.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, the Sondheim Theater in London has a capacity of more than 1,000. The seats are by Kirwin & Simpson, which also designed the seat above for @sohoplace, a new West End theater. Andrew Simpson, above right, is Kirwin & Simpson's lead designer and the grandson of its founder. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOM JAMIESON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page C5.

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Before Hurricane Ian, Florida’s Southwest Coast Was a Place to Escape the Chaos***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66GW-WXH1-JBG3-636X-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Jennifer Reed, Charles Ballaro and Jack Healy

**Highlight:** Communities like Cape Coral and Fort Myers, south of Tampa Bay, suddenly found themselves at the center of the hurricane.

**Body**

Communities like Cape Coral and Fort Myers, south of Tampa Bay, suddenly found themselves at the center of the hurricane.

FORT MYERS, Fla. — Jessica Cosden’s family was huddled together at home as roofs rattled, trees crashed down and surging waters filled the 400 miles of canals lacing their city.

Then everything went dark.

“We just lost power,” Ms. Cosden said. “My 3-year-old son is freaking out.”

As Hurricane Ian charged ashore along Florida’s southwest coast on Wednesday, it turned a laid-back stretch of suburban shoreline known for tiki bars, golf-course retirement communities and stone-crab fishing havens into a strand of destruction and chaos.

With no electricity, the Cosden family waited together into the night on Wednesday in a single candlelit room in their house in Cape Coral, a fast-growing city of 205,000 near Fort Myers. Hannah, 12, felt OK but worried about her family getting hurt. Jacob, 10 and living through his first real hurricane, stood in a corner and closed his eyes.

“I’m super shaken up,” Jacob said. “I just want this to be over. I’d rather be at school.”

Cities along Florida’s Southwest Coast, pounded by storm surge and 150 mile-per-hour wind gusts from Ian, can feel like sleepier cousins to the high-rise multicultural pulsations of Miami. The region skews older, whiter and more conservative than Florida’s denser Atlantic coast. Places like Cape Coral have long drawn Midwesterners hunting for an affordable slice of Florida shoreline.

But on Wednesday, much of that had been shattered. There were reports of roofs ripped off homes in Cape Coral. In the wealthy coastal enclave of Naples, a resident said he had three feet of water in his home.

In Everglades City, a mecca for stone-crab fishing, some residents who had barely finished rebuilding after the devastation of Hurricane Irma in 2017 had lost everything once more, said Holly Dudley, whose family runs a crabbing business. Ms. Dudley said streets were flooding, cars were floating and fishermen were anxious about whether their boats had survived.

“I know God has a plan,” Ms. Dudley said. “We’re thick-skinned and he makes us resilient. But at some point, when will it end?”

In Cape Coral, Hurricane Ian’s sprawling fury reminded some longtime residents of Hurricane Donna, which pummeled the city in 1960 when it was barely a developer’s dream on a map, marketed as a Waterfront Wonderland where hundreds of miles of canals had been carved into the land.

“There was nobody here,” said Gloria Raso Tate, a city councilwoman whose family arrived in 1960, right in the middle of Hurricane Donna.

On Wednesday, she had fled her home along the swelling Caloosahatchee River, which runs nearby, in the hopes of finding safety farther inland at her sister’s house in a different neighborhood of Cape Coral. Ms. Raso Tate said she worried her house might not survive the storm.

“We’re in the middle of it,” she said.

The hurricane posed a menacing test of whether a fast-growing city could handle one of the worst storms to strike the coast in decades.

“We’re swamped with people,” Ms. Raso Tate said. “That’s the issue right now. Most of our residents are new and have never had to go through a hurricane. There’s been some panic.”

Late Wednesday, city officials said there had been no reports of injuries or deaths in Cape Coral, but the toll of the storm was still unclear. Police officers, firefighters and medics were not responding to 911 calls on Wednesday until the winds eased off.

Some city officials said they believed that as many as half of the city’s 205,000 residents may have decided to stay in their homes, despite mandatory evacuation orders for much of the city that had been issued on Tuesday. The brunt of the storm was initially expected to hit farther north, in Tampa.

Shelters that could hold 40,000 people were only about one-tenth full, and some residents who stayed home had been calling to ask about shelters only after it was too dangerous to venture onto the roads, city officials said.

“I think a lot of people just hunkered down,” said Melissa Mickey, a spokeswoman for Cape Coral. “That’s a concern.”

As a storm surge forecast to reach 12 feet or more washed into nearby Fort Myers, churning whitecaps in people’s front yards, residents and city officials in Cape Coral were nervously watching the levels of the Caloosahatchee River and 400 miles of freshwater and saltwater canals across the city.

The canals threaded through Cape Coral had been dug with no permits and little regard for the environment, city officials said, but they were crossing their fingers that the web of waterways normally used for boating and fishing might act as a shock absorber for the storm surge and help drain some of the rain and flooding.

Officials in Lee County, which includes Fort Myers and Cape Coral, had been opening up low dams to drain waterways ahead of the storm.

Real estate values in the Fort Myers area, where a majority of residents are white, peaked and then crashed in the 2008 recession, but the region has boomed in recent years.

The area’s Latino residents have been growing in numbers, and big new corporate arrivals like Hertz and a medical-device manufacturer have revved up an economy that is still powered by tourism and housing.

“When I was growing up it was all retired people,” said Ms. Cosden, who is on the Cape Coral City Council. “The population has quadrupled since I was born. It’s a lot more families, middle and ***working class***.”

In Charlotte Harbor, about 30 miles north, Jeannie Croke, 50, had decided to ride out the storm at her home along a canal, though it was a decision she made when Hurricane Ian was still expected to strike the Tampa Bay area. Some of her neighbors changed their minds and fled for safer ground as the storm barreled toward them earlier on Wednesday.

“We just saw two of them in the past hour decide to leave. We may be one of the few remaining,” Ms. Croke said. “We’ve tied down the boat and did everything we could do. Pray for us.”

Jennifer Reed reported from Fort Myers, Fla., Charles Ballaro from Lehigh Acres, Fla., and Jack Healy from Phoenix. Robert Gebeloff contributed reporting from New York.

Jennifer Reed reported from Fort Myers, Fla., Charles Ballaro from Lehigh Acres, Fla., and Jack Healy from Phoenix. Robert Gebeloff contributed reporting from New York.

PHOTO: In Fort Myers, a flashlight was necessary to navigate a darkened hallway during a power outage as Hurricane Ian made landfall on Wednesday. The storm left many Floridians without electricity. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCO BELLO/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** November 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[***At Top Public School, Asian Students Question Segregation Label***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64MG-B201-JBG3-64N0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Michael Powell

**Body**

Tausifa Haque, a 17-year-old daughter of Bangladeshi immigrants, walks in the early morning from her family's apartment in the Bronx to the elevated subway and rides south to Brooklyn, a journey of one and a half hours.

There she joins a river of teenagers who pour into Brooklyn Technical High School -- Bengali and Tibetan, Egyptian and Chinese, Sinhalese and Russian, Dominican and Puerto Rican, West Indian and African American. The cavernous eight-story building holds about 5,850 students, one of the largest and most academically rigorous high schools in the United States.

Her father drives a cab; her mother is a lunchroom attendant. This school is a repository of her dreams and theirs. ''This is my great chance,'' Tausifa said. ''It's my way out.''

Brooklyn Tech is also subject to persistent criticism and demands for far-reaching reform, along with other test-screened public high schools across the nation.

Liberal politicians, school leaders and organizers argue such schools are bastions of elitism and, because of low enrollment of Black and Latino students, functionally racist and segregated. Sixty-three percent of the city's public school students are Black and Latino yet they account for just 15 percent of Brooklyn Tech's population.

For Asian students, the percentages are flipped: They make up 61 percent of Brooklyn Tech, although they account for 18 percent of the public school population.

Some critics imply that the presence of so many South and East Asian students, along with the white students, accentuates this injustice. Such charges reached a heated pitch a few years ago when a prominent white liberal council member said such schools were overdue for ''a racial reckoning.''

Richard Carranza, who served as New York's schools chancellor until last year, was more caustic. ''I just don't buy into the narrative,'' he said, ''that any one ethnic group owns admission to these schools.''

But several dozen in-depth interviews with Asian and Black students at Brooklyn Tech paint a more complicated portrait and often defy the political characterizations put forth in New York and across the country. These students speak of personal journeys and struggles at a far remove from the assumptions that dominate the raging battles over the future of their schools.

Their critiques often proved searching; most Asian students spoke of wanting more Black and Latino classmates.

Fully 63 percent of Brooklyn Tech's students are classified as economically disadvantaged. Census data shows that Asians have the lowest median income in the city and that a majority speak a language other than English at home.

The admissions debate reaches far beyond New York's selective high schools.

The San Francisco Board of Education has discarded a merit-based admissions policy and substituted a lottery at the highly regarded Lowell High School, where 55 percent of students were of Asian descent. ''When we talk about merit, meritocracy and especially meritocracy based on standardized testing,'' a board member opined, ''those are racist systems.''

Officials in Fairfax County, Va., replaced the entrance exam at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology with a combination of grades and socioeconomic criteria. The next year the percentage of incoming Black and Latino students jumped and the percentage of Asian students, who skew more middle and upper middle class than in New York, declined. White student enrollment increased.

When Asian parents sued, a federal judge told their lawyer, ''Everybody knows the policy is not race-neutral and that it's designed to affect the racial composition.''

That case is awaiting a decision.

Like these other institutions, Brooklyn Tech, which sits in the haute brownstone neighborhood of Fort Greene, is regarded as a diamond in the city's educational crown, along with the Bronx High School of Science and Stuyvesant High School.

The school boasts many advantages, as most students are well aware. Nearly all balked, however, at describing it as segregated, not least because the descriptor ''Asian'' encompasses disparate ethnicities, cultures, languages and skin colors.

Tausifa looks at the multihued sea of students pouring through the doors of Tech. She expressed puzzlement that a school where three-quarters of the students are nonwhite could be described as segregated. ''I have classes with students of all demographics and skin colors, and friends who speak different languages,'' she said. ''To call this segregation does not make sense.''

To which Salma Mohamed, a child of immigrants from Alexandria, Egypt, and a graduate of Brooklyn Tech, added: ''It's very interesting to me that the word segregated is used in a school that is predominantly Asian. It connotes white and class privilege. That's not us.''

The Debate Over an Entrance Exam

Critics of specialized high schools argue that these institutions are out of step with the zeitgeist and educational practice. Better to cast aside standardized tests and seek heterogenous classes in neighborhood high schools, they argue, than to cloister top students. Some studies, they say, show that struggling students gain from the presence of talented outliers. And the entrance exam, which includes no writing component, has fueled the growth of a private and inequitable tutoring industry.

What of the bright child who has a bad test day? Or a teenager who lacks the money to seek tutoring?

''Educationally, we don't need these schools,'' said David Bloomfield, a professor at the CUNY Graduate Center and Brooklyn College. ''These students cannot be in a bubble. They need to be in a more diverse student body, where you could have advanced classes.''

Those who champion specialized high schools point to alumni who became top scientists, among them 14 Nobel Prize laureates. With few exceptions these were the children of ***working-class*** and immigrant families. The best students, they argue, should press as far ahead as brains and curiosity might take them.

The mayor and school officials preside over a system of 1.1 million schoolchildren, they add, in which only half are proficient in math and 24 percent of Black students fail to graduate. As Americans struggle to stay competitive with other nations in science, technology and mathematics, why obsess about the anti-egalitarian sins of a handful of high-performing schools that hold 6 percent of high school students?

That said, the dwindling number of Black and Latino students at these high schools is a great concern and a mystery. Bill de Blasio, when he was mayor of New York, suggested the heart of the problem lay with a biased entrance exam.

That does not reckon with history. Decades ago, when crime and socioeconomic conditions were far graver than they are today, Black and Latino teenagers passed the examination in great numbers. In 1981, nearly two-thirds of Brooklyn Tech's students were Black and Latino, and that percentage hovered at 50 percent for another decade.

Black and Latino students account for 10 percent of the students at Bronx Science; that percentage was more than twice as high in the 1970s and '80s.

To understand this decline involves a trek back through decades of policy choices, as city officials, pushed by an anti-tracking movement, rolled back accelerated and honors programs and tried to reform gifted programs, particularly in nonwhite districts.

Black alumni of Brooklyn Tech argue that this progressive-minded movement handicapped precisely those Black and Latino students most likely to pass the test. Some poor, majority Black and Latino districts now lack a single gifted and talented program.

Citywide, elementary school gifted classes enroll about 16,000 students and are 75 percent white and Asian.

Of late, the city's new mayor, Eric Adams, has proposed adding new gifted and talented programs in Black and Latino neighborhoods, and increasing the number of specialized high schools. City officials recently created five more such schools.

Denice Ware, a daughter of Jamaican and Panamanian immigrants and president of the Brooklyn Tech Alumni Foundation, grew up in Ocean Hill-Brownsville in Brooklyn, an impoverished neighborhood. She was class salutatorian of her middle school for gifted students; the top 10 graduates that year, all Black, gained admittance to specialized high schools.

''Don't tell me Black and Latino children can't get into these schools,'' she said. ''Our teachers made sure we were prepared.''

Getting In and Staying In

A visitor steps inside the doors to Brooklyn Tech and finds the honor roll list for last year's senior class, the surnames offering variations on an old story: There is a Dong and a Doogan, a Goyer and a Huynh, a Subah and a Wai.

The specialized high schools serve as a homing beacon for immigrant and ***working-class*** teenagers. The 1950s and 1960s saw the arrival of Holocaust survivors and West Indian families. Later waves rolled in from Asia and West Africa.

''My parents didn't even know what Brooklyn Tech was,'' recalled Sophia Wing Lum Chok, whose parents grew up in Malaysia. She learned of the test on her own.

''They would have been very happy if I went anywhere,'' she said. ''I didn't have an adult figure in my life who did not work a blue-collar job.''

Ms. Chok, 19, flourished at Brooklyn Tech and studies at Yale. Her experience was anomalous in one sense: Many immigrant parents view the specialized schools as a holy grail.

Hasiba Haq, 28, lives in Kensington, a low-slung Brooklyn neighborhood known as Little Bangladesh. Her parents grew up on an island in the Bay of Bengal. Her father worked as a taxi driver when she was a student. She attended middle school in well-to-do Park Slope. ''I became aware of internalized shame at not being white and wealthy,'' she said. ''I learned kids did not sit at home in summer: They went to 'camp.'''

By the time she turned 11, her family and neighbors talked of the high school examination. Her parents enrolled her in a tutoring center, a rigorous boot camp with teenage Asian teachers drawn from the specialized high schools. The sticker price was $4,000. Her parents bargained hard, but still paid a small fortune.

''It was every weekend and classes over the summer,'' Ms. Haq said. ''Everyone in the community knew it was your turn to take the test.''

She got in and the local Bengali newspaper ran her photograph and those of other Bengali teenagers who gained admittance to specialized high schools. ''Family honor is tied to it,'' she said. ''It's kind of embarrassing.''

When she walked into Brooklyn Tech, she felt her shoulders drop. ''I could finally breathe,'' she said. ''I was around kids like me.''

There were Bengalis and Pakistanis and Indians, the Brown Squad. There was a Latino Squad, a Russian Squad, a Black Squad, similar in their yearnings. She stayed up past midnight doing homework, one advanced course piled atop another.

''It was more difficult than college,'' said Ms. Haq, a Fordham University graduate. ''It was a hustle-and-grind culture.''

She is now 28, a producer at TED Talks. Like many alumni, she speaks of crosscurrents of ambivalence and pride about surviving that crucible. Folk wisdom has it that South Asians dominate the test but reality is messier. Many students in her tutoring classes fell short, and parent and child cried together. Some students dropped out.

More than 23,500 teenagers took the specialized high school test last year. Roughly 41 percent were Black and Latino, and 34 percent were Asian.

The examination can be problematic, as it requires knowledge of algebra, which is not offered to many middle school students. Ms. Haq was lucky enough to get offered that course. Tausifa Haque, the teenager from the Bronx, was not. Had her parents not paid for tutoring classes, she would have been at sea in that portion of the test.

''I thought I was the smartest kid in the world,'' Tausifa said, laughing at her conceit. ''Then I understood I did not know enough to pass the test without tutoring.''

She realized something else: Some of her middle school classmates had no chance. ''One Black classmate, really smart, did not even realize there was a test,'' she said. ''There were uneven advantages.''

Being a Black Student at Tech

Diane Nunez, who is Black, and her son, Ricardo, 15, share a goal: to maximize his education and get him into a top college. His road was uncertain. He applied to the highly competitive Mark Twain Middle School and scored in the 97th percentile. The test cutoff was the 98th percentile.

When Ricardo was in seventh grade, Ms. Nunez received a guidance counselor's email intended for another family. It mentioned a city-run tutoring course for the high school test. ''I thought, 'Wait a minute, Ricardo is smart enough for this,''' she said. ''Why isn't he getting offered this?''

Ms. Nunez dug into her savings and enrolled Ricardo in a private tutoring agency favored by Asian parents. Ricardo understood the lost weekends of study it would entail. ''That was the most challenging academics I'd ever done,'' Ricardo said. ''But I knew where I wanted to end up.''

Once at Brooklyn Tech, he joined the Black student union. ''I don't feel like a minority,'' he said. ''We resist being pitted against each other at this school.''

Rachel Germany, a social studies teacher at Brooklyn Tech who is Black, serves as adviser to that student union. She is moved by the struggles of all her students. ''I appreciate the diversity and love these kids,'' she said. ''Having said that, the dearth of Black and Latinx students in a public high school feels palpable and strange.''

City officials have long sought to arrest the decline in Black and Latino students at specialized high schools. In the mid-1990s, a chancellor started a tutoring program to much applause. Officials today could not say what became of that.

The Department of Education runs another tutoring initiative, known as the Dream Program, which six students described as substandard, a pale shadow of the rigor of the tutoring academies. ''The teachers did not even know what the exam consisted of,'' said Nabila Hoque, a senior at Brooklyn Tech. ''They handed us out-of-date workbooks.''

Nabila, whose father is disabled and whose mother works in a uniform shop, enrolled at a tutoring academy. She was recently accepted at Duke University on a full scholarship.

Tutoring is no replacement for identifying gifted students and placing them in accelerated classes.

''There's a big literature on the value of accelerated classes and it's very favorable,'' said James H. Borland, a professor at Columbia University Teachers College. ''There's a strong research base that shows it's very beneficial.''

Jumaane Williams, who is Black and resides on the political left -- where support is infrequently heard for the specialized exam -- is the New York City public advocate. He describes himself as a public school baby, from kindergarten to his master's, and he is insistent that he couldn't have achieved any of it without Brooklyn Tech.

''The most clear failure has been establishing an accessible pipeline'' for Black and Latino students, he wrote in The Daily News. ''In the past, gifted-and-talented programs in middle schools have been a reliable pathway.''

Horace Davis, a former Con Edison executive who is Black, spoke of his boyhood in East Flatbush, a ***working-class*** neighborhood in Brooklyn. He got into accelerated classes in his neighborhood school, and teachers pushed hard.

His sister and best friend encouraged him to take the test, Mr. Davis said.

''You have four years of courses at Brooklyn Tech taught at the college level,'' he said. ''It's not just that you're surrounded by smart students; you start to think of college and your life in a different way.''

An Uneven Playing Field

Little comes easy at a hothouse such as Brooklyn Tech. The weight of parental and teacher expectation make for much stress. Some fall to cheating; some leave.

''I got so much out of that school,'' said Zarnaab Javaid, who is of Pakistani descent and now at the State University of New York at Binghamton. ''What brings me hesitation is the sheer number of kids who were not happy.''

Alumni and students alike harbor the sense that as hard as they work, they benefit from unfair advantages. They point to college-level course offerings and a handsome moot court for the law class, and the battered robotics lab that produces students who win local and national competitions. Most private schools have more plushly appointed facilities but not public high schools.

These students chafe, though, at the notion that their success can be explained away by saying, Well, Asian students test well.

''You can't just say Asian people are culturally predisposed to more education,'' Mr. Javaid said.

These students voice a fear that harks back to earlier generations of ***working-class*** Jewish students who dealt with antisemitism. If officials toss the test and substitute portfolios, interviews and extracurricular accomplishments, it could be easier to dismiss Asians as faceless ''grinds,'' the students said.

''Many immigrant working families don't have the time to get a portfolio together for their kids,'' said Ms. Germany, the social studies teacher at Brooklyn Tech.

However stressful a high-stakes test, it means a surname is no obstacle. No one knows they are Bengali, Tibetan, Nigerian or Tajik.

Students and teachers spoke of alternatives. Establish variable passing scores so that economically disadvantaged, Latino or Black districts face somewhat lower bars than a wealthy majority-white district on the Upper West Side. Offer the exam to all eighth graders as a matter of course, and improve tutoring. Build out gifted and talented in nonwhite districts.

Again and again, the conversation returned to the broader problem. The elementary and middle schools must prepare more students to compete at the highest level.

''Bring grades or class rank into it if you need to; we should strive for a world where we don't need Brooklyn Tech,'' said Ayaan Ali, a senior whose parents emigrated from Pakistan. ''But abolishing the test is like putting a Band-Aid over a gunshot wound.''

Hasiba Haq, the TED Talks producer, sees a mirror turning inward as students and teachers question the test and the toll it takes on students who feel a constant pressure to succeed. To dismiss the success of these students as one of segregated advantage, however, draws from her a shake of the head.

''We're really trying to have this nuanced conversation about race and class and opportunity,'' she said, ''We haven't found the words for it yet.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/us/selective-high-schools-brooklyn-tech.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/us/selective-high-schools-brooklyn-tech.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Brooklyn Tech and other test-screened high schools are subject to criticism and demands for reform. (A1)

About 5,850 students attend Brooklyn Technical High School, one of the most academically rigorous schools in the U.S. Of that population, 61 percent are Asian, and 15 percent are Black and Latino.

Hasiba Haq, 28, a graduate of Fordham University, said Brooklyn Tech's coursework was ''more difficult than college.'' (A14)

Tausifa Haque, 17, is the daughter of Bangladeshi immigrants.

Nabila Hoque, a senior at Brooklyn Tech, received a full scholarship to Duke.

Rachel Germany, a social studies teacher, advises the Black student union. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARAH BLESENER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

''I don't feel like a minority,'' said Ricardo Nunez, a Black student union member. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RICK WENNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A15)

**Load-Date:** January 26, 2022

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[***The Male Gaze***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651T-HYG1-JBG3-654H-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 8; FICTION

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**Byline:** By Jessica Bennett

**Body**

A VERY NICE GIRLBy Imogen Crimp

In Imogen Crimp's enjoyable debut novel, ''A Very Nice Girl,'' Anna is a ***working-class*** young woman from the outskirts of London who is training to be an opera singer and working in a jazz club for cash. It's there that she meets Max, a not-quite-yet-divorced man who is more than a decade her senior. Charming though slightly mean (in a flirtatious way?), Max works in finance and takes her to fancy meals.

What ensues is almost so predictable as to not be: Max, with his expense account, his shiny high-rise flat with a view of the city and his weekend house in Oxford to which she's not invited, makes clear that they are just ''having fun.'' And Anna, his ''dark-eyed bohemian,'' as he calls her -- who initially agrees to the fun thing, of course -- falls in love. The power dynamic between them, unaligned from the start, becomes gaping as he persuades her to abandon her studies to spend more time with him. He starts giving her money and she, once so committed to her art, starts to lose what little independence she'd found.

Anna, it turns out, is not so much ''nice'' as she is unformed. She is also: naïve, insecure, full of self-doubt, but also talented, trying to find her way in a place where she feels like an outsider among her wealthy classmates and shaping herself into the person she thinks Max wants her to be. ''God, why am I being so boring?'' she worries of their conversations. ''I would do anything he wanted,'' she thinks during sex.

Like her protagonist, Crimp briefly studied to be a singer at a London conservatory, which may explain why passages set in this milieu are the ones where her writing -- and her protagonist -- find their strength. Onstage, Anna is confident and brave, even ''invincible,'' feeling like ''every nerve in my body was alive.''

''I liked that I could do something that made other people scared,'' she recalls of finding her voice. ''I liked discovering that I -- who teachers often had to ask to repeat my answer several times, my voice was so quiet -- could fill a room with sound.''

There are plenty of stories these days about what it is to be a woman observed by the ''male gaze.'' It's a phrase Anna and her friends would no doubt use, if the at-times heavy-handed dialogue about tampons as ''capitalist,'' or Latin as the ''language of the patriarchy,'' is any indication. (Anna's roommate is writing a book she describes as a ''feminist deconstruction of the relationship between men and women in the internet age.'')

But Anna is not only an object of that gaze; she actually starts to mold herself into it -- beginning to see herself, interpret herself, value herself, through how she perceives Max perceiving her.

''Looking at myself naked in the mirror, I'd try to see it how he would,'' she says.

''I felt he was studying me too closely, appraising my worth, like I was a piece of jewelry he was considering buying.''

''I craved his look, and when I was away from him, I missed it.''

In some of these moments, ''A Very Nice Girl'' is an all-too-real reminder of what it is to be a woman in your 20s, searching for who you are, trying on identities or stuck in a complicated pseudo-relationship even when you know you shouldn't be. It's a book about assessing your worth through other people's eyes -- parents, friends, a lover -- and about being observed: by an overprotective mother, by men on the tube, by those who assess her auditions, by classmates competing for her slot, and ultimately by the audience. And yet, for the strength of Crimp's writing, it might have benefited from a less predictable plot. Vulnerable young woman alone in a new city, seduced by an older, richer man who turns out to be kind of a jerk ... readers may be disappointed to find there's no real twist here -- unless, of course, you count that Anna must lose the guy to get herself back.Jessica Bennett is a contributing editor in Opinion who writes on gender, politics and culture. Previously, she was The Times's gender editor.A VERY NICE GIRLBy Imogen Crimp336 pp. Henry Holt & Company. $26.99.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/13/books/review/a-very-nice-girl-imogen-crimp.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/13/books/review/a-very-nice-girl-imogen-crimp.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Lily Snowden-Fine FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***'What the Hell Are We Even Doing?'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67MY-NY51-JBG3-60PH-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

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The stunning failure of the Democratic Party on election night was nowhere more apparent than at Il Bacco, an Italian restaurant on the boulevard where Queens bleeds into Nassau County. That was where a soon-to-be-infamous 34-year-old political neophyte walked out to a cheering throng of Republicans and declared victory in one of America's most important House contests. ''Only in this country can the kid who came from the basement in Jackson Heights ... ,'' George Santos began, before he was momentarily overwhelmed. ''To everybody watching, I want you to know that the American dream is worth fighting for. It's worth defending, and that's why I jumped into this race.''

In another era -- two or four years ago, perhaps -- the Santos saga, with its absurd cascade of lies, would have been an amusing sideshow for many Democratic politicians, who would have been able to mock the chaos and move on, comfortably sure that Santos, who fabricated much of his personal and financial biography, would only further hobble a neutered Republican minority. But the new congressman, now under investigation by local and federal authorities, was instead a crucial cog in Kevin McCarthy's House majority, having flipped the redrawn Third Congressional District in New York, an area that had been represented by Democrats for decades, by eight points.

These days, New York is known as the deep-blue state where Democrats lost four seats on the way to losing the House of Representatives and effectively halting President Biden's domestic agenda for the next two years. Kathy Hochul, who served as Andrew Cuomo's lieutenant governor before accusations of sexual harassment and assault forced him from office in 2021, won the narrowest race for governor in 28 years, beating Lee Zeldin, a Trump-supporting congressman from Long Island, by less than six points. While forecasts for a national red wave didn't materialize -- Democratic candidates for governor and the Senate were largely triumphant in tossup races across the country, and Chuck Schumer of Brooklyn remained the Senate majority leader -- Democrats stumbled in territory on Long Island and in the Hudson Valley that Biden won handily just two years earlier.

These disappointments have cast into sharp relief both the divisions within the party and the peculiar void of the state's Democratic organization itself. Few New Yorkers cared, until late 2022, that the statewide Democratic apparatus operated, for the most part, as a hollowed-out appendage of the governor, a second campaign account that did little, if any, work in terms of messaging and turnout. New Hampshire, a state with roughly half the population of Queens, has a Democratic Party with 16 full-time paid staff members. New York's has four, according to the state chairman, Jay Jacobs. One helps maintain social media accounts that update only sparingly. Most state committee members have no idea where the party keeps its headquarters, or if it even has one. (It does, at 50 Broadway in Manhattan.)

National parties function as enormous umbrella organizations, determining the presidential primary calendar and the process for allocating delegates at the national conventions. The drudgery of running elections is left to the local and state parties, as well as individual campaigns and independent political action committees.

Elsewhere in the country, state Democratic parties are much more robust than they are in New York. In Wisconsin, under the leadership of 42-year-old Ben Wikler, the party offered crucial organizing muscle in Gov. Tony Evers's re-election win, staving off a Republican statewide sweep. The Nevada Democratic Party, despite infighting among moderates and progressives, aided Senator Catherine Cortez Masto's re-election, investing strongly in rural voter engagement. And in California, the party chair position is publicly contested among multiple candidates, with delegates voting as Democrats traverse the state and make their case in the media.

As for New York, observers across the ideological spectrum agree that the state is entering an unprecedented era, with warring political factions and a glaring power vacuum. Hochul recently became the first governor in New York history to have the State Legislature, controlled by Democrats, vote down her nominee to the state's highest court. Progressives spearheaded opposition to the judge, Hector LaSalle, arguing that he was too conservative.

In challenging Hochul from the right, Zeldin was savagely effective -- ''Vote like your life depends on it,'' he exhorted, echoing Richard Nixon, in the final days of the campaign -- in seizing on suburban anxieties around rising crime that Republicans in other states weren't able to successfully exploit. While Manhattan and the combined might of upper-income white and middle-class Black voters thwarted Zeldin in the five boroughs, he made notable inroads with ***working-class*** Asian Americans, potentially heralding a political realignment for the city's fastest growing demographic. Hochul's campaign was assailed for its relative listlessness and failure to counter Republican attacks on crime. ''That is an issue that had to be dealt with early on, not 10 days before the election,'' Nancy Pelosi chided the governor. (Hochul's staff did not make her available for an interview.)

Within the confines of New York, Democrats remain historically dominant, retaining veto-proof majorities in both the State Senate and State Assembly. All the statewide elected officials are Democrats, as is the mayor of New York City, Eric Adams. But this is a recent shift: Republicans controlled the State Senate almost continuously from the mid-1960s until 2019. George Pataki, a moderate Republican, led the state for 12 years, and Rudy Giuliani and Michael Bloomberg ran New York City from 1994 through 2013.

Heading into 2022, Democrats were confident that after decades of Republican rule in the State Legislature, they could entirely control the state's redistricting process, engineering favorable House maps for the fall. After a quasi-independent commission deadlocked -- critics argued that it was designed to fail when Cuomo helped create it a decade ago -- Democratic state legislators redrew lines that strongly favored their party. Republicans sued in court, claiming that the Democrats' maps violated an anti-gerrymandering clause in the State Constitution. To the shock of many political insiders, the Republicans won their court battle, and an outside special master was appointed by an upstate Republican judge to quickly draw new lines. House primaries were shoved from June to August.

With the special master prioritizing competitiveness, not incumbency advantage, Democrats found themselves thrown together in some of the same districts. Representative Jerry Nadler was pitted in a nasty primary against his longtime colleague Carolyn Maloney in Manhattan. (Nadler would prevail.) North of the city, Sean Patrick Maloney, the chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and a pugilistic centrist, decided to run in a new district spanning Rockland and Westchester that included far more turf that had been represented by Mondaire Jones, a neighboring progressive.

''Sean Patrick Maloney did not even give me a heads up before he went on Twitter to make that announcement,'' Jones fumed at the time. ''And I think that tells you everything you need to know about Sean Patrick Maloney.'' Ritchie Torres, a Bronx congressman, accused Maloney of ''thinly veiled racism'' against Jones, who is Black. Maloney held his ground, and Jones was forced to move to a new district in New York City, where he would lose in an August primary. Maloney fended off a primary challenge from Alessandra Biaggi, a state senator who ran far to his left. Then, despite a titanic war chest, he fell to Mike Lawler, a Republican state legislator, by less than a point. Jones tweeted one word: ''Yikes.''

And now the Democratic civil war rages. Jacobs, who is also the chairman of the Nassau County Democratic Party and is on his second tour leading the statewide organization, has come in for a drubbing. A week after the election, more than 1,000 Democrats signed a letter calling for Jacobs's ouster. They included state legislators, City Council members, county leaders and members of New York's 400-odd Democratic State Committee. Most of them belonged to the state's progressive wing, which has grown only further emboldened since the fall. On Jan. 3, a number of them gathered outside City Hall to reiterate their demands: Jacobs must go.

''The party has to change, and it can't change until we change the leadership,'' George Albro, a co-chair of the New York Progressive Action Network, a left-wing organization formed from the remnants of Bernie Sanders's 2016 campaign, said in an interview. ''From top to bottom, the Democratic Party in New York is a disaster.''

Until Cuomo's downfall, Jacobs was known as a close ally of the imperious governor. His first tenure as party chairman came under Cuomo's predecessor, David Paterson, but his second began in 2019, a year after Cuomo won a commanding re-election. That election cycle was notable because Cuomo overcame a primary challenge from the actress Cynthia Nixon, who targeted him from the ascendant left. Though Nixon lost, six insurgent progressives defeated members of the Independent Democratic Conference, a breakaway group of centrist Democrats who had spent the last half decade in an unusual -- and incredibly infuriating to progressives -- power-sharing arrangement with State Senate Republicans. The I.D.C. had existed with Cuomo's blessing, joining with Republicans to foil liberal priorities in the State Legislature, like tuition assistance for undocumented immigrants, tougher tenant protections and criminal-justice reforms. For Cuomo, a triangulating centrist determined to avoid having to sign or veto progressive bills while harboring dreams of the national stage, the arrangement worked just fine. (In 2018, I took a break from writing to run for State Senate myself, losing in a Brooklyn Democratic primary.)

Since the state party, historically, has been a creature of the governor or the most powerful Democrat in the state, Jacobs is safe as long as Hochul tolerates him. And Hochul, some Democrats say, owes Jacobs for the work he did behind closed doors to ensure that the new governor had a comfortable primary win after Cuomo resigned and immediately began to plot a comeback. Jacobs's fear was that a divided field could pave the way for a Cuomo revival, and he worked to rapidly hustle up institutional and financial support for Hochul that helped to deter another challenger, Attorney General Letitia James, from running against her.

In 2021, after a democratic socialist, India Walton, defeated the longtime mayor of Buffalo and a former chairman of the state party, Byron Brown, in a contentious primary, Jacobs refused to endorse Walton. ''Let's take a scenario, very different, where David Duke -- You remember him? The grand wizard of the KKK? He moves to New York, he becomes a Democrat and he runs for mayor in the city of Rochester, which has a low primary turnout, and he wins the Democratic line. I have to endorse David Duke? I don't think so,'' Jacobs said in a television interview, before clarifying that Walton ''isn't in the same category, but it just leads you to that question, Is it a must? It's not a must. It's something you choose to do.''

Outraged progressives called for Jacobs's resignation. He refused to go, and Hochul, who is from the Buffalo area and remains close to Brown, did not force Jacobs out. Brown, with tacit approval from the governor and Jacobs, then won the mayoralty with a write-in campaign that November, drawing support from Republicans to crush Walton.

A year later, Jacobs explored ways of undercutting the established vehicle for left-wing organizing in the state, the Working Families Party, a hybrid of party activists and labor unions that had endorsed Jumaane Williams over Hochul in the primary. He cut a check to a more moderate Democrat trying to primary Jamaal Bowman, a Westchester County congressman and a member of the Squad, the prominent group of far-left members of Congress, including Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar. After Republicans swept Democrats out of power in the New York suburbs last fall, Jacobs quickly blamed the left. ''New York did underperform, but so did California,'' Jacobs told the politics publication City & State in November. ''What do those two states have in common? Well, governmentally, we're among the two most progressive states in the country.''

A 67-year-old political lifer, Jacobs has an unrelated day job overseeing a string of popular and lucrative summer camps in upstate New York, in Pennsylvania and on Long Island, where he lives. Democratic business is often run out of a TLC Family of Camps office in Glen Cove, a small town on Nassau County's Gold Coast. Politicos and journalists who want to reach Jacobs know to email his Camp TLC address; Jacobs cc'd his chief of staff at that summer-camp address to help arrange a telephone interview that lasted an hour, despite Jacobs's initial hesitancy about going on the record.

''People believe that the state party runs all the campaigns, determines the messaging, does the opposition research for every candidate and, you know, when a candidate anywhere loses, it's the fault of the state party, and all of that is just not an accurate view of the function of the state party and what we actually do,'' Jacobs said.

Jacobs described the party as a ''housekeeping organization'' and a ''coordinating entity'' that works among labor unions, campaigns and other interest groups. He cited the maintenance of a voter file that campaigns use to target the electorate as among its most important work, as well as establishing campaign offices at election time. Fund-raising, too, is a big part of the work, and it's there where Jacobs has been especially useful. A multimillionaire and prolific donor, Jacobs has given more than $1 million to various Democratic candidates and causes over the last two decades. It can be argued that it's this wealth, in part, that has allowed him to continuously lead the Nassau County party since 2001. Few staunch Democrats are both better wired and more willing to cut checks than Jacobs.

''How I run my businesses and my charitable donations and the rest would indicate, as well as my personal beliefs, would indicate that I'm really, personally, quite progressive, more so than most people would think,'' Jacobs said. Rather, he argued, his message is direct: ''Slow down. You're going too fast. What you're doing is going to lose us votes in the suburbs and rural areas.''

In an unusual move for a party leader, Jacobs last year backed the rivals of several incumbent Democrats. His motivation, he told me, was ''the behavior of some of these folks that are speaking on behalf of what I'd refer to as the far left. They practice the politics of personal destruction. They won't argue the merits of what I say, but they'll condemn me -- and others, by the way, not just me -- in really vitriolic terms, personal and the rest. Some of the reasons why I personally gave to some of the primaries -- it was just a handful of people -- it's because of what they said about me. Personally.''

Last August, Jacobs donated $2,900 -- the maximum allowable amount -- to a county legislator trying to unseat Bowman. The congressman won by 38 points anyway.

''I don't know Jay Jacobs,'' Bowman told me. ''I've never talked to him on the phone. I've never met him in my life. Even though I was a newcomer in 2020, I was still duly elected, and I'm a member of the party now. One would've thought that the leader of the party would have reached out to have a cup of coffee or have a conversation.''

Should Jacobs resign? ''The short answer is yes,'' Bowman answered. ''But the more, I think, comprehensive nuanced answer or question is, What the hell are we even doing? You know, the whole thing about the corporate agenda, which I think Jay Jacobs and maybe even Governor Hochul and maybe others are missing is, when you talk about younger voters, millennials or Gen Z, they are not aligned with corporate interests over labor and ***working-class*** people.''

But Jacobs has plenty of defenders, including county leaders across the state, who believe he's an upgrade over his somnolent or domineering predecessors and has a realistic view of what it takes to win beyond the liberal confines of New York City. ''It's hard for me to understand this rancor from certain individuals, by the way, who never seem to be satisfied,'' says Jeremy Zellner, the chairman of the Erie County Democratic Party. ''Only in New York could Jay win every single statewide election and hold the supermajorities in both the Assembly and Senate and be chastised.''

Gregory Meeks, the Queens congressman and chairman of the county organization there, echoes Jacobs's critique: The progressive and socialist left has cost Democrats in general elections by forcing them to defend positions he believes are alienating. ''Extremes cannot be the dominant part of a party, because it isolates everyone else,'' Meeks says. ''What's not good for all of us is talking about defunding the police.''

Because Hochul inherited Jacobs, his critics have hoped she would ditch him for someone who might take a more active role in the sort of tasks that party chairs in other states care far more about: recruiting candidates, shaping the party's message, funding voter-outreach campaigns that begin many months ahead of a general election and even hiring a full-time communications director and research staff. Among some Hochul allies, there has been quiet frustration directed at one of her top advisers, Adam Sullivan, who speaks frequently with Jacobs on Hochul's behalf. Sullivan holds great sway in Hochul's world because he managed her successful campaign for Congress more than a decade ago. Despite his low profile and the fact that his consulting firm, ACS Campaign Consulting, is based in Colorado, where he lives, Sullivan was one of a select few aides Hochul thanked in her victory speech. Sullivan himself disputes that there's any behind-the-scenes friction. ''The governor is completely committed to building a strong, robust party,'' Sullivan says. ''Everyone in her orbit is on the same page.'' What isn't clear is whether that page, and the vision for the future of the state party, includes Jacobs.

Even Jacobs's detractors acknowledge that dumping him and hunting for a replacement is only the beginning of a political project that will take many years. (Floated successors include Adriano Espaillat, a congressman who has built a strong operation among Dominican Americans in Upper Manhattan; Grace Meng, a Queens congresswoman and Democratic National Committee vice chairwoman who is the first Asian American elected to the House from New York; and Jessica Ramos, a progressive Queens state senator.)

All the ongoing chaos hasn't escaped the notice of national Democrats. ''When I go to D.N.C. meetings,'' says a high-ranking New York Democratic official, who requested anonymity to avoid antagonizing colleagues, ''there is a sense that New York doesn't have a state party at all.''

Through the first half of the 20th century, Tammany Hall, with origins as an Irish Catholic society in the late 1700s, was the embodiment of the local Democratic Party, using patronage to secure power and dominating state and city politics alike. Nothing equivalent rose to take its place. ''I don't think anybody in their right mind would compare the state party right now to the machine that existed 50, 60, 70 years ago,'' says Paterson, the former governor who later served as state party chairman during Cuomo's tenure.

New York never had a Harry Reid figure, a singularly powerful Democrat who took an obsessive interest in party building. The two Cuomos, Mario and his son Andrew, governed the state for a combined nearly 23 years, and each treated the party organization as little more than a tool for self-promotion. A liberal icon to the rest of America for his soaring speech at the 1984 Democratic National Convention, Mario Cuomo was assailed at home for barely lifting a finger to aid Democrats desperately trying to retake the State Senate. In 1990, The Times reported that Cuomo was hoarding more than $5 million for his own campaign while spending none for the State Senate Democrats, who were outspent 4 to 1 by Republicans. In 1994, the state party spent almost $2 million to aid Cuomo's failed re-election effort while offering less than $30,000 apiece for the candidates for attorney general and state comptroller. By the end of the year, the party was moribund and completely broke, running up a million-dollar debt.

The only Democratic governor in modern times to care about the future of the state party and down-ballot candidates was Eliot Spitzer, who won a landslide victory in 2006 and would resign, a little more than a year later, in a prostitution scandal. Spitzer was a proud liberal who wanted to break the Republican hold on the State Senate. The party, too, was trying to modernize in anticipation of Senator Hillary Clinton's 2008 campaign for president. For a brief period, under the leadership of Denny Farrell, an influential state assemblyman from Manhattan, talented operatives were hired, and Spitzer's aides tried to implement a strategy for boosting legislative candidates.

''The party itself had really dissipated,'' recalls Spitzer, now a real estate developer. His team helped recruit and fund an upstate Democratic candidate who won a pivotal special election for a State Senate seat in early 2008. ''It was partly fund-raising, partly finding the right candidates, partly putting the right energy into it.''

The rise of Andrew Cuomo, who had a near-dictatorial hold on political affairs for nearly the entirety of the 2010s, put an end to nascent party-building plans. Cuomo treated Democratic politics as an extension of Cuomo politics, hoovering up resources and kneecapping Democrats he viewed as a threat. He was content to let Republicans keep the State Senate and rarely campaigned for House candidates. Donald Trump's election, coupled with Sanders's 2016 bid, would radicalize a new generation of Democrats. Soon, a democratic socialist candidate was winning a State Senate seat, and Working Families Party-supported insurgents were driving out the conservative Democrats who had chosen to align themselves with the Republican Party.

By 2018, Ocasio-Cortez had felled one of the most powerful party bosses in New York, a sign that the left could win its battles against the establishment. ''We need Democrats who are not running from their own shadow,'' says Sochie Nnaemeka, the New York director of the Working Families Party.

The widening fissures are both ideological and geographical. Manhattan and Brooklyn Democrats saved Hochul in November, but so did Westchester County, which once upon a time was a Republican stronghold. Democrats there gave Hochul a 20-point margin over Zeldin after Biden flew in to campaign for her. Westchester has continued to mirror national trends, as affluent suburbs grow Democratic, but Republicans have remained remarkably resilient on Long Island. Home to lavish estates, as well as growing Orthodox Jewish communities and a rising Asian American electorate newly alienated by Democrats, along with a working- and middle-class vote forever skeptical of big-city liberalism, the eastern suburb backed Zeldin by double digits. In recent years, the Hudson Valley has grown bluer, with city residents scooping up comparatively cheaper real estate during the pandemic, yet Zeldin carried Rockland, Dutchess, Putnam and Orange Counties, where Trump-era enthusiasm for Democrats gave way to backlash over rising crime south of the former Tappan Zee Bridge (renamed for Mario Cuomo by his son).

Jacobs can credibly argue that the progressivism or outright socialism that wins in Brooklyn or Queens can't be easily sold in Nassau County. But Bowman and his cohort can ask why he neglects the younger voters moving left -- or, for that matter, why he fails to build out an organization that can be credibly called a political party, the kind that is more than one man and a few aides conducting political business from a summer-camp office. In a 10-page report issued in January, Jacobs pinned Democratic losses on historically high Republican turnout, a contention backed by data. But shouldn't a state party's task be, in part, to turn out its own voters? Had enough Democrats been motivated to vote, George Santos would never have been sworn in as a congressman.

''What we saw is a party that did not know what role they should play,'' Nnaemeka says, ''and therefore played no role.''

Ross Barkan writes frequently on New York and national politics. He is the author of two novels and a nonfiction account of Covid's impact on New York City. This is his first article for the magazine.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/22/magazine/new-york-democrats.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/22/magazine/new-york-democrats.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY PABLO DELCAN AND DANIELLE DEL PLATO) (MM22-MM23) This article appeared in print on page MM22, MM23, MM24, MM25, MM53.

**Load-Date:** February 26, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Stream These 13 Movies Before They Leave Netflix This Month***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:670F-K6D1-DXY4-X302-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 1, 2022 Thursday 17:13 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 1468 words

**Byline:** Jason Bailey

**Highlight:** The end of the year brings the end of many licensing agreements for streaming services, so load up your queues now.

**Body**

The end of the year brings the end of many licensing agreements for streaming services, so load up your queues now.

The end of the year brings the end of many licensing agreements for streaming services, and this month is no exception. We’ll see the departure of a mix of Oscar winners, comedy franchises, indie dramas and action extravaganzas from Netflix in the U.S. So load up your queues now, lest you miss your last chance at these gems. (Dates indicate the final day a title is available.)

‘Fast Color’ (Dec. 10)

The ubiquity and (especially as of late) mediocrity of the mainstream superhero movie is particularly galling when reflecting on the commercial indifference with which Julia Hart’s superhero story was received in 2018. Then again, Hart’s wise and wonderful screenplay (co-written with her husband, Jordan Horowitz, who also produces) doesn’t simply deploy the familiar beats and conflicts; this is a character-driven indie drama that just so happens to concern characters with superhuman powers, and that grapples with the real-world implications of their abilities. Lorraine Toussaint is mighty as the patriarch of the family at the story’s center; Gugu Mbatha-Raw is quietly excellent as her troubled daughter.

[*Stream it here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/80242008).

‘The Danish Girl’ (Dec. 15)

Tom Hooper’s adaptation of the novel by David Ebershoff was unsurprisingly controversial upon its 2015 release, dealing, as it does, with the true story of the Danish painter Lili Elbe, one of the first people known to have undergone sexual reassignment surgery. But Hooper’s adaptation was criticized for its historical inaccuracies and approach to the material, as well as for centering the narrative on Gerda Wegener, Elbe’s cisgender partner. Those claims are valid, but the film is still worth seeing, primarily for the achievements of its actors. Eddie Redmayne resists the urge to overplay as Elbe, while Alicia Vikander is extraordinary as Wegener; she won the Academy Award for best supporting actress for the role and deserved it.

[*Stream it here*](https://www.netflix.com/as/title/80058477).

‘A Little Princess’ (Dec. 31)

When the director Alfonso Cuarón landed the high-profile assignment of taking over the “Harry Potter” film franchise for its third entry, “The Prisoner of Azkaban,” eyebrows raised across Hollywood — after all, at that point he was best known for helming the NC-17 erotic road trip drama “Y Tu Mamá También.” But the “Potter” gig made complete sense to those who’d seen his 1995 adaptation of this classic children’s novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett. Taking understandable liberties with the source material, he weaves a tapestry of magic and pathos out of the story of Sara Crewe, who finds her life of privilege turned upside down when her father sends her to a girls’ boarding school.

[*Stream it here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/705734).

‘Blood Diamond’ (Dec. 31)

Quick quiz: Leonardo DiCaprio was nominated for the Oscar for best actor for “The Departed” (2006), right? Wrong. He was nominated that year, but it was for a different film: Edward Zwick’s sharp-edged action-drama, set during the Sierra Leone Civil War, starring DiCaprio as a smuggler and mercenary whose initial interest in the conflict is purely monetary. That changes, however, as he joins forces with a fisherman (Djimon Hounsou, also nominated for an Oscar) whose discovery of a giant diamond has put him in the sights of a local warlord. The narrative is predictable, sure. But DiCaprio, Hounsou and Jennifer Connelly, another co-star, are acting up a storm, and Zwick shows his usual adeptness at staging big action sequences.

[*Stream it here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/70045850).

‘Blow’ (Dec. 31)

It would be easy to dismiss this 2001 crime drama as “Goodfellas” Lite — it’s based on the true story of a cocaine kingpin, telling the thrilling story of his rise and fall in a jittery, hyperkinetic style, and features a stellar ensemble cast. But as Scorsese cosplay goes, it’s lively and entertaining. The director, the late Ted Demme (“The Ref”), knows when to turn up the heat and when to let it simmer; the screenplay (by the veteran scribes David McKenna and Nick Cassavetes) is detail-oriented and fascinating; and Johnny Depp turns in one of his best performances as George Jung, who made a fortune running drugs for Pablo Escobar. Ray Liotta even turns up as George’s father, an explicit “Goodfellas” shout-out that plays like a blessing on the project.

[*Stream it here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/60020891).

‘Blue Jasmine’ (Dec. 31)

Woody Allen’s last great movie, this 2013 comedy-drama won Cate Blanchett an Oscar for best actress, and Andrew Dice Clay the best reviews of his career as a bitter and estranged family member. Blanchett stars as Jasmine, once a rich socialite in New York City, whose husband (Alec Baldwin) fell from grace in a Bernie Madoff-style scandal; she finds herself living in San Francisco with her sister (the wonderful Sally Hawkins) and her ***working-class*** boyfriend (Bobby Cannavale, borderline feral). The echoes of “A Streetcar Named Desire” are unmistakable, and undoubtedly intentional; as he did with his Ingmar Bergman riffs, Allen is not just quoting an iconic work but putting his story and characters in conversation with it, and the results are both thoughtful and thrilling.

[*Stream it here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/70270362).

‘Eyes Wide Shut’ (Dec. 31)

True to form, Stanley Kubrick’s final film — unveiled four months after his death in 1999 — confounded audiences and critics upon its release, only to grow in reputation and estimation in the ensuing years. Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, then still real-life spouses, star as a wealthy Manhattan couple who find their seemingly idyllic marriage rocked by her confessions of desire for a passing stranger. Blind with jealousy, he journeys into the New York night, searching for an illicit affair but stumbling upon something far more insidious. Moody, odd and darkly funny, it boasts one of the greatest closing lines in all of cinema.

[*Stream it here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/5670434).

‘Men in Black’ I / II / 3 (Dec. 31)

Barry Sonnenfeld’s original 1997 “Men in Black” remains one of the great popcorn movies — a witty, briskly-paced treat that manages to both send up big-budget, effects-heavy extravaganzas, and simultaneously work as one. Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones are a pitch-perfect matchup of wisecracking cool and stone-faced professionalism, an oddball buddy movie pairing for the books. Their 2002 follow-up can’t match the laughs or energy of the original, but it’s still a hoot, with Rosario Dawson a welcome addition to the cast. And the final installment, released a decade later, draws on a time-travel plot that primarily serves as a showcase for Josh Brolin’s flawless impression of his “No Country For Old Men” co-star Jones. But it’s such a delicious piece of mimicry, you don’t really mind.

Stream “Men in Black” [*here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/60001650), “Men in Black II” [*here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/60023597) and “Men in Black 3” [*here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/70217910).

‘National Lampoon’s Vacation’ / ‘European Vacation’ (Dec. 31)

Chevy Chase was floundering badly in the movies — his early films, after leaving “Saturday Night Live” only one year into its run, included such undistinguished efforts as “Modern Problems,” “Under the Rainbow” and “Oh! Heavenly Dog” — when he finally landed his ideal film role. Working from a screenplay by the up-and-coming screenwriter John Hughes (with uncredited contributions by Chase and the director Harold Ramis), the actor was terrific as Clark Griswold, a Chicago suburb-dweller who only wants the perfect cross-country vacation for himself and his family. The film was so successful that Chase (and co-star Beverly D’Angelo) came back three years later to escort his brood across Europe, with similarly silly results.

Stream “Vacation" [*here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/793679) and “European Vacation” [*here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/60022298).

‘Point Break’ (Dec. 31)

Kathryn Bigelow was still an all-but-unknown genre filmmaker, and Keanu Reeves was still best known for playing Ted in the “Bill &amp; Ted” movies, when they teamed up with Patrick Swayze — then hot off his starring role in the surprise hit “Ghost” — for this tense action drama. The screenplay by W. Peter Iliff (with uncredited rewrites by Bigelow and her then-husband, James Cameron) wasn’t the freshest of stuff, even in 1991: an FBI agent (Reeves) goes undercover in a group of surfer bank robbers and finds himself in too deep with the group’s charismatic leader (Swayze). But Bigelow’s energetic direction keeps things moving at such a hearty clip, the familiarity barely matters; her action beats are furiously paced, her female gaze gives welcome dimension to the testosterone-heavy proceedings and the central dynamic is wonderfully thorny.

[*Stream it here*](https://www.netflix.com/title/60020602).

ALSO LEAVING: “[*A Clockwork Orange*](https://www.netflix.com/title/383466),” “[*Casino Royale*](https://www.netflix.com/title/70044604),” “[*Chocolat*](https://www.netflix.com/title/60003116),” “[*I Love You, Man*](https://www.netflix.com/title/70111463),” “[*Police Academy*](https://www.netflix.com/title/60035683),” “[*Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*](https://www.netflix.com/title/1029730)” (all Dec. 31).

PHOTO: Leonardo DiCaprio, left, and Djimon Hounsou in a scene from “Blood Diamond,” leaving Netflix on Dec. 31. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jaap Buitendijk/Warner Bros Pictures, via Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[***With Senate Vote, Congress Moves to Avert Rail Strike***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:670F-6VN1-DXY4-X2X2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 1, 2022 Thursday 08:36 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1479 words

**Byline:** Emily Cochrane

**Highlight:** Bipartisan coalitions in the House and Senate pushed through a bill that would impose an agreement between rail companies and their workers.

**Body**

Bipartisan coalitions in the House and Senate pushed through a bill that would impose an agreement between rail companies and their workers.

WASHINGTON — The Senate on Thursday voted overwhelmingly to impose a labor agreement between rail companies and their workers who have been locked in a stubborn stalemate, moving with uncommon speed to avert a potential holiday season rail strike that would jeopardize shipping across the country.

Passage of the measure cleared it to be signed by President Biden, who just days ago made a personal appeal for Congress to act to impose a labor agreement that his administration helped negotiate [*earlier this year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/business/rail-strike.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-railroad-labor-talks&amp;variant=show&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_1&amp;block=storyline_levelup_swipe_recirc) but that had failed to resolve the dispute. He was expected to sign the bill quickly, racing to stave off any economic fallout that could come from a work stoppage in the coming days.

It was the first time since the 1990s that Congress has used its power under the Constitution’s commerce clause, which allows it to regulate interstate commerce, to intervene in a national rail labor dispute to head off a strike. The step was a remarkable one for Mr. Biden, who vowed to be “the most pro-union president you’ve ever seen,” and for Democrats in control of Congress, who count organized labor among their most loyal constituencies.

In recent days, Mr. Biden and his allies on Capitol Hill have put aside those considerations in favor of a resolution that they have argued is needed to prevent painful consequences for Americans.

“I know that many in Congress shared my reluctance to override the union ratification procedures,” Mr. Biden said in a statement after the vote. “But in this case, the consequences of a shutdown were just too great for working families all across the country.”

The action came a day after the House overwhelmingly approved the measure, which would force the companies and their workers to abide by the tentative agreement reached in September. That deal includes a 24-percent increase in wages over five years, more schedule flexibility and one additional paid day off. Several rail unions had rejected it because it lacked paid sick leave.

Senate Democrats, under pressure from progressives to insist on the additional compensated time off for workers, tried and failed to push through a House-passed measure to add seven days of paid medical leave to the agreement. It was defeated 52 to 43, failing to secure the necessary 60 votes needed to pass and prompting multiple liberal senators to oppose the agreement altogether.

Republicans failed to win adoption of their proposal to extend the Dec. 9 negotiation deadline by 60 days, to provide a cooling-off period and avoid congressional intervention in the dispute. The proposal fell on a vote of 70 to 25.

Ultimately, a broad bipartisan group set aside reservations about inserting Congress into the labor dispute and backed the agreement that the Biden administration negotiated. The vote was 80 to 15, with Senator Rand Paul, Republican of Kentucky, voting “present.”

Mr. Biden [*had championed the negotiations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/business/rail-strike.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-railroad-labor-talks&amp;variant=show&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_1&amp;block=storyline_levelup_swipe_recirc) that led to the tentative agreement, which his administration helped strike under the Railway Labor Act, a 1926 law that allows the president to intervene in rail labor disputes that threaten to cut off essential commerce or transportation service.

But while the resulting deal provided higher pay and more schedule flexibility, multiple unions voted against its ratification in recent weeks because it failed to include paid sick leave, and would force workers to take unpaid time off to attend medical appointments. Many employees argued it did not go far enough to address the toll of their difficult and unpredictable schedules.

With a railway strike possible in the coming days, Mr. Biden turned to Congress to intervene. He stressed his reluctance to override the will of union workers seeking basic workplace rights but said it was necessary to address the threat of economic calamity by a disruption to the nation’s rail system and an inability to swiftly transport goods and services across the country.

At a news conference at the White House on Thursday, Mr. Biden bristled at a question about why he had not insisted on more paid leave for rail workers in the deal, saying that he had “negotiated a contract no one else can negotiate.” He said he would continue to fight for paid leave for all Americans.

On Capitol Hill, Democrats also said they would have preferred to avoid stepping into the middle of a railroad labor dispute, something Congress has done 18 times in the past century. They groused about being called upon to embrace a deal that went against what workers were demanding. Pressing to overcome those concerns, Mr. Biden dispatched Martin J. Walsh, the labor secretary, and Pete Buttigieg, the transportation secretary, to the Capitol on Thursday to meet with Democratic senators during a private lunch ahead of the votes.

“The consequences of inaction would be severe,” said Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York and the majority leader, on the Senate floor Thursday morning. He ticked through a list of what he described as the “serious problems that would occur if there’s a rail shutdown.”

Republicans, too, griped about the position they had been placed in, questioning why Mr. Biden had not allowed for a few more days to resolve the dispute before involving Congress.

The final vote reflected the unusual coalition brought together in opposition to imposing the agreement. Multiple liberal senators, including Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, joined some of the most conservative Republicans, such as Senator Josh Hawley of Missouri, in voting “no.”

“If DC Republicans want to be a ***working class*** party, they might want to do something for workers,” Mr. Hawley wrote [*on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1598421184579772422). He was among the conservative senators who backed the paid leave measure, but opposed imposing the agreement without it.

To quell concerns in both parties and speed the measure through the Senate, leaders agreed to first consider the G.O.P. proposal for a cooling-off period and the House-passed proposal to add the paid leave.

“Less than 36 hours ago, we were asked to decide on issues that are complicated, that are important, without necessary deliberations,” said Senator Dan Sullivan, Republican of Alaska, who sponsored the deadline extension. He said his measure would “give negotiators more time to get to an agreement and it will not make Congress the entity of last resort in these kind of negotiations.”

Other senators, including some Republicans, said the threat of damage to the nation’s economy at a moment when inflation remains high drove their votes to implement the tentative agreement.

“While this position is undesirable, Congress must act,” Senators Cynthia Lummis of Wyoming and Kevin Cramer of North Dakota, both Republicans, wrote [*in a joint letter to their colleagues*](https://senatorkevincramer.app.box.com/s/iqdfbz7j5csic4i3akqr0y03ish00w4o). “Implementing an agreement that roughly half of the unionized workers support, along with all their leadership, is the most responsible path forward.”

But Ms. Lummis and Mr. Cramer, like the majority of Republicans, argued against adding the paid leave proposal and said Congress should abide by the terms of the tentative agreement.

“It is in the best interest of all parties that the railroads, not Congress, work through issues such as paid leave directly with their employees,” the two senators wrote.

Liberals, some of whom were frustrated at the push to impose the tentative agreement on workers, argued that the paid leave proposal was a necessary addition championed by union workers. Only one Democrat, Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, voted against the measure on the floor.

“While I am sympathetic to the concerns union members have raised, I do not believe it is the role of Congress to renegotiate a collective bargaining agreement that has already been negotiated,” he said in a statement explaining his vote.

Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, an independent and chairman of the Budget Committee, had warned he would block the overall agreement without a vote to add paid leave.

“This is not a radical idea, it’s a very conservative idea,” Mr. Sanders said in a speech on the Senate floor. He added, “I would hope that we would have strong support.”

The proposal drew a majority, but not the supermajority needed for passage.

Noam Scheiber, Stephanie Lai and Zolan Kanno-Youngs contributed reporting.

Noam Scheiber, Stephanie Lai and Zolan Kanno-Youngs contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Supporters of railroad unions protesting at the Capitol. (A1); “The consequences of inaction would be severe,” said Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York and the majority leader.; It was the first time since the 1990s that Congress has used its power to intervene in a national rail labor dispute to head off a strike. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HAIYUN JIANG/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13) This article appeared in print on page A1, A13.

**Load-Date:** December 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***How It Feels to Be an Asian Student in an Elite Public School***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64M9-XM21-JBG3-63J0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 25, 2022 Tuesday 23:33 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 3213 words

**Byline:** Michael Powell

**Highlight:** Stuyvesant, Brooklyn Tech and other schools across the country are under pressure to end entrance exams. Students have complicated feelings about that.

**Body**

Tausifa Haque, a 17-year-old daughter of Bangladeshi immigrants, walks in the early morning from her family’s apartment in the Bronx to the elevated subway and rides south to Brooklyn, a journey of one and a half hours.

There she joins a river of teenagers who pour into Brooklyn Technical High School — Bengali and Tibetan, Egyptian and Chinese, Sinhalese and Russian, Dominican and Puerto Rican, West Indian and African American. The cavernous eight-story building holds about 5,850 students, one of the largest and most academically rigorous high schools in the United States.

Her father drives a cab; her mother is a lunchroom attendant. This school is a repository of her dreams and theirs. “This is my great chance,” Tausifa said. “It’s my way out.”

Brooklyn Tech is also subject to persistent criticism and demands for far-reaching reform, along with other test-screened public high schools across the nation.

Liberal politicians, school leaders and organizers argue such schools are bastions of elitism and, because of low enrollment of Black and Latino students, functionally racist and segregated. Sixty-three percent of the city’s public school students are Black and Latino yet they account for just 15 percent of Brooklyn Tech’s population.

For Asian students, the percentages are flipped: They make up 61 percent of Brooklyn Tech, although they account for 18 percent of the public school population.

Some critics imply that the presence of so many South and East Asian students, along with the white students, accentuates this injustice. Such charges reached a heated pitch a few years ago when a prominent white liberal council member said such schools were overdue for “a racial reckoning.”

Richard Carranza, who served as New York’s schools chancellor until last year, was more caustic. “I just don’t buy into the narrative,” he said, “that any one ethnic group owns admission to these schools.”

But several dozen in-depth interviews with Asian and Black students at Brooklyn Tech paint a more complicated portrait and often defy the political characterizations put forth in New York and across the country. These students speak of personal journeys and struggles at a far remove from the assumptions that dominate the raging battles over the future of their schools.

Their critiques often proved searching; most Asian students spoke of wanting more Black and Latino classmates.

Fully 63 percent of Brooklyn Tech’s students are classified as economically disadvantaged. Census data shows that Asians have the lowest median income in the city and that a majority speak a language other than English at home.

The admissions debate reaches far beyond New York’s selective high schools.

The San Francisco Board of Education has discarded a merit-based admissions policy and substituted a lottery at the highly regarded Lowell High School, where 55 percent of students were of Asian descent. “When we talk about merit, meritocracy and especially meritocracy based on standardized testing,” a board member [*opined*](https://www.newsweek.com/school-called-racist-san-francisco-1566895), “those are racist systems.”

Officials in Fairfax County, Va., replaced the entrance exam at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology with a combination of grades and socioeconomic criteria. The next year the percentage of incoming Black and Latino students jumped and the percentage of Asian students, who skew more middle and upper middle class than in New York, declined. White student enrollment increased.

When Asian parents sued, a federal judge told their lawyer, “Everybody knows the policy is not race-neutral and that it’s designed to affect the racial composition.”

That case is awaiting a decision.

Like these other institutions, Brooklyn Tech, which sits in the haute brownstone neighborhood of Fort Greene, is regarded as a diamond in the city’s educational crown, along with the Bronx High School of Science and Stuyvesant High School.

The school boasts many advantages, as most students are well aware. Nearly all balked, however, at describing it as segregated, not least because the descriptor “Asian” encompasses disparate ethnicities, cultures, languages and skin colors.

Tausifa looks at the multihued sea of students pouring through the doors of Tech. She expressed puzzlement that a school where three-quarters of the students are nonwhite could be described as segregated. “I have classes with students of all demographics and skin colors, and friends who speak different languages,” she said. “To call this segregation does not make sense.”

To which Salma Mohamed, a child of immigrants from Alexandria, Egypt, and a graduate of Brooklyn Tech, added: “It’s very interesting to me that the word segregated is used in a school that is predominantly Asian. It connotes white and class privilege. That’s not us.”

The Debate Over an Entrance Exam

Critics of specialized high schools argue that these institutions are out of step with the zeitgeist and educational practice. Better to cast aside standardized tests and seek heterogenous classes in neighborhood high schools, they argue, than to cloister top students. Some studies, they say, show that struggling students gain from the presence of talented outliers. And the entrance exam, which includes no writing component, has fueled the growth of a private and inequitable tutoring industry.

What of the bright child who has a bad test day? Or a teenager who lacks the money to seek tutoring?

“Educationally, we don’t need these schools,” said David Bloomfield, a professor at the CUNY Graduate Center and Brooklyn College. “These students cannot be in a bubble. They need to be in a more diverse student body, where you could have advanced classes.”

Those who champion specialized high schools point to alumni who became top scientists, among them 14 Nobel Prize laureates. With few exceptions these were the children of ***working-class*** and immigrant families. The best students, they argue, should press as far ahead as brains and curiosity might take them.

The mayor and school officials preside over a system of 1.1 million schoolchildren, they add, in which only half are proficient in math and 24 percent of Black students fail to graduate. As Americans struggle to stay competitive with other nations in science, technology and mathematics, why obsess about the anti-egalitarian sins of a handful of high-performing schools that hold 6 percent of high school students?

That said, the dwindling number of Black and Latino students at these high schools is a great concern and a mystery. Bill de Blasio, when he was mayor of New York, suggested the heart of the problem lay with a biased entrance exam.

That does not reckon with history. Decades ago, when crime and socioeconomic conditions were far graver than they are today, Black and Latino teenagers passed the examination in great numbers. In 1981, nearly two-thirds of Brooklyn Tech’s students were Black and Latino, and that percentage hovered at 50 percent for another decade.

Black and Latino students account for 10 percent of the students at Bronx Science; that percentage was more than twice as high in the 1970s and ’80s.

To understand this decline involves a trek back through decades of policy choices, as city officials, pushed by an anti-tracking movement, rolled back accelerated and honors programs and tried to reform gifted programs, particularly in nonwhite districts.

Black alumni of Brooklyn Tech argue that this progressive-minded movement handicapped precisely those Black and Latino students most likely to pass the test. Some poor, majority Black and Latino districts now lack a single gifted and talented program.

Citywide, elementary school gifted classes enroll about 16,000 students and are 75 percent white and Asian.

Of late, the city’s new mayor, Eric Adams, has proposed adding new gifted and talented programs in Black and Latino neighborhoods, and increasing the number of specialized high schools. City officials recently created five more such schools.

Denice Ware, a daughter of Jamaican and Panamanian immigrants and president of the Brooklyn Tech Alumni Foundation, grew up in Ocean Hill-Brownsville in Brooklyn, an impoverished neighborhood. She was class salutatorian of her middle school for gifted students; the top 10 graduates that year, all Black, gained admittance to specialized high schools.

“Don’t tell me Black and Latino children can’t get into these schools,” she said. “Our teachers made sure we were prepared.”

Getting In and Staying In

A visitor steps inside the doors to Brooklyn Tech and finds the honor roll list for last year’s senior class, the surnames offering variations on an old story: There is a Dong and a Doogan, a Goyer and a Huynh, a Subah and a Wai.

The specialized high schools serve as a homing beacon for immigrant and ***working-class*** teenagers. The 1950s and 1960s saw the arrival of Holocaust survivors and West Indian families. Later waves rolled in from Asia and West Africa.

“My parents didn’t even know what Brooklyn Tech was,” recalled Sophia Wing Lum Chok, whose parents grew up in Malaysia. She learned of the test on her own.

“They would have been very happy if I went anywhere,” she said. “I didn’t have an adult figure in my life who did not work a blue-collar job.”

Ms. Chok, 19, flourished at Brooklyn Tech and studies at Yale. Her experience was anomalous in one sense: Many immigrant parents view the specialized schools as a holy grail.

Hasiba Haq, 28, lives in Kensington, a low-slung Brooklyn neighborhood known as Little Bangladesh. Her parents grew up on an island in the Bay of Bengal. Her father worked as a taxi driver when she was a student. She attended middle school in well-to-do Park Slope. “I became aware of internalized shame at not being white and wealthy,” she said. “I learned kids did not sit at home in summer: They went to ‘camp.’”

By the time she turned 11, her family and neighbors talked of the high school examination. Her parents enrolled her in a tutoring center, a rigorous boot camp with teenage Asian teachers drawn from the specialized high schools. The sticker price was $4,000. Her parents bargained hard, but still paid a small fortune.

“It was every weekend and classes over the summer,” Ms. Haq said. “Everyone in the community knew it was your turn to take the test.”

She got in and the local Bengali newspaper ran her photograph and those of other Bengali teenagers who gained admittance to specialized high schools. “Family honor is tied to it,” she said. “It’s kind of embarrassing.”

When she walked into Brooklyn Tech, she felt her shoulders drop. “I could finally breathe,” she said. “I was around kids like me.”

There were Bengalis and Pakistanis and Indians, the Brown Squad. There was a Latino Squad, a Russian Squad, a Black Squad, similar in their yearnings. She stayed up past midnight doing homework, one advanced course piled atop another.

“It was more difficult than college,” said Ms. Haq, a Fordham University graduate. “It was a hustle-and-grind culture.”

She is now 28, a producer at TED Talks. Like many alumni, she speaks of crosscurrents of ambivalence and pride about surviving that crucible. Folk wisdom has it that South Asians dominate the test but reality is messier. Many students in her tutoring classes fell short, and parent and child cried together. Some students dropped out.

More than 23,500 teenagers took the specialized high school test last year. Roughly 41 percent were Black and Latino, and 34 percent were Asian.

The examination can be problematic, as it requires knowledge of algebra, which is not offered to many middle school students. Ms. Haq was lucky enough to get offered that course. Tausifa Haque, the teenager from the Bronx, was not. Had her parents not paid for tutoring classes, she would have been at sea in that portion of the test.

“I thought I was the smartest kid in the world,” Tausifa said, laughing at her conceit. “Then I understood I did not know enough to pass the test without tutoring.”

She realized something else: Some of her middle school classmates had no chance. “One Black classmate, really smart, did not even realize there was a test,” she said. “There were uneven advantages.”

Being a Black Student at Tech

Diane Nunez, who is Black, and her son, Ricardo, 15, share a goal: to maximize his education and get him into a top college. His road was uncertain. He applied to the highly competitive Mark Twain Middle School and scored in the 97th percentile. The test cutoff was the 98th percentile.

When Ricardo was in seventh grade, Ms. Nunez received a guidance counselor’s email intended for another family. It mentioned a city-run tutoring course for the high school test. “I thought, ‘Wait a minute, Ricardo is smart enough for this,’” she said. “Why isn’t he getting offered this?”

Ms. Nunez dug into her savings and enrolled Ricardo in a private tutoring agency favored by Asian parents. Ricardo understood the lost weekends of study it would entail. “That was the most challenging academics I’d ever done,” Ricardo said. “But I knew where I wanted to end up.”

Once at Brooklyn Tech, he joined the Black student union. “I don’t feel like a minority,” he said. “We resist being pitted against each other at this school.”

Rachel Germany, a social studies teacher at Brooklyn Tech who is Black, serves as adviser to that student union. She is moved by the struggles of all her students. “I appreciate the diversity and love these kids,” she said. “Having said that, the dearth of Black and Latinx students in a public high school feels palpable and strange.”

City officials have long sought to arrest the decline in Black and Latino students at specialized high schools. In the mid-1990s, a chancellor started a tutoring program to much applause. Officials today could not say what became of that.

The Department of Education runs another tutoring initiative, known as the Dream Program, which six students described as substandard, a pale shadow of the rigor of the tutoring academies. “The teachers did not even know what the exam consisted of,” said Nabila Hoque, a senior at Brooklyn Tech. “They handed us out-of-date workbooks.”

Nabila, whose father is disabled and whose mother works in a uniform shop, enrolled at a tutoring academy. She was recently accepted at Duke University on a full scholarship.

Tutoring is no replacement for identifying gifted students and placing them in accelerated classes.

“There’s a big literature on the value of accelerated classes and it’s very favorable,” said James H. Borland, a professor at Columbia University Teachers College. “There’s a strong research base that shows it’s very beneficial.”

Jumaane Williams, who is Black and resides on the political left — where support is infrequently heard for the specialized exam — is the New York City public advocate. He describes himself as a public school baby, from kindergarten to his master’s, and he is insistent that he couldn’t have achieved any of it without Brooklyn Tech.

“The most clear failure has been establishing an accessible pipeline” for Black and Latino students, [*he wrote in The Daily News*](https://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/ny-oped-keep-the-test-change-the-system-20190327-i5hraxljj5bazhlfgqg77dgdtq-story.html). “In the past, gifted-and-talented programs in middle schools have been a reliable pathway.”

Horace Davis, a former Con Edison executive who is Black, spoke of his boyhood in East Flatbush, a ***working-class*** neighborhood in Brooklyn. He got into accelerated classes in his neighborhood school, and teachers pushed hard.

His sister and best friend encouraged him to take the test, Mr. Davis said.

“You have four years of courses at Brooklyn Tech taught at the college level,” he said. “It’s not just that you’re surrounded by smart students; you start to think of college and your life in a different way.”

An Uneven Playing Field

Little comes easy at a hothouse such as Brooklyn Tech. The weight of parental and teacher expectation make for much stress. Some fall to cheating; some leave.

“I got so much out of that school,” said Zarnaab Javaid, who is of Pakistani descent and now at the State University of New York at Binghamton. “What brings me hesitation is the sheer number of kids who were not happy.”

Alumni and students alike harbor the sense that as hard as they work, they benefit from unfair advantages. They point to college-level course offerings and a handsome moot court for the law class, and the battered robotics lab that produces students who win local and national competitions. Most private schools have more plushly appointed facilities but not public high schools.

These students chafe, though, at the notion that their success can be explained away by saying, Well, Asian students test well.

“You can’t just say Asian people are culturally predisposed to more education,” Mr. Javaid said.

These students voice a fear that harks back to earlier generations of ***working-class*** Jewish students who dealt with antisemitism. If officials toss the test and substitute portfolios, interviews and extracurricular accomplishments, it could be easier to dismiss Asians as faceless “grinds,” the students said.

“Many immigrant working families don’t have the time to get a portfolio together for their kids,” said Ms. Germany, the social studies teacher at Brooklyn Tech.

However stressful a high-stakes test, it means a surname is no obstacle. No one knows they are Bengali, Tibetan, Nigerian or Tajik.

Students and teachers spoke of alternatives. Establish variable passing scores so that economically disadvantaged, Latino or Black districts face somewhat lower bars than a wealthy majority-white district on the Upper West Side. Offer the exam to all eighth graders as a matter of course, and improve tutoring. Build out gifted and talented in nonwhite districts.

Again and again, the conversation returned to the broader problem. The elementary and middle schools must prepare more students to compete at the highest level.

“Bring grades or class rank into it if you need to; we should strive for a world where we don’t need Brooklyn Tech,” said Ayaan Ali, a senior whose parents emigrated from Pakistan. “But abolishing the test is like putting a Band-Aid over a gunshot wound.”

Hasiba Haq, the TED Talks producer, sees a mirror turning inward as students and teachers question the test and the toll it takes on students who feel a constant pressure to succeed. To dismiss the success of these students as one of segregated advantage, however, draws from her a shake of the head.

“We’re really trying to have this nuanced conversation about race and class and opportunity,” she said, “We haven’t found the words for it yet.”

PHOTOS: Brooklyn Tech and other test-screened high schools are subject to criticism and demands for reform. (A1); About 5,850 students attend Brooklyn Technical High School, one of the most academically rigorous schools in the U.S. Of that population, 61 percent are Asian, and 15 percent are Black and Latino.; Hasiba Haq, 28, a graduate of Fordham University, said Brooklyn Tech’s coursework was “more difficult than college.” (A14); Tausifa Haque, 17, is the daughter of Bangladeshi immigrants.; Nabila Hoque, a senior at Brooklyn Tech, received a full scholarship to Duke.; Rachel Germany, a social studies teacher, advises the Black student union. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARAH BLESENER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); “I don’t feel like a minority,” said Ricardo Nunez, a Black student union member. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RICK WENNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A15)

**Load-Date:** January 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Lesson of the Day: A Photographer Who Captures Stories That Would Otherwise Go Untold; Current Events***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:659W-VG81-JBG3-6237-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 27, 2022 Wednesday 05:00 EST

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**Section:** LEARNING; lesson-plans

**Length:** 718 words

**Byline:** Erica Ackerberg

**Highlight:** In this lesson, students will learn about the job of a New York Times photographer, and then create visual stories of their communities.

**Body**

In this lesson, students will learn about the job of a New York Times photographer, and then create visual stories of their communities.

Lesson Overview

Featured Article: “[*A Simple Directive Sparked a Storied Career: ‘Now, Take the Picture*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/15/arts/michelle-agins-photoville-photography.html),’” by Charlie Brinkhurst-Cuff with photographs by Michelle V. Agins

[*Michelle V. Agins*](https://www.nytimes.com/by/michelle-v-agins) is one of the longest-serving staff photographers at The New York Times. As only the second Black woman to join the newspaper as a staff photographer, she has spent much of her career documenting Black stories and Black American life.

In this lesson, you will look at Ms. Agins’s work and read about her path to becoming a professional photographer. Then, just as she does, you will look around your community and create your own visual story.

Warm-Up

Have you ever thought about what it’s like to be a photojournalist? Spend a few minutes considering what this job might entail. Then, respond to the following questions in writing or in a discussion with a classmate:

* What do you know about the job of a photojournalist? What do you wonder about it?

1. What do you think a day in the life of a photojournalist looks like? What qualities and skills might a photographer need to do the job well?
2. How do you think photos can tell stories? When you look at a photo, can you imagine what it’s like to be where it was taken?

To find out what this profession is all about, watch this video, which follows Todd Heisler, a New York Times staff photographer, through a day on the job. Then, respond to the questions below:

* What are some challenges Mr. Heisler faced on this assignment? What does he look for when he’s on assignment?

1. What is he trying to capture in his photographs?
2. Did the video change your ideas about being a photojournalist? Did anything that Mr. Heisler said stand out to you?

Questions for Writing and Discussion

[*Read the article*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/15/arts/michelle-agins-photoville-photography.html), and answer the following questions:

1. How did Ms. Agins’s childhood affect her career choice?

2. What were some challenges she faced in becoming a photographer?

3. Why does Ms. Agins feel drawn to documenting Black stories and the lives of Black Americans?

4. What approaches to visual storytelling do Ms. Agins and Mr. Heisler have in common?

5. Look back at the article, and pause on one photo. As you look closely at it, respond to these questions adapted from our [*What’s Going On in This Picture?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/06/learning/whats-going-on-in-this-picture-dec-7-2020.html) feature (be sure to write beyond the information in the text):

* What is going on in this picture?

1. How does this photo make you feel?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
3. What more can you find?

6. The author writes that Ms. Agins “considers her camera to be a part of the ongoing conversation she is having with the world around her.” What do you think Ms. Agins means?

Going Further

After witnessing and taking photos of violence in her community, Ms. Agins realized that “news photography could provide evidence and tell important stories in Black, ***working-class*** neighborhoods like her own.”

What important stories might you tell through photos of your community? What groups or individuals are often overlooked there? What corners of your town or city go unnoticed? What events, programs or gatherings in your community don’t get enough attention?

Choose a story about — or a particular angle on — the place you live. Here are some examples of photo essays that have appeared in The New York Times: [*block parties around New York City*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/09/15/nyregion/block-parties-nyc.html); [*life at band camp*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/08/19/arts/music/band-camp.html); and [*urban fisherman of Los Angeles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/31/travel/urban-fishing-los-angeles.html). You might also look through [*Ms. Agins*](https://www.nytimes.com/by/michelle-v-agins)’s and [*Mr. Heisler’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/by/todd-heisler) work for more inspiration.

Make a list of photos you hope to take to tell your story, and go out and create a photo essay of five to 10 photographs. You can use [*Google Slides*](https://www.google.com/slides/about/), or a more advanced design program like [*Canva*](https://www.canva.com/), to share your photos. Don’t forget to caption each photo and to give your collection a catchy headline.

If you want to learn some technical tips for photography, see our video “[*How to Think Like a Photographer With Todd Heisler*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3tOGP0t7Zw)” or our [*guide for photographing interesting people in your community*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/04/learning/lesson-plans/photographing-interesting-people-in-your-community-a-guide-to-taking-portraits.html).

Want more Lessons of the Day? You can find them all [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-article-of-the-day).

PHOTO: Michelle V. Agins is one of The Times’s longest-serving staff photographers and only the second Black woman photographer to work for the newspaper. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Gabriela Bhaskar/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Phony Coronavirus Class War***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YXX-NK51-JBG3-62C0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 19, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 27

**Length:** 961 words

**Byline:** By Michelle Goldberg

**Body**

Defiance of public health directives has become a mark of right-wing identity.

A Washington Post article on Sunday described people in a posh suburb of Atlanta celebrating liberation from coronavirus lockdown. ''I went to the antique mall yesterday on Highway 9 and it was just like -- it was like freedom,'' said a woman getting a pedicure.

''Yeah, I'm going to do the laser and the filler,'' said a woman at a wine bar, looking forward to cosmetic dermatology. ''When you start seeing where the cases are coming from and the demographics -- I'm not worried,'' said a man lounging in a plaza.

Only one person was quoted expressing trepidation: a masked clerk in a shoe store. ''I live an hour away and was driving in this morning, only me on the road, and I was thinking, 'Am I doing the right thing?''' she said.

Lately some commentators have suggested that the coronavirus lockdowns pit an affluent professional class comfortable staying home indefinitely against a ***working class*** more willing to take risks to do their jobs.

Writing in The Post, Fareed Zakaria tried to make sense of the partisan split over coronavirus restrictions, describing a ''class divide'' with pro-lockdown experts on one side and those who work with their hands on the other. On Fox News, Steve Hilton decried a ''37 percent work from home elite'' punishing ''real people'' trying to earn a living. In a column titled ''Scenes From the Class Struggle in Lockdown,'' The Wall Street Journal's Peggy Noonan wrote: ''Here's a generalization based on a lifetime of experience and observation. The ***working-class*** people who are pushing back have had harder lives than those now determining their fate.''

The assumptions underlying this generalization, however, are not based on even a cursory look at actual data. In a recent Washington Post/Ipsos survey, 74 percent of respondents agreed that the ''U.S. should keep trying to slow the spread of the coronavirus, even if that means keeping many businesses closed.'' Agreement was slightly higher -- 79 percent -- among respondents who'd been laid off or furloughed.

Researchers at the University of Chicago have been tracking the impact of coronavirus on a representative sample of American households. They've found that when it comes to judging policies on the coronavirus, ''politics is the overwhelming force dividing Americans,'' and that ''how households have been economically impacted by the Covid crisis so far'' plays only a minimal role.

Donald Trump and his allies have polarized the response to the coronavirus, turning defiance of public health directives into a mark of right-wing identity. Because a significant chunk of Trump's base is made up of whites without a college degree, there are naturally many such people among the lockdown protesters.

But it's a mistake to treat the growing ideological divide over when and how to reopen the country as a matter of class rather than partisanship. The push for a faster reopening, even in places where coronavirus cases are growing, has significant elite support. And many of those who face exposure as they're ordered back to work are rightly angry and terrified.

Because here's the thing about reopening: It's liberation to some, but compulsion to others. If your employer reopens but you don't feel safe going to work, you can't continue to collect unemployment benefits. In The Texas Tribune, a waitress in Odessa spoke of her fear when she was called back to work at a restaurant that hadn't put adequate social distancing measures in place. ''It scared me, so I left,'' she said. ''Then I had to remember that if I do quit, I would have to lose my unemployment.''

Meatpacking workers have been sickened with coronavirus at wildly disproportionate rates, and all over the country there have been protests outside of meatpacking plants demanding that they be temporarily closed, sometimes by the workers' own children. Perhaps because those demonstrators have been unarmed, they've received far less coverage than those opposed to lockdown orders.

Indeed, across America there's been a surge in labor activism as people made to work in unsafe conditions stage strikes, walkouts and sickouts. ''It sounds corny, but we're moving towards a worker rebellion,'' Ron Herrera, president of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, told The Los Angeles Times.

Meanwhile, financial elites are eager for everyone else to resume powering the economy. '''People Will Die. People Do Die.' Wall Street Has Had Enough of the Lockdown,'' was the headline on a recent Vanity Fair article. It cited a banker calling for ''broad legal indemnification for employers against claims related to the virus'' so that employees can't sue if their workplace exposes them to illness. Here we see the real coronavirus class divide.

In some ways I can relate to the exultant Georgians who've decided to deny the danger of coronavirus. I too hate life under lockdown and I yearn for some social distance from my children; every day I scan the news for information about whether schools will reopen in the fall. I'd love a pedicure, or a drink with a friend. And I know that plenty of people desperate to escape these grim new limits on our lives have far more urgent needs: to save a business or support their families.

But when it comes to the coronavirus, willingness to ignore public health authorities isn't a sign of flinty ***working-class*** realism. Often it's the ultimate mark of privilege.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/18/opinion/coronavirus-reopen-workers.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/18/opinion/coronavirus-reopen-workers.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Protesting coronavirus restrictions in Harrisburg, Pa., on Friday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jonathan Ernst/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Low-Key Suburb, High-End Neighbor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:675H-HJK1-JBG3-61WD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 25, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section RE; Column 0; Real Estate Desk; Pg. 5; LIVING IN

**Length:** 1550 words

**Byline:** By Jill P. Capuzzo

**Body**

The Passaic County township attracts those seeking more affordable homes with easy city access. (And yes, an episode of 'The Sopranos' was shot there.)

After years of renting apartments in Jersey City and Union City, N.J., Erica and Tim Walsh decided they were ready to start a family -- and that meant buying a house in the suburbs.

They set their sights on Montclair, a township in Essex County with an urban vibe that has long attracted city dwellers. It wasn't long, however, before they came to the conclusion that, given Montclair's property values, being in the general vicinity was good enough. That's when they decided to focus on neighboring Little Falls instead.

''We had always heard a lot about Montclair, with its cool mix of restaurants and bars, but it was clear we couldn't afford Montclair,'' said Ms. Walsh, 33, a product manager for a finance company.

In March of 2021, the couple bought a new four-bedroom raised ranch house in Little Falls for $850,000. Two months later, they were expecting their daughter, Lucie, now 9 months old.

''We finally felt we had room to breathe,'' she said, attributing the growth of their family in part to their move to Little Falls, where they have settled in happily. ''We really love it here. We've had a chance to explore a lot of the restaurants and are becoming kind of regulars.''

Unlike its glitzier neighbor, Little Falls maintains a modest profile, said Ray Damiano, 70, a real estate broker with Premier Properties and a longtime resident, who describes the township as a ***working-class***, family-oriented place. ''People generally live below their means,'' he said. ''They don't have the flashiest houses.''

Many of the township's 13,360 residents have deep roots there, said his son, James Damiano, who was elected mayor in 2016 at the age of 30: ''If you haven't lived here for many generations, you're brand-new.''

But in recent years, more young couples like the Walshes have discovered this low-key Passaic County township 16 miles west of Manhattan. In August, Yuliya Krol and Jason Green moved from their rental apartment in Brooklyn into a 1950s three-bedroom ranch house in Little Falls that they bought for $600,000, after being outbid on a number of other houses in the area.

''Little Falls is nice and quiet, but you can easily drive to more populated places,'' said Ms. Krol, 32, who works in sales for a technology company. ''The community is so nice. Everyone is so friendly -- you get the feeling that they really enjoy living and working here.''

Both couples were introduced to Little Falls by Maggie Sherman D'Aquila, a real estate agent with Compass. Ms. Sherman D'Aquila, now 43, moved to Little Falls from Park Slope, Brooklyn, five years ago, with her husband, Rob D'Aquila, a chiropractor, and their son, Talon, paying $495,000 for a four-bedroom ranch house with sunset views. (Talon is now 6 and has a younger brother, Hunter, 3.)

''I said at the time, 'There's no way I'm moving to New Jersey,''' she said. ''New Yorkers have this unrealistic view of New Jersey, thinking it's all I-95 or 'The Sopranos,' and I did, too. Now all I do is try to get people to cross the Hudson and come to the greener pastures of the Garden State.''

What You'll Find

As it happens, a scene from the HBO series ''The Sopranos'' was shot in a deli in Little Falls. The township was also home to the teenage Jonas Brothers, who wrote some of their early songs while living in a three-bedroom house in the Great Notch section.

The 2.87-square-mile township is divided into three sections: the easternmost Great Notch area, where larger homes sit on higher ground; the center of the township, where older residential streets radiate out from the commercial district; and the Singac section, where mostly modest homes and bungalows sit along curved roads that abut the Passaic River.

Much of the low-lying Singac area is in a designated flood zone. In recent years, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has bought and razed 139 homes that were subject to repeated flooding, said Mr. Damiano, the mayor, leaving what he described as a ''jack-o'lantern-style'' look in the neighborhood, with permanently empty lots next to existing houses.

Eager to keep property taxes down, he is upset over the loss of tax ratables from those missing homes, but he is more frustrated by the tax-exempt status of the large and growing Montclair State University. Despite being named for the neighboring township, the school straddles the two communities -- and more than 80 percent of its 252-acre campus is in Little Falls.

As a state institution, all of its land and buildings are exempt from local taxation, said Andrew Mees, the university's media relations director. With its last large property acquisition in Little Falls in 2012, he said, the school gave Little Falls a payment in lieu of taxes over the next five years totaling $882,731.

Near the center of the township, there are a number of condominium and rental apartment complexes, from The Mill at Little Falls, a condominium with about 320 units in a converted carpet mill along the Passaic River, to The Parke at Little Falls, a new townhouse development being built by Lennar.

What You'll Pay

As of mid-December, there were 23 properties on the market in Little Falls, including 11 single family homes, seven condominiums, two multifamily homes and three lots.

The highest priced home was a five-bedroom, three-and-a-half-bathroom house on 0.56 acres, built in 2002 and listed for $1.2 million, with annual taxes of $22,975; the lowest priced was a one-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment listed for $219,000, with taxes of $4,072 annually.

Prices have been fairly steady for the past several years. This year, through Dec. 12, 2022, 153 homes sold for an average price of $434,228, according to information from the Garden State Multiple Listing Service. During the same period in 2021, 147 homes sold for an average price of $424,611. And in 2020, 140 homes sold for an average price of $413,554. (That represents a slight uptick from before the pandemic: In 2019, 139 homes sold for an average price of $388,153.)

The Vibe

Small, one-of-a-kind shops and restaurants line East Main Street, and include popular spots like Ethan and the Bean coffee shop and A Taco Affair. The commercial center is currently getting its first face-lift in more than 50 years, with new lighting and curb upgrades.

Weekends are busy at the recently refurbished recreation center, where new turf football fields sit alongside pickleball, tennis and basketball courts and an indoor soccer center. At the heart of the complex is The Shack, an open-air restaurant where parents can take a break from watching their children's games and grab a burger.

Another popular gathering spot is Wilmore Park. Along with its war memorials and buried time capsule, the park is the site of summer concerts, a farmers' market and holiday celebrations.

The Schools

Public school students in prekindergarten through second grade attend Little Falls School No. 2, while those in third and fourth grades attend School No. 3 and those in fifth through eighth grade attend School No. 1.

In high school, Little Falls students join those from neighboring Totowa and Woodland Park at Passaic Valley Regional High School, in Little Falls. The school has just over 1,000 students and offers 13 Advanced Placement courses, 30 honors courses and 19 dual enrollment courses, where students can earn credits at local colleges and universities. In 2020-21, students' average SAT scores were 517 in reading and writing and 515 in math, compared with state averages of 557 and 560.

Private schools in the area include Pioneer Academy in Wayne, N.J., for students in prekindergarten through 12th grade, and Monarch Montessori School, in Little Falls, for children from six weeks old to those in fourth grade.

The Commute

Little Falls has two New Jersey Transit train stations: one near the center of the township and the other on the Montclair State University campus. The trip to Penn Station in Manhattan from the township station takes a little over an hour and includes a transfer in Newark; tickets are $9.25 one way or $270 for a monthly pass. The trip to Penn Station from Montclair State takes 47 to 57 minutes, with some direct train options; tickets are $7.75 one way or $227 a month.

New Jersey Transit bus No. 191 from Main Street to Port Authority Bus Terminal in Manhattan takes about 50 minutes and costs $7 one way or $199 for a monthly pass. The No. 193 bus from Willowbrook Mall, in Wayne, N.J., takes 33 minutes to reach the Port Authority and costs $8 one way or $235 a month.

The History

Little Falls was the central site for building the Morris Canal in the 1820s. Hundreds of workers descended on the township to dig the waterway trench and quarry Little Falls brownstone for the retaining walls. When the canal opened in 1829, canalboats powered by mules took five days to complete the 102-mile journey, bringing coal and goods from the Delaware River to Newark Bay. In 1925, when it was replaced by train transport, the canal was drained and closed. The portion running through Little Falls is now a nature preserve.

For weekly email updates on residential real estate news, sign up here.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/21/realestate/little-falls-new-jersey.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/21/realestate/little-falls-new-jersey.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Main Street and Paterson Avenue in Little Falls, N.J. The town ''is nice and quiet, but you can easily drive to more populated places,'' said Yuliya Krol, a resident. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page RE5.

**Load-Date:** December 25, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Newsom’s lead is large enough to withstand major polling errors.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63KY-JB01-DXY4-X3VJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 14, 2021 Tuesday 20:09 EST

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**Section:** US; elections

**Length:** 450 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Gov. Gavin Newsom’s lead now dwarfs the typical polling error and is large enough to withstand nearly every California polling miss in recent memory.

**Body**

Gov. Gavin Newsom’s lead now dwarfs the typical polling error and is large enough to withstand nearly every California polling miss in recent memory.

After the polls overestimated Democratic candidates in 2016 and 2020, it is reasonable to wonder whether Gov. Gavin Newsom’s lead in the [*California recall election*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/09/14/us/elections/results-california-recall.html) might prove as illusory as Hillary Clinton’s lead in Wisconsin or Joe Biden’s in Florida.

It’s not impossible. But Mr. Newsom’s lead now dwarfs the typical polling error and is large enough to withstand nearly every statewide polling miss in recent memory.

Opposition to recalling Mr. Newsom leads by 16 points, 57.3 to 41.5 percent, according to the [*FiveThirtyEight average*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/california-recall-polls/). Polls in 2020 overestimated the Democrats by an average of about five percentage points.

There was no state in either the 2016 or 2020 presidential elections where the final polls missed by 16 percentage points. Perhaps the worst recent polling miss — Senator Susan Collins’s comfortable nine-point victory after trailing in the polls by three points — is in the ballpark, but would still fall five points short of erasing Mr. Newsom’s lead.

Many of the most embarrassing and high-profile misses for pollsters, such as the seven-point polling errors in Wisconsin in 2016 and 2020, might still leave Mr. Newsom with a double-digit victory.

It is hard to find many precedents for such a large polling error. According to Harry Enten, a writer at CNN, there are only [*four cases*](https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/03/politics/newsom-rising-polls-recall/index.html) in the last 20 years where the polling average in a race for governor was off by at least 15 percentage points.

Mr. Newsom’s opponents can hope that the idiosyncrasies of a recall election might make it more challenging for pollsters than a typical general election. Special and primary elections often have larger polling errors.

But the polls were [*fairly accurate*](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/Congressional/California_Recall3.html) in the last California gubernatorial recall and [*dead-on*](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2012/governor/wi/wisconsin_governor_recall_election_walker_vs_barrett-3056.html) in the high-profile effort to recall former Gov. Scott Walker of Wisconsin in 2012. The high turnout in early voting in California so far tends to reduce the risk that an unusual turnout would contribute to a particularly large polling error.

And California is not a state where the polls have missed badly in recent election cycles. The largest polling errors have been in Wisconsin, Maine and other states with large numbers of white ***working-class*** voters. That’s not California. Just 22 percent of California voters in 2020 were whites without a four-year college degree, the second lowest of any state, according to census data.

Perhaps as a result, statewide polling in California has generally been fairly accurate.

Joe Biden led the final California polls by [*29.2 points*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/president-general/california/), according to FiveThirtyEight.

He won by[*29.2 points*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-california.html).

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[***Days Before the French Election, Le Pen Sees a Surge in the Polls***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6550-5V01-JBG3-60KK-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1639 words

**Byline:** By Roger Cohen

**Body**

President Emmanuel Macron's belated entry into the campaign and his focus on Ukraine have left him vulnerable to a strong challenge from the right.

PARIS -- At last, Emmanuel Macron stepped forth. The French president entered a vast arena this weekend, plunged into darkness and lit only by spotlights and glow sticks, before a crowd of 30,000 supporters in a domed stadium in the Paris suburbs.

It was a highly choreographed appearance -- his first campaign rally for an election now less than a week away -- with something of the air of a rock concert. But Mr. Macron had come to sound an alarm.

Do not think ''it's all decided, that it's all going to go well,'' he told the crowd, a belated acknowledgment that a presidential election that had seemed almost certain to return him to power is suddenly wide open.

The diplomatic attempt to end the war in Ukraine has been time-consuming for Mr. Macron, so much so that he has had little time for the French election, only to awaken to the growing danger that France could lurch to the anti-immigrant right, with its Moscow-friendly politics and its skepticism of NATO.

Marine Le Pen, the hard-right leader making her third attempt to gain power, has surged over the past couple of weeks, as her patient focus on cost-of-living issues has resonated with the millions of French people struggling to make ends meet after an increase of more than 35 percent in gas prices over the past year.

The most recent poll from the respected Ifop-Fiducial group showed Ms. Le Pen gaining 21.5 percent of the vote in the first round of voting next Sunday, almost double the vote share of the fading extreme-right upstart Éric Zemmour, with 11 percent, and closing the gap on Mr. Macron with 28 percent. The two leading candidates go through to a runoff on April 24.

More worrying for Mr. Macron, the poll suggested he would edge Ms. Le Pen by just 53.5 percent to 46.5 percent in the second round. In the last presidential election, in 2017, Mr. Macron trounced Ms. Le Pen by 66.1 percent to 33.9 percent in the runoff.

''It's an illusion that this election is won for Mr. Macron,'' said Nicolas Tenzer, an author who teaches political science at Sciences Po university. ''With a high abstention rate, which is possible, and the level of hatred toward the president among some people, there could be a real surprise. The idea that Le Pen wins is not impossible.''

Édouard Philippe, a former prime minister in Mr. Macron's government, warned this past week that ''of course Ms. Le Pen can win.''

This notion would have seemed ridiculous a month ago. Ms. Le Pen looked like a has-been after trying and failing in 2012 and 2017. Mr. Zemmour, a glib anti-immigrant TV pundit turned politician with more than a touch of Donald Trump about him, had upstaged her on the right of the political spectrum by suggesting that Islam and France were incompatible.

Now, however, Mr. Zemmour's campaign appears to be sinking in a welter of bombast, as Ms. Le Pen, who said last year that ''Ukraine belongs to Russia's sphere of influence,'' reaps the benefits of her milquetoast makeover.

Mr. Zemmour may in the end have done Ms. Le Pen a service. By outflanking her on the right, by becoming the go-to candidate for outright xenophobia, he has helped the candidate of the National Rally (formerly the National Front) in her ''banalization'' quest -- the attempt to gain legitimacy and look more ''presidential'' by becoming part of the French political mainstream.

Mr. Macron has fallen two or three percentage points in polls over the past week, increasingly criticized for his refusal to debate other candidates and his general air of having more important matters on his mind, like war and peace in Europe, than the laborious machinations of French democracy.

A front-page cartoon in the daily newspaper Le Monde last week showed Mr. Macron clutching his cellphone and turning away from the crowd at a rally. ''Vladimir, I'm just finishing with this chore and I'll call you back,'' he says.

With a colorless prime minister in Jean Castex -- Mr. Macron has tended to be wary of anyone who might impinge on his aura -- there have been few other compelling political figures able to carry the president's campaign in his absence. His centrist political party, La République en Marche, has gained no traction in municipal and regional politics. It is widely viewed as a mere vessel for Mr. Macron's agenda.

His government's wide use of consulting firms, including McKinsey -- involving spending of more than $1.1 billion, some of it on the best ways to confront Covid-19 -- has also led to a wave of criticism of Mr. Macron in recent days. A former banker, Mr. Macron has often been attacked as ''the president of the rich'' in a country with deeply ambivalent feelings about wealth and capitalism.

Still, Mr. Macron has proved adept at occupying the entire central spectrum of French politics through his insistence that freeing up the economy is compatible with maintaining, and even increasing, the French state's role in social protection. Prominent figures of the center-left and center-right attended his rally on Saturday.

Over the course of the past five years, he has shown both faces of his politics, first simplifying the labyrinthine labor code and spurring a start-up business culture, then adopting a policy of ''whatever it costs'' to save people's livelihoods during the coronavirus pandemic. His handling of that crisis, after a slow start, is widely viewed as successful.

''He absolutely proved up to the task,'' Mr. Tenzer said.

Still, much of the left feels betrayed by his policies, whether on the environment, the economy or the place of Islam in French society, and Mr. Macron was at pains on Saturday to counter the view that his heart lies on the right. Citing investments in education, promising to raise minimum pensions and give a tax-free bonus to employees this summer, Mr. Macron proclaimed his concern for those whose salaries vanish in ''gasoline, bills, rents.''

It felt like catch-up time after Mr. Macron had judged that his image as a statesman-peacemaker would be enough to ensure him a second term. Vincent Martigny, a professor of political science at the University of Nice, said of Mr. Macron that ''his choice to remain head of state until the end prevented him from becoming a real candidate.''

The worrying scenario for Mr. Macron is that Mr. Zemmour's vote would go to Ms. Le Pen in a runoff, and that she would be further bolstered by the wide section of the left that feels betrayed or just viscerally hostile toward the president, as well as by some center-right voters for whom immigration is a core issue.

On the president's first campaign foray into the provinces, a visit to Dijon last week where he spent time in a ***working-class*** area, accompanied by the socialist mayor, Mr. Macron offered this explanation of his sometimes seesawing policies: ''When you walk you need two legs. One on the left, and one on the right. And you have to place one after the other in order to advance.''

It was the sort of clever phrase that infuriates Mr. Macron's opponents, leaving them unsure what angle to attack him from.

Ms. Le Pen has focused relentlessly on economic issues, promising to reduce gas and electricity prices, tax the hiring of foreign employees to favor nationals, preserve the 35-hour week and maintain the retirement age at 62, whereas Mr. Macron wants to raise it to 65.

Mr. Macron has warned that the French will have to ''work harder,'' a phrase dear to the former center-right president Nicolas Sarkozy, and so a means to lure Mr. Sarkozy's faithful followers to the Macron camp.

If Ms. Le Pen has wanted to appear a softened politician, she is by no means as transformed from the anti-immigrant zealot she was as she likes to suggest. Her program includes a plan to hold a referendum that would lead to a change in the Constitution that would bar policies that lead to ''the installation on national territory of a number of foreigners so large that it would change the composition and identity of the French people.''

''France, land of immigration, is finished,'' she said in February. She also said the French must not allow their country to ''be buried under the veil of multiculturalism.'' In September 2021, she declared: ''French delinquents in prison, foreigners on a plane!''

The ***working-class*** vote is essentially split between Ms. Le Pen and the hard-left candidate, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, who has also been gaining ground in recent polls as the electorate begins to focus on what vote would be most effective in propelling a candidate into the second round. But at around 15 percent, Mr. Mélenchon appears to be well adrift still from Ms. Le Pen in the race for the runoff.

The French left has proved chronically split to the point of near political irrelevance for the first time since the Fifth Republic's foundation in 1958. The Socialist Party, whose candidate François Hollande won the 2012 election and governed until 2017, has collapsed, with just 1.5 percent of the vote in the Ifop-Fiducial poll.

Although Ms. Le Pen has tried to distance herself a little from President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, whom she met in Moscow in 2017, and whose policies she had backed until the war in Ukraine, she remains allergic to hard-line measures toward Russia. A victory by her would threaten European unity, alarm French allies from Washington to Warsaw, and confront the European Union with its biggest crisis since Brexit.

''Do we want to die?'' she asked in a recent television debate, when asked if France should cut off oil and gas imports from Russia. ''Economically, we would die!''

She added: ''We have to think of our people.''

Constant Méheut contributed reporting.Constant Méheut contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/03/world/europe/french-election-le-pen-macron.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/03/world/europe/french-election-le-pen-macron.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: President Emmanuel Macron of France held his first campaign rally Saturday in the Paris suburbs.

Mr. Macron, acknowledging his slim lead, told the crowd not to think that ''it's all decided.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Marine Le Pen, center on Friday, opposes immigration and was a public Putin supporter. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

**Load-Date:** April 4, 2022

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[***Going From Paris to the Periphery***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y1C-B761-JBG3-6227-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Norimitsu Onishi

**Body**

Short of cash, the Socialist Party has moved its headquarters from a Parisian mansion once owned by a princess to a converted factory in the suburbs.

IVRY-SUR-SEINE, France -- Maybe it was the equivalent of moving from the Upper East Side of Manhattan to Queens or Staten Island or even New Jersey.

For decades, the headquarters of the Socialist Party, which held France's presidency until just a couple of years ago, was ensconced in the heart of Paris -- a stroll to the nation's top schools; the Orsay and Louvre museums; the National Assembly and, across the Seine, the Élysée Palace. A constellation of Michelin-starred restaurants shined from every direction.

Today, its new home, in a converted pharmaceutical factory, shares a block with a scrap metal dealer and a beverage wholesaler, just behind the railroad tracks of the commuter transit system that services the ''banlieue,'' or suburb, of Ivry-sur-Seine. A party stalwart grumbled that his ''GPS couldn't find the street,'' but even some locals seemed lost.

''Really?'' Kamrul Islam said when informed that France's Socialist Party was a two-minute walk from his Hawaiian-style poke bowl restaurant, adding that he was less interested in politics than food. ''Before it was tacos in France, now it is time for poke. I don't know how many years we're going to survive with the poke bowls. But we're not going to change anything until we see it is bad.''

For years, the Socialist Party survived on a poke bowl of increasingly free-market economics and liberal social policies, but did not change despite growing popular discontent with the two-party system in which it had secured a comfortable spot. Mirroring the decline of Social Democrats across Europe, France's Socialists failed to capitalize on anger over globalization and rising inequality, ceding those issues especially to far-right populists.

Since 2017, the Socialist Party has suffered a series of electoral defeats so disastrous that its very survival remains in doubt. The biggest beneficiary, of course, has been President Emmanuel Macron himself, a former investment banker and brief interloper with Socialists before he jettisoned them in 2017 to create his own centrist party.

But since then, Mr. Macron, too, has struggled to connect with the ***working-class*** voters who used to form the core of Socialist supporters. Instead he has earned a reputation as the president of the rich and faced the wrath of the Yellow Vest movement in a country of widening social cleavages.

Some Socialists say those failings still leave them an opening. The optimists cast the party's move from Paris's Seventh Arrondissement a year ago because of financial constraints not as a retreat but as a chance at rebirth -- an opportunity to shed their image of being limousine liberals and the ''gauche caviar.''

Their new home in Ivry-sur-Seine, an eastern, ***working-class*** suburb, gentrifying in pockets, which remains a stronghold of the French Communist Party, represented that aspiration, they say.

''The symbol we sought was to be able to say that we are, once again, among those we're called to represent,'' said Olivier Faure, the party's secretary general, adding that the party's former supporters had ''sometimes felt abandoned once we were in power.''

In an interview in his glass-walled office, Mr. Faure, 51, unfurled a map to bring back his party to relevance. He said his party would focus on the destructive effects of globalization and free markets on people and the environment.

Just as his party had represented workers in the past, it needed to address the needs of those toiling in an ''Uberized economy,'' who ''in reality are slaves of algorithms and management methods that are extremely brutal.''

Like all parties in France, from the extreme left to the extreme right, the Socialists were keenly aware of the rising importance of the environment as an electoral issue. To Mr. Faure, the biggest victims of climate change were globalization's losers, and his party must make it its mission to defend them.

Focusing on these issues, he said, would lead to ''the renewal of social democrats on one condition -- that they integrate these changes into their vision and become once again a disruptive force.''

It was during the tenure of the last Socialist president, François Hollande, who served from 2012 to 2017, that there was a ''break'' between the party and its ***working-class*** supporters, Mr. Faure said. The party's traditional base ''felt betrayed'' by Mr. Hollande's business-friendly policies -- Mr. Macron was a senior adviser, then economy minister -- and especially a labor law that made it easier to hire and fire people, he added.

The party's push on socially liberal issues, like gay marriage, made it better known as the choice of the urban ''bobo,'' or bohemian bourgeois.

The Socialists slipped into an ''intellectual laziness'' abetted by France's two-party system, which pitted the left against the right, he said. They failed to realize that ''gradually there were many French who were switching off and who no longer saw a place on the right or on the left.''

Today, with the Socialists in disarray, France's dominant parties are instead Mr. Macron's La République en Marche and the far-right National Rally of Marine Le Pen.

But the Socialists are not alone in their pain. What happened to them has occurred elsewhere in Europe -- Germany, Italy and increasingly even in Britain, where Social Democrats and the Labour party had dominated after the end of the Cold War, but steadily slipped into crisis.

''They failed to grasp the consequences of globalization,'' said Alain Bergounioux, a historian who is an expert on Socialism.

Today, he added, the party's place in the nation's political spectrum has shrunk: Many ***working-class*** voters drifted to the extreme right, while Mr. Macron and the ascendant Greens were grabbing left-leaning middle-class voters.

Jean-Christophe Cambadélis, who served as the party's secretary general between 2014 and 2017, said that to regain relevance France's left would need to undergo a more radical makeover, with the Socialists establishing formal ties with ideological allies.

A new party on the left would succeed only by offering a new vision that, he said, should focus on fighting for the ''integrity of the individual'' facing bewildering changes, like climate change, the digital economy and medical revolutions.

''It's not the concept of workers' emancipation from the 1960s,'' he said, ''but one that says that, in our age of revolutions, the integrity of human beings must be defended.''

The future seemed limitless when the party moved into its old headquarters -- at 10 rue de Solférino in the Seventh Arrondissement -- months before the Socialists won the presidency for the first time, with François Mitterrand in 1981. Back then, the choice of location had a different message: ''To show that the left was ready to govern,'' Mr. Faure said.

Not that there weren't critics. For a party devoted to defending the ***working class***, an address in one of the capital's richest neighborhoods sounded dissonant.

There was also the building's inconvenient past: a vast M-shaped building once owned by a princess who was known for holding one of Paris's most sought-after salons and for keeping a pet elephant.

Its sale by the party, to a French developer, brought nearly 46 million euros, or about $51 million, which it used to pay off debts and buy its new headquarters for ?7 million, renovations included.

Many party officials grumbled openly about the move. Julien Dray, a legendary party fixer whose exploits have been the basis of the hit series, ''Baron Noir,'' told the French media that his ''GPS couldn't find the street'' where the new headquarters is.

''It's true,'' Mr. Dray said in a recent interview in Paris.

He added: ''We panicked and rushed to sell to reduce costs. But symbolically that hurt us a lot. It gave the impression that the Socialist Party didn't believe in itself.''

Mr. Cambadélis, the former leader who was behind the sale of the former headquarters, said there was no other option. He said he would have preferred moving to a more modest area at least within Paris. Many party members were depressed that their new home was just outside the highway ringing Paris, called Périphérique, he said.

''We were becoming peripheral,'' he said.

In Ivry-sur-Seine, the party still appeared to be searching for its place in a banlieue undergoing change. A housing project that once symbolized the power of French Communists was being demolished.

But the Communists were still in charge and, during lunch on a recent Thursday, its local leaders huddled at a corner table at O'Papillon, a fancy restaurant a block from the new Socialist headquarters.

So far, the Socialists have kept a low profile in their new neighborhood, according to many locals, who said they saw very little foot traffic in and out of the new headquarters.

''The Socialists are in a very bobo part of Ivry, with a lot of artist lofts,'' said Benjamin Gozlan, a painter and illustrator who was born in and still lives in Ivry-sur-Seine. ''They held a reception after they moved in. But they really haven't made any waves.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/12/world/europe/france-socialists-home-paris.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/12/world/europe/france-socialists-home-paris.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The new headquarters of France's Socialist Party in Ivry-sur-Seine is on the same block as a scrap metal dealer and a beverage wholesaler.

Olivier Faure, the secretary general of the party, said that the move symbol- ized that ''we are, once again, among those we're called to represent. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2020

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[***An Accomplished Partner Helped Shape a Candidate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66T2-YGY1-JBG3-62FX-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Joseph Bernstein and Katherine Rosman

**Body**

The Ohio Senate candidate's wife, an accomplished lawyer, remains ensconced in the milieu he now rails against.

In 2013, two students at Yale Law School decided to organize a discussion group on the subject of ''social decline in white America.''

One of them was J.D. Vance, currently the Republican candidate in Ohio for a U.S. Senate seat.

For him, the subject matter was intensely personal: He had grown up in an economically depressed area of Ohio, and was raised in large part by his grandparents as his mother struggled with addiction.

He had lived the material.

The other student behind the project was Usha Chilukuri, the child of Indian immigrants, from an ethnically diverse San Diego suburb. For her, white social decline may have been an intellectual interest -- but it was one with special significance. She was then Mr. Vance's girlfriend, now his wife, known as Usha Vance.

The reading list for the group, according to emails reviewed by The New York Times, included scholarly papers like ''Urban Appalachian Children: An 'Invisible' Minority in City Schools.'' The syllabus would become something like the theoretical spine for Mr. Vance's hit 2016 memoir ''Hillbilly Elegy,'' which is set against the social ills of the white ***working class*** in the postindustrial Midwest.

On paper, the gregarious Mr. Vance and the reserved Ms. Chilukuri may not have looked like a fit. But, according to contemporaries at Yale Law School, they were matched in their determination to conquer the prestigious worlds before them.

Ms. Vance, 36, who only selectively comes into the spotlight on her husband's campaign, helped shape -- and actualize -- Mr. Vance's ambitions, he has said. Her husband had outgoing charm in a room, but she knew, from a lifetime of experience, how to succeed.

''Usha was like my Yale spirit guide,'' he wrote in ''Hillbilly Elegy'' of his wife, who was played by the glamorous actress Freida Pinto in the Netflix adaptation of the book. ''She instinctively understood the questions I didn't even know to ask and she always encouraged me to seek opportunities that I didn't know existed.''

Her counsel to him, he has said, continues. ''I'm one of those guys who really benefits from having sort of a powerful female voice over his left shoulder saying, ''Don't do that, do that,'' Mr. Vance told Megyn Kelly in a 2020 interview on her podcast, ''The Megyn Kelly Show.'' For a long time, the powerful female voice in Mr. Vance's life was his grandmother, whom he called Mamaw and wrote about in ''Hillbilly Elegy.''

''Now,'' he said on the podcast, ''it's Usha.''

And yet, in recent years, Mr. Vance, 38, has created a public image that is remarkably at odds with the world in which he and his wife built their reputations.

Once a Never Trumper who made his name deciphering ***working-class*** white resentment for the liberal center, Mr. Vance has tacked to the right leading up to and during his Senate campaign. He has staked out a place as a leader of an ascendant wing of highly nationalistic Republicans. This group supports significant restrictions on immigration and champions the traditional nuclear family. They blame universities and Silicon Valley for the rise of ''woke capital,'' which they define as the trend of multinational corporations taking progressive stances on social issues to distract from practices that hurt American workers.

Mr. Vance's recent rhetoric, which resulted in a Donald Trump endorsement in April, has been piercing of the so-called establishment and its values. (Though, of course, there are few gigs more prestigious in American life than senator.)

In June, two days after the Supreme Court struck down Roe v. Wade, Mr. Vance tweeted, ''If your worldview tells you that it's bad for women to become mothers but liberating for them to work 90 hours a week in a cubicle at the New York Times or Goldman Sachs, you've been had.''

Ms. Vance was, according to an online database that includes voter registration records, a registered Democrat until at least 2014. She has clerked for Supreme Court Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and works at Munger, Tolles & Olson, a California law firm whose website describes its corporate culture as ''radically progressive.''

In other words, though Ms. Vance has supported Mr. Vance's rightward turn, she remains ensconced in the milieu that Mr. Vance, in his current campaign persona, rails against.

Through a spokeswoman, Ms. and Mr. Vance declined to be interviewed for this article.

From Yale to Newsmax

Press attention in Ohio to Ms. Vance has been scant, but sometimes racially insensitive. An Oct. 10 editorial cartoon in The Plain Dealer, a Cleveland newspaper, attempted to satirize Mr. Vance's criticism of the decision by Cleveland's Major League Baseball team last year to change its name from the Indians to the Guardians. The cartoon showed Mr. Vance dressed in a San Francisco Giants uniform and speaking into a microphone. The caption read: ''Only Indians name change I support is my wife's to 'Senator J.D. Vance's spouse.'''

At a campaign stop in Middletown, Ohio, Mr. Vance addressed the cartoon and his criticism of the media. ''You're making a racist joke about my wife, and no one is calling them out for it,'' he said. ''It's disgusting and despicable, and it's why nobody trusts the media.'' A spokeswoman for The Plain Dealer declined to comment.

In August, the Vances appeared together on Newsmax, the cable channel to the right of Fox News, which refused to call the 2020 presidential race for Joe Biden for more than a month after the election. Ms. Vance sat to her husband's left, her hand on his arm. They were in front of a bookshelf that included book club favorites like ''The Growing Season'' by Sarah Frey and ''Crying in H Mart,'' the 2021 memoir by the Japanese Breakfast musician Michelle Zauner, alongside the libertarian classic ''The Road to Serfdom.''

''The J.D. that I met back when we were in law school is the J.D. that I'm sitting next to right now,'' Ms. Vance told the anchor, a sound bite that seemed designed to meet the criticism that her husband was a Johnny-come-lately to the populist wing of the Republican Party.

(The couple's top-drawer education may not be a positive thing to highlight for some of the channel's viewers; Newsmax earlier this year published a piece with the headline ''Whatever They're Teaching at Yale Law School, It's Frightening.'')

The Newsmax appearance wasn't the only indication that Ms. Vance was supportive of her husband's political metamorphosis. In December 2021, Federal Election Commission records show, she gave money to Blake Masters, an Arizona Senate candidate, a fellow national conservative who, like Mr. Vance, has received millions in donations from the tech billionaire Peter Thiel. (Both Mr. Vance and Mr. Masters have worked for Mr. Thiel.) It is the only political contribution the F.E.C. has on record for her.

'She Was the Boss'

Ms. Vance has been preparing to succeed her whole life. She was raised in Rancho Peñasquitos, an upwardly mobile suburb of San Diego, by a mechanical engineer and a biologist. The family was part of a small, close-knit community of Indian American academics and professionals, and their children.

''By age 5 or 6, she had assumed a leadership role,'' said Vikram Rao, a close family friend of Ms. Vance's who works in Silicon Valley. ''She decided which board games we were going to play and what the rules were going to be. She was never mean or unkind, but she was the boss.''

Ms. Vance was ''a bookworm'' in high school, according to Lizzie Le, a classmate who is a real estate agent in Rancho Peñasquitos. Ms. Vance played the flute in the school marching band. She was competitive. When The San Diego Union-Tribune interviewed high school students taking part in a trivia competition, Usha, 17 at the time, told the newspaper, ''It's not enough to know the answers, you have to do it fast.''

At Yale, her résumé continued to be well rounded. She majored in history, volunteered to help the homeless, tutored public school students and edited a public school advocacy magazine called Our Education. She learned cultural dances associated with ballet folklorico.

After Yale, she studied at the University of Cambridge on a Gates Cambridge Scholarship, to research the origins of copyright law.

According to Gabriel Winant, a friend of Ms. Vance's at Cambridge who is now a historian at the University of Chicago, their broader friend group was left of center, with Marxists well represented. Mr. Winant described Ms. Vance as smart, reserved and occasionally acerbic.

''She could notice something funny or hypocritical or ironic in what others were saying or doing,'' he said.

Ms. Vance was keenly aware of the importance of brand-name credentials, Mr. Winant said. When he was deciding where to go to graduate school, ''I remember her saying Yale is the best place,'' Mr. Winant said. ''It will turn your career into what you want it to be.''

At Yale Law School, she and Mr. Vance were in the same first year ''small group'' of about 15 students who take all their classes together. Mr. Vance was instantly smitten.

''She seemed some sort of genetic anomaly, a combination of every positive quality a human being should have: bright, hardworking, tall, and beautiful,'' he wrote in his memoir. ''I joked with a buddy that if she had possessed a terrible personality, she would have made an excellent heroine in an Ayn Rand novel, but she had a great sense of humor and an extraordinarily direct way of speaking.''

Both Mr. and Ms. Vance took contract law from Amy Chua, the popular but divisive professor, who became a mentor to each. Ms. Chua encouraged Mr. Vance to write ''Hillbilly Elegy,'' and to focus on his relationship with Ms. Vance, according to a 2017 interview with The Atlantic.

They married in Kentucky in 2014, with wooden benches for guests set outside in the grass. In a separate ceremony, they were blessed by a Hindu pundit.

A Political Cipher

As Mr. Vance worked on ''Hillbilly Elegy,'' his wife pursued federal clerkships, first in the Eastern District of Kentucky, and then in the prestigious U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, where she clerked for Judge Brett M. Kavanaugh. In Washington, Mr. Vance practiced law at Sidley Austin.

''Usha definitely brings me back to earth,'' Mr. Vance told Ms. Kelly in 2020 on her podcast. ''If I get a little too cocky or a little too proud, I just remind myself that she's way more accomplished than I.''

In 2015, the Vances moved to San Francisco, where Ms. Vance started as an associate at Munger, Tolles & Olson, and Mr. Vance went to work at Mithril Capital, an investment firm co-founded by Peter Thiel.

A 2019 American Lawyer article about Munger, Tolles & Olson's diverse hiring practices put it in the ''cool, woke category.'' Though she had clerked for conservative judges, Ms. Vance was perceived by her colleagues as a liberal or a moderate, according to two people who worked with her at the firm, and asked for anonymity because they did not want to face professional consequences for discussing a colleague.

In 2017, Ms. Vance clerked for Chief Justice Roberts on the Supreme Court. Her colleagues were as impressed by her intelligence -- she had ''intimidating smarts,'' as Nick Harper, a fellow Supreme Court clerk, said -- as they were by her dedication to caring for her and Mr. Vance's newborn first child alongside the demanding job. (The Vances now have three children under the age of 6.)

''It was clear that her family was immensely important to her,'' said Sean Mirski, another clerk at the time. Mr. Vance, riding high on the success of ''Hillbilly Elegy,'' was a frequent guest at clerk happy hours. Neither Mr. Harper nor Mr. Mirski recalled Ms. Vance ever discussing politics.

Indeed, Ms. Vance is something of a political enigma even to people who know her extremely well.

''Political football has never been a central part of her identity,'' said Mr. Rao, who, before the pandemic, had been a guest at the Vance home in Cincinnati. ''This is not someone who wakes up every day and thinks, 'Did my team win or lose?'''

But Mr. Vance plays the game. As he has chased far-right voters, he has castigated the world his wife comes from, the one that shaped him as a young adult.

In November 2021, Mr. Vance gave a speech at the National Conservatism Conference entitled ''The Universities are the Enemy.''

''We have to honestly and aggressively attack the universities in this country,'' said Mr. Vance, whose mother-in-law is a college provost at the University of California San Diego. ''The universities do not pursue knowledge and truth,'' he added. ''They pursue deceit and lies.''

That world has, in turn, started to reject Mr. Vance. Ahead of the September 2021 wedding of Sophia Chua-Rubenfeld -- a daughter of Ms. Chua -- multiple guests requested not to be seated next to the Vances, according to two people who attended the wedding. (The couple did not attend, in the end, because their children had the flu and Ms. Vance was soon to deliver their third child, according to two people close to the Vance family.)

Ms. Vance returned to Munger, Tolles & Olson in 2019. Her work has included helping to defend the University of California against claims that it violated Title IX, and the Walt Disney Company, against claims of copyright infringement.

According to one former and one current lawyer at the firm, some employees at Munger, Tolles & Olson are confused and disappointed by Ms. Vance's support of her husband's Trumpian turn, and his rhetoric on gender and immigration.

A New Life in Ohio

In 2018 the couple bought a 5,000 square-foot Victorian Gothic house on several acres in an upscale, liberal-leaning neighborhood on the east side of Cincinnati. The house, which cost $1.4 million, dates back to 1858 and is considered an important home by local historians. It has a sweeping staircase, verdant grounds for their dogs, Pippin and Casper, and separate structures including a two-story building by a swimming pool.

Ms. Vance -- who works remotely for her firm's San Francisco and D.C. offices -- is not widely known among the city's establishment, though in 2020 she joined the board of directors of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. (Dianne Rosenberg, the board chair and a civic leader and patron of the arts in Cincinnati, declined to comment about Ms. Vance joining the board.)

Mr. Vance's first ad to air on television after he won the Republican primary last spring featured Ms. Vance, sitting at a table in a blue dress with polka dots, making her husband's pitch. ''Our family's story is an Ohio story,'' she said.

After that, Ms. Vance faded back into the background of the campaign's narrative for months.

''She has not been appearing alongside J.D. the way Fran DeWine appears alongside Mike DeWine,'' said Mark R. Weaver, a veteran Republican strategist in Ohio, referring to the state's governor and his wife. ''That is the ultimate 100 percent deployment of a political spouse. It's just very difficult to deploy your wife in your campaign aggressively when you have three young children and she has a platinum level legal career.''

Mr. Weaver noted that Ms. Vance's coastal credentials may have been more of an issue for Republican primary voters last spring than they are in the general contest this fall.

And as the race has moved into its final stages, Ms. Vance has become more publicly involved. On Oct. 20, she joined Ms. DeWine, at an event in support of an agricultural interest group called ''Our Ohio,'' held at Phillips Tube Group, a woman-led steel tube manufacturer. (Mr. DeWine is running for re-election, and, like Mr. Vance, he has been endorsed by Mr. Trump.)

Once the campaign is behind them, perhaps Ms. Vance will have more time for one of her passions -- reading. Between 2007 and 2010, Ms. Vance posted 65 ''read'' books to her Goodreads account, including novels by Zadie Smith, Jonathan Safran Foer and Vladimir Nabokov, as well as nonfiction by Nina Burleigh and Nicholas Kristof. Then her account went dormant for six years.

In 2016, Ms. Vance briefly returned to Goodreads to share her enthusiasm for a new book: ''Hillbilly Elegy.'' She gave it a 5-star rating.

Kitty Bennett and Kirsten Noyes contributed research. Kitty Bennett and Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/01/style/usha-jd-vance-ohio.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/01/style/usha-jd-vance-ohio.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: J.D. and Usha Vance celebrating his victory in the Republican primary in May as he runs for a Senate seat from Ohio. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GAELEN MORSE/REUTERS) This article appeared in print on page ST12.

**Load-Date:** November 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[***French Election Opens Up as Marine Le Pen Surges***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6550-6371-DXY4-X45F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 4, 2022 Monday 15:49 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1687 words

**Byline:** Roger Cohen

**Highlight:** President Emmanuel Macron’s belated entry into the campaign and his focus on Ukraine have left him vulnerable to a strong challenge from the right.

**Body**

President Emmanuel Macron’s belated entry into the campaign and his focus on Ukraine have left him vulnerable to a strong challenge from the right.

PARIS — At last, [*Emmanuel Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/emmanuel-macron) stepped forth. The French president entered a vast arena this weekend, plunged into darkness and lit only by spotlights and glow sticks, before a crowd of 30,000 supporters in a domed stadium in the Paris suburbs.

It was a highly choreographed appearance — his first campaign rally for an election now less than a week away — with something of the air of a rock concert. But Mr. Macron had come to sound an alarm.

Do not think “it’s all decided, that it’s all going to go well,” he told the crowd, a belated acknowledgment that a [*presidential election*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/french-presidential-election) that had seemed almost certain to return him to power is suddenly wide open.

The diplomatic attempt to end the war in [*Ukraine has been time-consuming for Mr. Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/world/europe/macron-france-russia-ukraine.html?searchResultPosition=1), so much so that he has had little time for the French election, only to awaken to the growing danger that [*France could lurch to the anti-immigrant right*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/18/world/europe/france-election-macron-zemmour-le-pen.html?searchResultPosition=12), with its Moscow-friendly politics and its skepticism of NATO.

[*Marine Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/marine-le-pen), the hard-right leader making her third attempt to gain power, has surged over the past couple of weeks, as her patient focus on cost-of-living issues has resonated with the millions of French people struggling to make ends meet after an increase of more than 35 percent in gas prices over the past year.

The [*most recent poll from the respected Ifop-Fiducial group*](https://www.ifop.com/presidentielle-2022/) showed Ms. Le Pen gaining 21.5 percent of the vote in the first round of voting next Sunday, almost double the vote share of the fading extreme-right upstart [*Éric Zemmour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/27/world/europe/eric-zemmour-france.html), with 11 percent, and closing the gap on Mr. Macron with 28 percent. The two leading candidates go through to a runoff on April 24.

More worrying for Mr. Macron, the poll suggested he would edge Ms. Le Pen by just 53.5 percent to 46.5 percent in the second round. In the last presidential election, in 2017, Mr. Macron trounced Ms. Le Pen by 66.1 percent to 33.9 percent in the runoff.

“It’s an illusion that this election is won for Mr. Macron,” said Nicolas Tenzer, an author who teaches political science at Sciences Po university. “With a high abstention rate, which is possible, and the level of hatred toward the president among some people, there could be a real surprise. The idea that Le Pen wins is not impossible.”

Édouard Philippe, a former prime minister in Mr. Macron’s government, warned this past week that “of course Ms. Le Pen can win.”

This notion would have seemed ridiculous a month ago. Ms. Le Pen looked like a has-been after trying and failing in 2012 and 2017. Mr. Zemmour, a glib anti-immigrant TV pundit turned politician with [*more than a touch of Donald Trump about him*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/17/world/europe/zemmour-france-presidency-trump.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article), had upstaged her on the right of the political spectrum by suggesting that Islam and France were incompatible.

Now, however, Mr. Zemmour’s campaign appears to be sinking in a welter of bombast, as Ms. Le Pen, who said last year that “Ukraine belongs to Russia’s sphere of influence,” reaps the benefits of her milquetoast makeover.

Mr. Zemmour may in the end have done Ms. Le Pen a service. By outflanking her on the right, by becoming the go-to candidate for outright xenophobia, he has helped the candidate of the National Rally (formerly the National Front) in her “banalization” quest — the attempt to gain legitimacy and look more “presidential” by becoming part of the French political mainstream.

Mr. Macron has fallen two or three percentage points in polls over the past week, increasingly criticized for his [*refusal to debate other candidates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/world/europe/emmanuel-macron-france-election-debate.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article) and his [*general air of having more important matters on his mind*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/22/world/europe/france-election-emmanuel-macron.html?searchResultPosition=5), like war and peace in Europe, than the laborious machinations of French democracy.

A front-page cartoon in the daily newspaper Le Monde last week showed Mr. Macron clutching his cellphone and turning away from the crowd at a rally. “Vladimir, I’m just finishing with this chore and I’ll call you back,” he says.

With a colorless prime minister in Jean Castex — Mr. Macron has tended to be wary of anyone who might impinge on his aura — there have been few other compelling political figures able to carry the president’s campaign in his absence. His centrist political party, La République en Marche, has gained no traction in municipal and regional politics. It is widely viewed as a mere vessel for Mr. Macron’s agenda.

His [*government’s wide use of consulting firms, including McKinsey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/world/europe/macron-france-consultants-mckinsey-campaign.html?searchResultPosition=1) — involving spending of more than $1.1 billion, some of it on the best ways to confront Covid-19 — has also led to a wave of criticism of Mr. Macron in recent days. A former banker, Mr. Macron has often been attacked as “the president of the rich” in a country with deeply ambivalent feelings about wealth and capitalism.

Still, Mr. Macron has proved adept at occupying the entire central spectrum of French politics through his insistence that freeing up the economy is compatible with maintaining, and even increasing, the French state’s role in social protection. Prominent figures of the center-left and center-right attended his rally on Saturday.

Over the course of the past five years, he has shown both faces of his politics, first simplifying the labyrinthine labor code and spurring a start-up business culture, then adopting a policy of “whatever it costs” to save people’s livelihoods during the coronavirus pandemic. His handling of that crisis, after a slow start, is widely viewed as successful.

“He absolutely proved up to the task,” Mr. Tenzer said.

Still, much of the left feels betrayed by his policies, whether on the environment, the economy or the place of Islam in French society, and Mr. Macron was at pains on Saturday to counter the view that his heart lies on the right. Citing investments in education, promising to raise minimum pensions and give a tax-free bonus to employees this summer, Mr. Macron proclaimed his concern for those whose salaries vanish in “gasoline, bills, rents.”

[*It felt like catch-up time*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/03/world/europe/macron-presidency-campaign-france-ukraine.html?searchResultPosition=5)after Mr. Macron had judged that his image as a statesman-peacemaker would be enough to ensure him a second term. Vincent Martigny, a professor of political science at the University of Nice, said of Mr. Macron that “his choice to remain head of state until the end prevented him from becoming a real candidate.”

The worrying scenario for Mr. Macron is that Mr. Zemmour’s vote would go to Ms. Le Pen in a runoff, and that she would be further bolstered by the wide section of the left that feels betrayed or just viscerally hostile toward the president, as well as by some center-right voters for whom immigration is a core issue.

On the president’s first campaign foray into the provinces, a visit to Dijon last week where he spent time in a ***working-class*** area, accompanied by the socialist mayor, Mr. Macron offered this explanation of his sometimes seesawing policies: “When you walk you need two legs. One on the left, and one on the right. And you have to place one after the other in order to advance.”

It was the sort of clever phrase that infuriates Mr. Macron’s opponents, leaving them unsure what angle to attack him from.

Ms. Le Pen has focused relentlessly on economic issues, promising to reduce gas and electricity prices, tax the hiring of foreign employees to favor nationals, preserve the 35-hour week and maintain the retirement age at 62, whereas Mr. Macron wants to raise it to 65.

Mr. Macron has warned that the French will have to “work harder,” a phrase dear to the former center-right president Nicolas Sarkozy, and so a means to lure Mr. Sarkozy’s faithful followers to the Macron camp.

If Ms. Le Pen has wanted to appear a softened politician, she is by no means as transformed from the anti-immigrant zealot she was as she likes to suggest. Her program includes a plan to hold a referendum that would lead to a change in the Constitution that would bar policies that lead to “the installation on national territory of a number of foreigners so large that it would change the composition and identity of the French people.”

“France, land of immigration, is finished,” she said in February. She also said the French must not allow their country to “be buried under the veil of multiculturalism.” In September 2021, she declared: “French delinquents in prison, foreigners on a plane!”

The ***working-class*** vote is essentially split between Ms. Le Pen and the hard-left candidate, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, who has also been gaining ground in recent polls as the electorate begins to focus on what vote would be most effective in propelling a candidate into the second round. But at around 15 percent, Mr. Mélenchon appears to be well adrift still from Ms. Le Pen in the race for the runoff.

The French left has proved chronically split to the point of near political irrelevance for the first time since the Fifth Republic’s foundation in 1958. The Socialist Party, whose candidate François Hollande won the 2012 election and governed until 2017, has collapsed, with just 1.5 percent of the vote in the Ifop-Fiducial poll.

Although Ms. Le Pen has tried to distance herself a little from President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, whom she met in Moscow in 2017, and whose policies she had backed until the war in Ukraine, she remains allergic to hard-line measures toward Russia. A victory by her would threaten European unity, alarm French allies from Washington to Warsaw, and confront the European Union with its biggest crisis since Brexit.

“Do we want to die?” she asked in a recent television debate, when asked if France should cut off oil and gas imports from Russia. “Economically, we would die!”

She added: “We have to think of our people.”

Constant Méheut contributed reporting.

Constant Méheut contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: President Emmanuel Macron of France held his first campaign rally Saturday in the Paris suburbs.; Mr. Macron, acknowledging his slim lead, told the crowd not to think that “it’s all decided.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Marine Le Pen, center on Friday, opposes immigration and was a public Putin supporter. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

**Load-Date:** April 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Two Women Related by Blood, Strained by Money, Split by Hardship; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650R-3PM1-JBG3-600R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 15, 2022 Tuesday 23:06 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 718 words

**Byline:** Aaron Shulman

**Highlight:** Elena Medel’s debut novel, “The Wonders,” explores daily life in Spain beyond the tourist clichés.

**Body**

THE WONDERS

By Elena Medel

Translated by Lizzie Davis and Thomas Bunstead

For decades, Spain has excelled at what the travel industry calls “destination marketing.” The product on offer is the country itself, a photogenic fantasy of art and history, beaches and bullfights, Flamenco dancers and musicians, wine and tapas. The exotic sizzle reel of advertising clichés offered by la Marca España — the Spain Brand, an official promotional initiative the Spanish government launched amid the depths of the Great Recession — has obscured for much of the world what life is really like for millions of Spaniards.

Elena Medel’s debut novel, “The Wonders,” stands as a corrective to this asymmetry. Spanning from 1969 to 2018, the novel immerses readers in the daily indignities of a country that has often struggled agonizingly with stagnant wages and widespread paro (unemployment), not to mention the legacy of the Franco dictatorship. The story follows two women related by blood but separated by circumstance: María, who gives birth to a daughter out of wedlock in the late 1960s and must leave behind her baby and her hometown, Córdoba, to seek work in Madrid; and Alicia, María’s granddaughter, whose life is no less precarious or tainted by loss than that of the maternal grandmother she has never met. As these fragmented narratives elegantly graze each other without ever clicking into a fully formed picture, the two women’s lives are marked by suicide, foreclosures, menial labor, social immobility and overarching sadness. This is no sunny jaunt to Ibiza, nor does it have the mythic halo of la Alhambra.

A prominent literary voice in Spain, Medel made a name for herself in the early aughts as a prodigy of sorts. She published her first book of poetry to acclaim when she was still in her teens, then went on to write several more collections and founded the small press La Bella Varsovia. Her poetic sensibility is evident in rhythmic, incantatory prose ably translated by Lizzie Davis and Thomas Bunstead, yet she also looks at the world through a good novelist’s magnifying glass. For example, at the Atocha train station in Madrid, where Alicia works, she notes how “the people in the bathroom that costs 60 céntimos try hard to aim their urine stream so it stays inside the bowl: a little solidarity among the ***working class***.”

This observation, like so many in “The Wonders,” derives its sense of wonder (a very wry, often downcast sense of wonder) not from lofty transcendence, but from the way the tiniest details of our lives are shaped by the realities of money. Yet as we are taken into María’s and Alicia’s histories — María hiding her intelligence so as not to outshine a man, Alicia cheating on a boyfriend who can’t accept that she won’t have children — Medel probes deeper than mere economics. As an older María thinks while resisting her partner’s plea to move in with him: “It’s a question of money … and a question of power.” And the fact that women in Spain have historically enjoyed neither.

It’s no coincidence that the book’s understated climax, if you can call it that, occurs during the 2018 [*Women’s Strike*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/08/world/international-womens-day-2018.html), when Spanish women skipped work and took to the streets to protest gender inequality. In an article she published reflecting on the march, Medel lamented that there wasn’t a greater mix of generations and social classes present. By way of a brief scene involving María and Alicia near the novel’s end, it is as if she rights her disappointment with reality, if fleetingly, through the infinite possibilities of fiction.

“The Wonders” is not a loud, fizzy debut, and this is one of its strengths. It is a vivid and painfully intimate account of two easily overlooked lives. Medel paints a gray world of drudgery and solitude, yet she also makes room for her characters to grow into their power as women, a power they discover does not in fact lie in money.

Aaron Shulman is the author of “The Age of Disenchantments: The Epic Story of Spain’s Most Notorious Literary Family and the Long Shadow of the Spanish Civil War.” He lives in Barcelona. THE WONDERS By Elena Medel Translated by Lizzie Davis and Thomas Bunstead 240 pp. Algonquin Books. $26.95.

PHOTO: Elena Medel (PHOTOGRAPH BY LAURA C. VELA)

**Related Articles**

* [*‘Barcelona Dreaming’ Offers a Nostalgic Trip to Pre-Crisis Europe*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/08/books/review/rupert-thomson-barcelona-dreaming.html)

**Load-Date:** May 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Prospects of Ownership Continue to Dim for Many***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66YJ-B771-JBG3-6061-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 27, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1311 words

**Byline:** By Mihir Zaveri

**Body**

In a city of renters, the turbulent pandemic housing market is making it harder than ever to buy a home.

Jennifer Kopp decided early, when she was a child growing up in public housing in the Sheepshead Bay neighborhood of Brooklyn, that she would be the first in her family to own a home.

This fall, that goal appeared to draw closer: After more than 20 years of renting, Ms. Kopp was approved for a program that would help cover a down payment if she found a place by December.

The city-run program, called HomeFirst, is designed to provide a loan of up to $100,000 to first-time buyers who are New York City residents with limited incomes. A family of four that earns less than about $106,000 could qualify, and the loan may be forgiven, if the recipient keeps the home as a primary residence, among other requirements.

But Ms. Kopp, 42, a teaching assistant with a young son, soon ran into problems. Prices were beyond her reach, pushed up by a pandemic buying frenzy that left very few homes on the market. Interest rates, at their highest level in two decades, made mortgages too expensive. Ms. Kopp, who earns about $45,000 a year at a public school in Brooklyn, may need to borrow against her retirement funds or abandon the search.

''It makes a person who is living paycheck to paycheck, trying to just achieve a little slice of what they once would have called the 'American dream' -- it's making it literally impossible,'' she said.

Affording a home has grown increasingly difficult for many Americans, given these widespread housing shortages and economic swings. But the challenges can be at their most extreme in New York City, where residents like Ms. Kopp may have to postpone the dream indefinitely.

The city's homeownership rate of just over 31 percent, which is about the same as the figure from 2011, is roughly half the nationwide number and less than nearly every other major American city. Between the second quarter of 2019 and 2022, as the typical home price rose to nearly four times the median family income nationally, the price of a home in New York City has remained more than nine times that level, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

The situation is reinforcing worries about the city's long-term health: As home owning becomes even more out of reach, racial wealth disparities could be exacerbated and more middle- and ***working-class*** families could be driven out.

''It's one of those hard, difficult problems that we have to tackle, or else we're going to end up with a city that's only affordable to the very, very wealthy,'' said Christie Peale, the chief executive and executive director of the Center for New York City Neighborhoods, a nonprofit group that pushes for affordable homeownership.

The city's large proportion of renters mirrors other cities and reflects the ''huge flows'' of people coming and going, especially young and transient people attracted to the city's job opportunities and cultural life, said Mark Willis, a senior policy fellow at New York University's Furman Center.

''Homeownership makes less sense if you're not there for the long run,'' he said.

The homes that do get built tend to be more expensive because of high land and development costs, said Jonathan Miller, the president of Miller Samuel, a real estate appraisal and consulting firm.

Nearly everything is more costly now, in large part because of the city's housing shortage. But the economic and social fluctuations during the pandemic have made the situation worse.

''You had a huge run-up in home prices, compounded with a huge run-up in interest rates,'' said Laurie Goodman, an institute fellow and founder of the Housing Finance Policy Center at the Urban Institute, a nonprofit research organization. ''The result was a huge increase in un-affordability.''

The income required to afford a home in, for example, the middle-third of the New York City area market in September 2019 was about $117,450, assuming a 30-year fixed rate mortgage, according to an analysis by the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies. That jumped more than 59 percent to almost $187,000 in September 2022.

Frederick Ferby Jr., 33, grew up with his mother in an apartment in the Rockaways in Queens, which had recurring pest and other problems. His father struggled to maintain and pay off the loan for a house in Jamaica.

Those experiences influenced Mr. Ferby's choice of where to buy a home.

An IT engineer, he pays a below-market monthly fee of around $700 for an apartment in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, and could afford a monthly mortgage of around $2,000. He looked at some places in the Bronx that fit his price range, but none felt large enough for the price.

''To find something decent, at least in the boroughs, it's difficult,'' he said. He is now considering moving to New Jersey.

Mayor Eric Adams has made boosting ''affordable homeownership'' -- and trying to bridge the racial wealth disparities -- a key piece of his housing agenda. The homeownership rate for Black residents is roughly 27 percent, and for Hispanic and Latino residents it is roughly 17 percent, well below the 42 percent rate for white New Yorkers.

When the mayor announced his housing plan earlier this year, he said he wanted to ''put the dream of homeownership back in the hands of working people and remind New Yorkers that leaving this city isn't an option.''

It is unclear if Black and Latino home buyers have been hurt or helped by recent shifts in the market. Some data show that in New York State and nationwide, the homeownership rate for Black and Latino renters increased between 2019 and 2021, probably in part because of low interest rates at the beginning of the pandemic.

In the most recent fiscal year, the city spent $9 million helping people make down payments and helped finance renovations for more than 120 one- to four-family homes, as part of a broader focus on homeownership.

But the efforts still fall short of the kind of transformative public investments that could meaningfully increase the rates of homeownership. Some advocates and politicians on the left are calling for a much higher investment and the creation of new forms of multifamily housing owned by tenants and neighbors or nonprofits.

There are trade-offs to government investments in homeownership, housing advocates acknowledge.

Because the cost of buying is so high, it means public dollars may not reach as many people as programs targeting rentals. Enabling people to build wealth essentially means a home has appreciated and is no longer as cheap as it once was.

''The challenge for government is: How do you invest in affordable homeownership in a way that's affordable over successive generations?'' Ms. Peale said.

Without additional assistance, owning a home remains out of reach for many.

Jewel Ghosh, originally from Bangladesh, came to New York City in 2014 because of its big immigrant population and robust public transportation.

Mr. Ghosh, a doctor, lived in an basement before moving into a two-bedroom apartment in Ozone Park, Queens, this summer. He now lives there with his parents, wife and baby boy.

He has searched for a bigger place to buy. But as a city health department employee making about $70,000 a year and supporting his entire family on that income, he said he cannot afford the $700,000 homes he sees on the market.

''It's my personal opinion that there is no balance with the income and the expenses,'' Mr. Ghosh said. ''One of the basic needs -- living -- is very difficult.''

For Ms. Kopp, the teaching assistant, not being able to afford a home is one reason she dreams of leaving the city. But she is afraid of uprooting her life and that of her son.

''I have a city pension, I have health benefits and I have job security,'' she said.

But she added, ''I definitely would love to leave New York.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/24/nyregion/home-ownership-new-york-city.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/24/nyregion/home-ownership-new-york-city.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Far right, public housing on the Lower East Side. New York City's homeownership rate of 31 percent is roughly half the nationwide number. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSHUA BRIGHT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB1)

The economic and social fluctuations during the pandemic have made the housing situation worse. Above, Jennifer Kopp and her son live in a rental on Staten Island. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY OLGA GINZBURG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

WINNIE AU FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB4) This article appeared in print on page MB1, MB4.

**Load-Date:** November 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Newsom’s lead is large enough to withstand major polling errors.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63KS-HMC1-JBG3-62C8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 13, 2021 Monday 20:45 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 471 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Gov. Gavin Newsom’s lead now dwarfs the typical polling error and is large enough to withstand nearly every California polling miss in recent memory.

**Body**

Gov. Gavin Newsom’s lead now dwarfs the typical polling error and is large enough to withstand nearly every California polling miss in recent memory.

After the polls overestimated Democratic candidates in 2016 and 2020, it is reasonable to wonder whether Gov. Gavin Newsom’s lead in the California recall election might prove as illusory as Hillary Clinton’s lead in Wisconsin or Joe Biden’s in Florida.

It’s not impossible. But Mr. Newsom’s lead now dwarfs the typical polling error and is large enough to withstand nearly every statewide polling miss in recent memory.

Opposition to recalling Mr. Newsom leads by 17 points, 58 to 41 percent, according to the [*FiveThirtyEight average*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/california-recall-polls/). Polls in 2020 overestimated the Democrats by an average of about five percentage points.

There was no state in either the 2016 or 2020 presidential elections where the final polls missed by 16 percentage points. Perhaps the worst recent polling miss — Senator Susan Collins’s comfortable nine-point victory after trailing in the polls by three points — is in the ballpark, but would still fall five points short of erasing Mr. Newsom’s lead.

Many of the most embarrassing and high-profile misses for pollsters, such as the seven-point polling errors in Wisconsin in 2016 and 2020, might still leave Mr. Newsom with a double-digit victory.

It is hard to find many precedents for such a large polling error. According to Harry Enten, a writer at CNN, there are only [*four cases*](https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/03/politics/newsom-rising-polls-recall/index.html) in the last 20 years where the polling average in a race for governor was off by at least 15 percentage points.

Mr. Newsom’s opponents can hope that the idiosyncrasies of a recall election might make it more challenging for pollsters than a typical general election. Special and primary elections often have larger polling errors.

But the polls were [*fairly accurate*](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/Congressional/California_Recall3.html) in the last California gubernatorial recall and [*dead-on*](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2012/governor/wi/wisconsin_governor_recall_election_walker_vs_barrett-3056.html) in the high-profile effort to recall former Gov. Scott Walker of Wisconsin in 2012. The high turnout in early voting in California so far tends to reduce the risk that an unusual turnout would contribute to a particularly large polling error.

And California is not a state where the polls have missed badly in recent election cycles. The largest polling errors have been in Wisconsin, Maine and other states with large numbers of white ***working-class*** voters. That’s not California. Just 22 percent of California voters in 2020 were whites without a four-year college degree, the second lowest of any state, according to census data.

Perhaps as a [*result*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/09/14/us/elections/results-california-recall.html), statewide polling in California has generally been fairly accurate.

Joe Biden led the final California polls by [*29.2 points*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/president-general/california/), according to FiveThirtyEight.

He won by[*29.2 points*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-california.html).

PHOTO: Gov. Gavin Newsom campaigning in Oakland on Saturday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jim Wilson/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 14, 2021

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[***A New Home for French Socialists, on Paris’s Periphery***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XYT-HGB1-JBG3-63G1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

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**Byline:** Norimitsu Onishi

**Highlight:** Short of cash, the Socialist Party has moved its headquarters from a Parisian mansion once owned by a princess to a converted factory in the suburbs.

**Body**

Short of cash, the Socialist Party has moved its headquarters from a Parisian mansion once owned by a princess to a converted factory in the suburbs.

IVRY-SUR-SEINE, France — Maybe it was the equivalent of moving from the Upper East Side of Manhattan to Queens or Staten Island or even New Jersey.

For decades, the headquarters of the [*Socialist Party*](https://www.parti-socialiste.fr/), which held France’s presidency until just a couple of years ago, was ensconced in the heart of Paris — a stroll to the nation’s top schools; the Orsay and Louvre museums; the National Assembly and, across the Seine, the Élysée Palace. A constellation of Michelin-starred restaurants shined from every direction.

Today, its new home, in a converted pharmaceutical factory, shares a block with a scrap metal dealer and a beverage wholesaler, just behind the railroad tracks of the commuter transit system that services the “banlieue,’’ or suburb, of [*Ivry-sur-Seine*](https://www.parti-socialiste.fr/). A party stalwart grumbled that his “GPS couldn’t find the street,” but even some locals seemed lost.

“Really?” Kamrul Islam said when informed that France’s Socialist Party was a two-minute walk from his Hawaiian-style poke bowl restaurant, adding that he was less interested in politics than food. “Before it was tacos in France, now it is time for poke. I don’t know how many years we’re going to survive with the poke bowls. But we’re not going to change anything until we see it is bad.”

For years, the Socialist Party survived on a poke bowl of increasingly free-market economics and liberal social policies, but did not change despite growing popular discontent with the two-party system in which it had secured a comfortable spot. Mirroring the decline of Social Democrats across Europe, France’s Socialists failed to capitalize on anger over globalization and rising inequality, ceding those issues especially to far-right populists.

Since 2017, the Socialist Party has suffered a series of electoral defeats so disastrous that its very survival remains in doubt. The biggest beneficiary, of course, has been President Emmanuel Macron himself, a former investment banker and brief interloper with Socialists before he jettisoned them in 2017 to create his own centrist party.

But since then, Mr. Macron, too, has struggled to connect with the ***working-class*** voters who used to form the core of Socialist supporters. Instead he has earned a reputation as the president of the rich and faced the wrath of the Yellow Vest movement in a country of widening social cleavages.

Some Socialists say those failings still leave them an opening. The optimists cast the party’s move from Paris’s Seventh Arrondissement a year ago because of financial constraints not as a retreat but as a chance at rebirth — an opportunity to shed their image of being limousine liberals and the “gauche caviar.”

Their new home in Ivry-sur-Seine, an eastern, ***working-class*** suburb, gentrifying in pockets, which remains a stronghold of the French Communist Party, represented that aspiration, they say.

“The symbol we sought was to be able to say that we are, once again, among those we’re called to represent,” said Olivier Faure, the party’s secretary general, adding that the party’s former supporters had “sometimes felt abandoned once we were in power.”

In an interview in his glass-walled office, Mr. Faure, 51, unfurled a map to bring back his party to relevance. He said his party would focus on the destructive effects of globalization and free markets on people and the environment.

Just as his party had represented workers in the past, it needed to address the needs of those toiling in an “Uberized economy,” who “in reality are slaves of algorithms and management methods that are extremely brutal.”

Like all parties in France, from the extreme left to the extreme right, the Socialists were keenly aware of the rising importance of the [*environment as an electoral issue*](https://www.parti-socialiste.fr/). To Mr. Faure, the biggest victims of climate change were globalization’s losers, and his party must make it its mission to defend them.

Focusing on these issues, he said, would lead to “the renewal of social democrats on one condition — that they integrate these changes into their vision and become once again a disruptive force, and not simply the nice guides of the free-market revolution.”

It was during the tenure of the last Socialist president, François Hollande, who served from 2012 to 2017, that there was a “break” between the party and its ***working-class*** supporters, Mr. Faure said. The party’s traditional base “felt betrayed” by Mr. Hollande’s business-friendly policies — Mr. Macron was a senior adviser, then economy minister — and especially a labor law that made it easier to hire and fire people, he added.

The party’s push on socially liberal issues, like gay marriage, made it better known as the choice of the urban “bobo,” or bohemian bourgeois.

The Socialists slipped into an “intellectual laziness” abetted by France’s two-party system, which pitted the left against the right, he said. They failed to realize that “gradually there were many French who were switching off and who no longer saw a place on the right or on the left.”

Today, with the Socialists in disarray, France’s dominant parties are instead Mr. Macron’s La République en Marche and the far-right National Rally of Marine Le Pen.

But the Socialists are not alone in their pain. What happened to them has occurred elsewhere in Europe — Germany, Italy and increasingly even in Britain, where Social Democrats and the Labour party had dominated after the end of the Cold War, but steadily slipped into crisis.

“They failed to grasp the consequences of globalization,” said Alain Bergounioux, a historian who is an expert on Socialism.

Today, he added, the party’s place in the nation’s political spectrum has shrunk: Many ***working-class*** voters drifted to the extreme right, while Mr. Macron and the ascendant Greens were grabbing left-leaning middle-class voters.

Jean-Christophe Cambadélis, who served as the party’s secretary general between 2014 and 2017, said that to regain relevance France’s left would need to undergo a more radical makeover, with the Socialists establishing formal ties with ideological allies.

A new party on the left would succeed only by offering a new vision that, he said, should focus on fighting for the “integrity of the individual’’ facing bewildering changes, like climate change, the digital economy and medical revolutions.

“It’s not the concept of workers’ emancipation from the 1960s,” he said, “but one that says that, in our age of revolutions, the integrity of human beings must be defended.”

The future seemed limitless when the party moved into its old headquarters — at 10 rue de Solférino in the Seventh Arrondissement — months before the Socialists won the presidency for the first time, with François Mitterrand in 1981. Back then, the choice of location had a different message: “To show that the left was ready to govern,” Mr. Faure said.

Not that there weren’t critics. For a party devoted to defending the ***working class***, an address in one of the capital’s richest neighborhoods sounded dissonant.

There was also the building’s inconvenient past: a vast M-shaped building once owned by a princess who was known for holding one of Paris’s most sought-after salons and for keeping a pet elephant.

Its sale by the party, to a French developer, brought nearly 46 million euros, or about $51 million, which it used to pay off debts and buy its new headquarters for €7 million, renovations included.

Many party officials grumbled openly about the move. Julien Dray, a legendary party fixer whose exploits have been the basis of the hit series, “[*Baron Noir*](https://www.parti-socialiste.fr/),” told the French media that his “GPS couldn’t find the street” where the new headquarters is.

“It’s true,” Mr. Dray said in a recent interview in Paris.

He added: “We panicked and rushed to sell to reduce costs. But symbolically that hurt us a lot. It gave the impression that the Socialist Party didn’t believe in itself.”

Mr. Cambadélis, the former leader who was behind the sale of the former headquarters, said there was no other option. He said he would have preferred moving to a more modest area at least within Paris. Many party members were depressed that their new home was just outside the highway ringing Paris, called Périphérique, he said.

“We were becoming peripheral,” he said.

In Ivry-sur-Seine, the party still appeared to be searching for its place in a banlieue undergoing change. A [*housing project*](https://www.parti-socialiste.fr/) that once symbolized the power of French Communists was being demolished.

But the Communists were still in charge and, during lunch on a recent Thursday, its local leaders huddled at a corner table at O’Papillon, a fancy restaurant a block from the new Socialist headquarters.

So far, the Socialists have kept a low profile in their new neighborhood, according to many locals, who said they saw very little foot traffic in and out of the new headquarters.

“The Socialists are in a very bobo part of Ivry, with a lot of artist lofts,” said Benjamin Gozlan, a painter and illustrator who was born in and still lives in Ivry-sur-Seine. “They held a reception after they moved in. But they really haven’t made any waves.”

PHOTOS: The new headquarters of France’s Socialist Party in Ivry-sur-Seine is on the same block as a scrap metal dealer and a beverage wholesaler.; Olivier Faure, the secretary general of the party, said that the move symbol- ized that “we are, once again, among those we’re called to represent. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2020

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[***‘The Democratic Party in New York Is a Disaster’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67M3-8HD1-JBG3-627V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 4213 words

**Byline:** Ross Barkan

**Highlight:** After losing crucial seats in the congressional midterms, a bitter civil war over the moribund state organization has spilled into the open.

**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=what_even_doing_barkan).

The stunning failure of the Democratic Party on election night was nowhere more apparent than at Il Bacco, an Italian restaurant on the boulevard where Queens bleeds into Nassau County. That was where a soon-to-be-infamous 34-year-old political neophyte walked out to a cheering throng of Republicans and declared victory in one of America’s most important House contests. “Only in this country can the kid who came from the basement in Jackson Heights … ,” [*George Santos*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/19/nyregion/george-santos-ny-republicans.html) began, before he was momentarily overwhelmed. “To everybody watching, I want you to know that the American dream is worth fighting for. It’s worth defending, and that’s why I jumped into this race.”

In another era — two or four years ago, perhaps — the Santos saga, with its absurd cascade of lies, would have been an amusing sideshow for many Democratic politicians, who would have been able to mock the chaos and move on, comfortably sure that Santos, who fabricated much of his personal and financial biography, would only further hobble a neutered Republican minority. But the new congressman, now under investigation by local and federal authorities, was instead a crucial cog in Kevin McCarthy’s House majority, having flipped the redrawn Third Congressional District in New York, an area that had been represented by Democrats for decades, by eight points.

These days, New York is known as the deep-blue state where Democrats lost four seats on the way to losing the House of Representatives and effectively halting President Biden’s domestic agenda for the next two years. [*Kathy Hochul,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/09/nyregion/hochul-governor-new-york.html) who served as Andrew Cuomo’s lieutenant governor before accusations of sexual harassment and assault forced him from office in 2021, won the narrowest race for governor in 28 years, beating Lee Zeldin, a Trump-supporting congressman from Long Island, by less than six points. While forecasts for a national red wave didn’t materialize — Democratic candidates for governor and the Senate were largely triumphant in tossup races across the country, and Chuck Schumer of Brooklyn remained the Senate majority leader — Democrats stumbled in territory on Long Island and in the Hudson Valley that Biden won handily just two years earlier.

These disappointments have cast into sharp relief both the divisions within the party and the peculiar void of the state’s Democratic organization itself. Few New Yorkers cared, until late 2022, that the statewide Democratic apparatus operated, for the most part, as a hollowed-out appendage of the governor, a second campaign account that did little, if any, work in terms of messaging and turnout. New Hampshire, a state with roughly half the population of Queens, has a Democratic Party with 16 full-time paid staff members. New York’s has four, according to the state chairman, Jay Jacobs. One helps maintain social media accounts that update only sparingly. Most state committee members have no idea where the party keeps its headquarters, or if it even has one. (It does, at 50 Broadway in Manhattan.)

National parties function as enormous umbrella organizations, determining the presidential primary calendar and the process for allocating delegates at the national conventions. The drudgery of running elections is left to the local and state parties, as well as individual campaigns and independent political action committees.

Elsewhere in the country, state Democratic parties are much more robust than they are in New York. In Wisconsin, under the leadership of 42-year-old [*Ben Wikler*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/01/magazine/wisconsin-democrats.html), the party offered crucial organizing muscle in [*Gov. Tony Evers’s re-election win*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/08/us/elections/results-wisconsin-governor.html), staving off a Republican statewide sweep. The Nevada Democratic Party, despite infighting among moderates and progressives, aided [*Senator Catherine Cortez Masto’s re-election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/12/us/politics/cortez-masto-laxalt-nevada-senate.html), investing strongly in rural voter engagement. And in California, the party chair position is publicly contested among multiple candidates, with delegates voting as Democrats traverse the state and make their case in the media.

As for New York, observers across the ideological spectrum agree that the state is entering an unprecedented era, with warring political factions and a glaring power vacuum. Hochul recently became the first governor in New York history to have the State Legislature, controlled by Democrats, vote down her nominee to the state’s highest court. [*Progressives spearheaded opposition to the judge, Hector LaSalle*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/15/nyregion/hector-lasalle-chief-judge-vote.html), arguing that he was too conservative.

In challenging Hochul from the right, Zeldin was savagely effective — “Vote like your life depends on it,” he exhorted, echoing Richard Nixon, in the final days of the campaign — in seizing on suburban anxieties around rising crime that Republicans in other states weren’t able to successfully exploit. While Manhattan and the combined might of upper-income white and middle-class Black voters thwarted Zeldin in the five boroughs, he made notable inroads with ***working-class*** Asian Americans, potentially heralding a political realignment for the city’s fastest growing demographic. Hochul’s campaign was assailed for its relative listlessness and failure to counter Republican attacks on crime. “That is an issue that had to be dealt with early on, not 10 days before the election,” [*Nancy Pelosi chided the governor.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/21/opinion/nancy-pelosi-maureen-dowd-interview.html)(Hochul’s staff did not make her available for an interview.)

Within the confines of New York, Democrats remain historically dominant, retaining veto-proof majorities in both the State Senate and State Assembly. All the statewide elected officials are Democrats, as is the mayor of New York City, [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor.html). But this is a recent shift: Republicans controlled the State Senate almost continuously from the mid-1960s until 2019. George Pataki, a moderate Republican, led the state for 12 years, and Rudy Giuliani and Michael Bloomberg ran New York City from 1994 through 2013.

Heading into 2022, Democrats were confident that after decades of Republican rule in the State Legislature, they could entirely control the state’s redistricting process, engineering favorable House maps for the fall. After a quasi-independent commission deadlocked — critics argued that it was designed to fail when Cuomo helped create it a decade ago — Democratic state legislators redrew lines that strongly favored their party. Republicans sued in court, claiming that the Democrats’ maps violated an anti-gerrymandering clause in the State Constitution. To the shock of many political insiders, the Republicans won their court battle, and an [*outside special master was appointed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/28/nyregion/jonathan-cervas-redistricting-maps-ny.html) by an upstate Republican judge to quickly draw new lines. House primaries were shoved from June to August.

With the special master prioritizing competitiveness, not incumbency advantage, Democrats found themselves thrown together in some of the same districts. Representative Jerry Nadler was pitted in a nasty primary against his longtime colleague Carolyn Maloney in Manhattan. ([*Nadler would prevail.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/08/us/elections/results-new-york-us-house-district-12.html)) North of the city, Sean Patrick Maloney, the chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and a pugilistic centrist, decided to run in a new district spanning Rockland and Westchester that included far more turf that had been represented by Mondaire Jones, a neighboring progressive.

“Sean Patrick Maloney did not even give me a heads up before he went on Twitter to make that announcement,” Jones fumed at the time. “And I think that tells you everything you need to know about Sean Patrick Maloney.” Ritchie Torres, a Bronx congressman, accused Maloney of “thinly veiled racism” against Jones, who is Black. Maloney held his ground, and Jones was forced to move to a new district in New York City, where he would lose in an August primary. Maloney fended off a primary challenge from Alessandra Biaggi, a state senator who ran far to his left. Then, despite a titanic war chest, he fell to Mike Lawler, a Republican state legislator, by less than a point. Jones tweeted one word: “Yikes.”

And now the Democratic civil war rages. Jacobs, who is also the chairman of the Nassau County Democratic Party and is on his second tour leading the statewide organization, has come in for a drubbing. A week after the election, more than 1,000 Democrats signed a letter [*calling for Jacobs’s ouster.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/14/nyregion/new-york-democrats-urge-hochul-to-push-out-state-party-chair.html) They included state legislators, City Council members, county leaders and members of New York’s 400-odd Democratic State Committee. Most of them belonged to the state’s progressive wing, which has grown only further emboldened since the fall. On Jan. 3, a number of them gathered outside City Hall to reiterate their demands: Jacobs must go.

“The party has to change, and it can’t change until we change the leadership,” George Albro, a co-chair of the New York Progressive Action Network, a left-wing organization formed from the remnants of Bernie Sanders’s 2016 campaign, said in an interview. “From top to bottom, the Democratic Party in New York is a disaster.”

Until Cuomo’s downfall, Jacobs was known as a close ally of the imperious governor. His first tenure as party chairman came under Cuomo’s predecessor, David Paterson, but his second began in 2019, a year after Cuomo won a commanding re-election. That election cycle was notable because Cuomo overcame a primary challenge from the actress Cynthia Nixon, who targeted him from the ascendant left. Though Nixon lost, six insurgent progressives defeated members of the Independent Democratic Conference, a breakaway group of centrist Democrats who had spent the last half decade in an unusual — and incredibly infuriating to progressives — power-sharing arrangement with State Senate Republicans. The I.D.C. had existed with Cuomo’s blessing, joining with Republicans to foil liberal priorities in the State Legislature, like tuition assistance for undocumented immigrants, tougher tenant protections and criminal-justice reforms. For Cuomo, a triangulating centrist determined to avoid having to sign or veto progressive bills while harboring dreams of the national stage, the arrangement worked just fine. (In 2018, I took a break from writing to run for State Senate myself, losing in a Brooklyn Democratic primary.)

Since the state party, historically, has been a creature of the governor or the most powerful Democrat in the state, Jacobs is safe as long as Hochul tolerates him. And Hochul, some Democrats say, owes Jacobs for the work he did behind closed doors to ensure that the new governor had a comfortable primary win after Cuomo resigned and immediately began to plot a comeback. Jacobs’s fear was that a divided field could pave the way for a Cuomo revival, and he worked to rapidly hustle up institutional and financial support for Hochul that helped to deter another challenger, Attorney General Letitia James, from running against her.

In 2021, after a democratic socialist, India Walton, defeated the longtime mayor of Buffalo and a former chairman of the state party, Byron Brown, in a contentious primary, Jacobs refused to endorse Walton. “Let’s take a scenario, very different, where David Duke — You remember him? The grand wizard of the KKK? He moves to New York, he becomes a Democrat and he runs for mayor in the city of Rochester, which has a low primary turnout, and he wins the Democratic line. I have to endorse David Duke? I don’t think so,” [*Jacobs said in a television interview,*](https://twitter.com/morganfmckay/status/1450163510562988044) before clarifying that Walton “isn’t in the same category, but it just leads you to that question, Is it a must? It’s not a must. It’s something you choose to do.”

Outraged progressives called for Jacobs’s resignation. He refused to go, and Hochul, who is from the Buffalo area and remains close to Brown, did not force Jacobs out. Brown, with tacit approval from the governor and Jacobs, then won the mayoralty with a write-in campaign that November, drawing support from Republicans to crush Walton.

A year later, Jacobs explored ways of undercutting the established vehicle for left-wing organizing in the state, the Working Families Party, a hybrid of party activists and labor unions that had endorsed Jumaane Williams over Hochul in the primary. He cut a check to a more moderate Democrat trying to primary Jamaal Bowman, a Westchester County congressman and a member of the Squad, the prominent group of far-left members of Congress, including Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar. After Republicans swept Democrats out of power in the New York suburbs last fall, Jacobs quickly blamed the left. “New York did underperform, but so did California,” Jacobs told the politics publication City &amp; State in November. “What do those two states have in common? Well, governmentally, we’re among the two most progressive states in the country.”

A 67-year-old political lifer, Jacobs has an unrelated day job overseeing a string of popular and lucrative summer camps in upstate New York, in Pennsylvania and on Long Island, where he lives. Democratic business is often run out of a TLC Family of Camps office in Glen Cove, a small town on Nassau County’s Gold Coast. Politicos and journalists who want to reach Jacobs know to email his Camp TLC address; Jacobs cc’d his chief of staff at that summer-camp address to help arrange a telephone interview that lasted an hour, despite Jacobs’s initial hesitancy about going on the record.

“People believe that the state party runs all the campaigns, determines the messaging, does the opposition research for every candidate and, you know, when a candidate anywhere loses, it’s the fault of the state party, and all of that is just not an accurate view of the function of the state party and what we actually do,” Jacobs said.

Jacobs described the party as a “housekeeping organization” and a “coordinating entity” that works among labor unions, campaigns and other interest groups. He cited the maintenance of a voter file that campaigns use to target the electorate as among its most important work, as well as establishing campaign offices at election time. Fund-raising, too, is a big part of the work, and it’s there where Jacobs has been especially useful. A multimillionaire and prolific donor, Jacobs has given more than $1 million to various Democratic candidates and causes over the last two decades. It can be argued that it’s this wealth, in part, that has allowed him to continuously lead the Nassau County party since 2001. Few staunch Democrats are both better wired and more willing to cut checks than Jacobs.

“How I run my businesses and my charitable donations and the rest would indicate, as well as my personal beliefs, would indicate that I’m really, personally, quite progressive, more so than most people would think,” Jacobs said. Rather, he argued, his message is direct: “Slow down. You’re going too fast. What you’re doing is going to lose us votes in the suburbs and rural areas.”

In an unusual move for a party leader, Jacobs last year backed the rivals of several incumbent Democrats. His motivation, he told me, was “the behavior of some of these folks that are speaking on behalf of what I’d refer to as the far left. They practice the politics of personal destruction. They won’t argue the merits of what I say, but they’ll condemn me — and others, by the way, not just me — in really vitriolic terms, personal and the rest. Some of the reasons why I personally gave to some of the primaries — it was just a handful of people — it’s because of what they said about me. Personally.”

Last August, Jacobs donated $2,900 — the maximum allowable amount — to a county legislator trying to unseat Bowman. The congressman won by 38 points anyway.

“I don’t know Jay Jacobs,” Bowman told me. “I’ve never talked to him on the phone. I’ve never met him in my life. Even though I was a newcomer in 2020, I was still duly elected, and I’m a member of the party now. One would’ve thought that the leader of the party would have reached out to have a cup of coffee or have a conversation.”

Should Jacobs resign? “The short answer is yes,” Bowman answered. “But the more, I think, comprehensive nuanced answer or question is, What the hell are we even doing? You know, the whole thing about the corporate agenda, which I think Jay Jacobs and maybe even Governor Hochul and maybe others are missing is, when you talk about younger voters, millennials or Gen Z, they are not aligned with corporate interests over labor and ***working-class*** people.”

But Jacobs has plenty of defenders, including county leaders across the state, who believe he’s an upgrade over his somnolent or domineering predecessors and has a realistic view of what it takes to win beyond the liberal confines of New York City. “It’s hard for me to understand this rancor from certain individuals, by the way, who never seem to be satisfied,” says Jeremy Zellner, the chairman of the Erie County Democratic Party. “Only in New York could Jay win every single statewide election and hold the supermajorities in both the Assembly and Senate and be chastised.”

Gregory Meeks, the Queens congressman and chairman of the county organization there, echoes Jacobs’s critique: The progressive and socialist left has cost Democrats in general elections by forcing them to defend positions he believes are alienating. “Extremes cannot be the dominant part of a party, because it isolates everyone else,” Meeks says. “What’s not good for all of us is talking about defunding the police.”

Because Hochul inherited Jacobs, his critics have hoped she would ditch him for someone who might take a more active role in the sort of tasks that party chairs in other states care far more about: recruiting candidates, shaping the party’s message, funding voter-outreach campaigns that begin many months ahead of a general election and even hiring a full-time communications director and research staff. Among some Hochul allies, there has been quiet frustration directed at one of her top advisers, Adam Sullivan, who speaks frequently with Jacobs on Hochul’s behalf. Sullivan holds great sway in Hochul’s world because [*he managed her successful campaign for Congress*](https://observer.com/2011/05/behind-hochuls-victory-a-team-of-operatives/) more than a decade ago. Despite his low profile and the fact that his consulting firm, ACS Campaign Consulting, is based in Colorado, where he lives, Sullivan was one of a select few aides Hochul thanked in her victory speech. Sullivan himself disputes that there’s any behind-the-scenes friction. “The governor is completely committed to building a strong, robust party,” Sullivan says. “Everyone in her orbit is on the same page.” What isn’t clear is whether that page, and the vision for the future of the state party, includes Jacobs.

Even Jacobs’s detractors acknowledge that dumping him and hunting for a replacement is only the beginning of a political project that will take many years. (Floated successors include Adriano Espaillat, a congressman who has built a strong operation among Dominican Americans in Upper Manhattan; Grace Meng, a Queens congresswoman and Democratic National Committee vice chairwoman who is the first Asian American elected to the House from New York; and Jessica Ramos, a progressive Queens state senator.)

All the ongoing chaos hasn’t escaped the notice of national Democrats. “When I go to D.N.C. meetings,” says a high-ranking New York Democratic official, who requested anonymity to avoid antagonizing colleagues, “there is a sense that New York doesn’t have a state party at all.”

Through the first half of the 20th century, Tammany Hall, with origins as an Irish Catholic society in the late 1700s, was the embodiment of the local Democratic Party, using patronage to secure power and dominating state and city politics alike. Nothing equivalent rose to take its place. “I don’t think anybody in their right mind would compare the state party right now to the machine that existed 50, 60, 70 years ago,” says Paterson, the former governor who later served as state party chairman during Cuomo’s tenure.

New York never had a Harry Reid figure, a singularly powerful Democrat who took an obsessive interest in party building. The two Cuomos, Mario and his son Andrew, governed the state for a combined nearly 23 years, and each treated the party organization as little more than a tool for self-promotion. A liberal icon to the rest of America for his [*soaring speech at the 1984 Democratic National Convention*](https://www.c-span.org/video/?323534-1/mario-cuomo-1984-democratic-national-convention-keynote-speech), Mario Cuomo was assailed at home for barely lifting a finger to aid Democrats desperately trying to retake the State Senate. In 1990, The Times reported that [*Cuomo was hoarding more than $5 million for his own campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/1990/10/27/nyregion/cuomo-hoards-his-5-million-fund.html) while spending none for the State Senate Democrats, who were outspent 4 to 1 by Republicans. In 1994, [*the state party spent almost $2 million*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/12/11/nyregion/democrats-seek-a-plan-to-salvage-their-party.html) to aid Cuomo’s failed re-election effort while offering less than $30,000 apiece for the candidates for attorney general and state comptroller. By the end of the year, the party was moribund and completely broke, running up a million-dollar debt.

The only Democratic governor in modern times to care about the future of the state party and down-ballot candidates was [*Eliot Spitzer, who won a landslide victory in 2006*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/07/nyregion/08york.html) and would resign, a little more than a year later, in [*a prostitution scandal.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/10/nyregion/10cnd-spitzer.html) Spitzer was a proud liberal who wanted to break the Republican hold on the State Senate. The party, too, was trying to modernize in anticipation of Senator Hillary Clinton’s 2008 campaign for president. For a brief period, under the leadership of Denny Farrell, an influential state assemblyman from Manhattan, talented operatives were hired, and Spitzer’s aides tried to implement a strategy for boosting legislative candidates.

“The party itself had really dissipated,” recalls Spitzer, now a real estate developer. His team helped recruit and fund an upstate Democratic candidate who won a pivotal special election for a State Senate seat in early 2008. “It was partly fund-raising, partly finding the right candidates, partly putting the right energy into it.”

[*The rise of Andrew Cuomo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/13/magazine/andrew-cuomo.html), who had a near-dictatorial hold on political affairs for nearly the entirety of the 2010s, put an end to nascent party-building plans. Cuomo treated Democratic politics as an extension of Cuomo politics, hoovering up resources and kneecapping Democrats he viewed as a threat. He was content to let Republicans keep the State Senate and rarely campaigned for House candidates. Donald Trump’s election, coupled with Sanders’s 2016 bid, would radicalize a new generation of Democrats. Soon, a democratic socialist candidate was winning a State Senate seat, and Working Families Party-supported insurgents were driving out the conservative Democrats who had chosen to align themselves with the Republican Party.

By [*2018, Ocasio-Cortez had felled*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/26/nyregion/joseph-crowley-ocasio-cortez-democratic-primary.html) one of the most powerful party bosses in New York, a sign that the left could win its battles against the establishment. “We need Democrats who are not running from their own shadow,” says Sochie Nnaemeka, the New York director of the Working Families Party.

The widening fissures are both ideological and geographical. Manhattan and Brooklyn Democrats saved Hochul in November, but so did Westchester County, which once upon a time was a Republican stronghold. Democrats there gave Hochul a 20-point margin over Zeldin after Biden flew in to campaign for her. Westchester has continued to mirror national trends, as affluent suburbs grow Democratic, but Republicans have remained remarkably resilient on Long Island. Home to lavish estates, as well as growing Orthodox Jewish communities and a rising Asian American electorate newly alienated by Democrats, along with a working- and middle-class vote forever skeptical of big-city liberalism, the eastern suburb backed Zeldin by double digits. In recent years, the Hudson Valley has grown bluer, with city residents scooping up comparatively cheaper real estate during the pandemic, yet Zeldin carried Rockland, Dutchess, Putnam and Orange Counties, where Trump-era enthusiasm for Democrats gave way to backlash over rising crime south of the former Tappan Zee Bridge (renamed for Mario Cuomo by his son).

Jacobs can credibly argue that the progressivism or outright socialism that wins in Brooklyn or Queens can’t be easily sold in Nassau County. But Bowman and his cohort can ask why he neglects the younger voters moving left — or, for that matter, why he fails to build out an organization that can be credibly called a political party, the kind that is more than one man and a few aides conducting political business from a summer-camp office. In a 10-page report issued in January, Jacobs pinned Democratic losses on historically high Republican turnout, a contention backed by data. But shouldn’t a state party’s task be, in part, to turn out its own voters? Had enough Democrats been motivated to vote, George Santos would never have been sworn in as a congressman.

“What we saw is a party that did not know what role they should play,” Nnaemeka says, “and therefore played no role.”

Ross Barkan writes frequently on New York and national politics. He is the author of two novels and a nonfiction account of Covid’s impact on New York City. This is his first article for the magazine.

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY PABLO DELCAN AND DANIELLE DEL PLATO) (MM22-MM23) This article appeared in print on page MM22, MM23, MM24, MM25, MM53.

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[***Lawmakers' Files Reveal Secret History of N.R.A.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68TT-1MS1-DXY4-X154-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

They served in Congress and on the N.R.A.'s board at the same time. Over decades, a small group of legislators led by a prominent Democrat pushed the gun lobby to help transform the law, the courts and views on the Second Amendment.

Long before the National Rifle Association tightened its grip on Congress, won over the Supreme Court and prescribed more guns as a solution to gun violence -- before all that, Representative John D. Dingell Jr. had a plan.

First jotted on a yellow legal pad in 1975, it would transform the N.R.A. from a fusty club of sportsmen into a lobbying juggernaut that would enforce elected officials' allegiance, derail legislation behind the scenes, redefine the legal landscape and deploy ''all available resources at every level to influence the decision making process.''

''An organization with as many members, and as many potential resources, both financial and influential within its ranks, should not have to go 2d or 3d Class in a fight for survival,'' Mr. Dingell wrote, advocating a new aggressive strategy. ''It should go First Class.''

To understand the ascendancy of gun culture in America, the files of Mr. Dingell, a powerful Michigan Democrat who died in 2019, are a good place to start. That is because he was not just a politician -- he simultaneously sat on the N.R.A.'s board of directors, positioning him to influence firearms policy as well as the private lobbying force responsible for shaping it.

And he was not alone. Mr. Dingell was one of at least nine senators and representatives, both Republicans and Democrats, with the same dual role over the last half-century -- lawmaker-directors who helped the N.R.A. accumulate and exercise unrivaled power.

Their actions are documented in thousands of pages of records obtained by The New York Times, through a search of lawmakers' official archives, the papers of other N.R.A. directors and court cases. The files, many of them only recently made public, reveal a secret history of how the nation got to where it is now.

Over decades, politics, money and ideology altered gun culture, reframed the Second Amendment to embrace ever broader gun rights and opened the door to relentless marketing driven by fear rather than sport. With more than 400 million firearms in civilian hands today and mass shootings now routine, Americans are bitterly divided over what the right to bear arms should mean.

The lawmakers, far from the stereotype of pliable politicians meekly accepting talking points from lobbyists, served as leaders of the N.R.A., often prodding it to action. At seemingly every hint of a legislative threat, they stepped up, the documents show, helping erect a firewall that impedes gun control today.

''Talk about being strategic people in a place to make things happen,'' an N.R.A. executive gushed at a board meeting after Congress voted down gun restrictions following the 1999 Columbine shooting. ''Thank you. Thank you.''

The fact that some members of Congress served on the N.R.A. board is not new. But much of what they did for the gun group, and how, was not publicly known.

Representative Bob Barr, a Georgia Republican, sent confidential memos to the N.R.A. leader Wayne LaPierre, urging action against gun violence lawsuits. Senator Ted Stevens, an Alaska Republican, chided fellow board members for failing to advance a bill that rolled back gun restrictions, and told them how to do it.

Republican Representative John M. Ashbrook of Ohio co-wrote a letter to the board describing ''very subtle and complex'' tactics to support ''candidates friendly to our cause and actions to defeat or discipline those who are hostile.'' Senator Larry E. Craig, an Idaho Republican who was a key strategic partner for the N.R.A., flagged and scuttled a proposal to require the use of gun safety locks.

And then there was Mr. Dingell. In a private letter in October 1978, the N.R.A. president, Lloyd Mustin, said his ''insights and guidance on the details of any gun-related matter pending in the Congress'' were ''uniformly successful.'' Just as valuable, he said, was the congressman's stealthy manipulation of the legislative process.

''These actions by him are often carefully obscured,'' Mr. Mustin wrote, so they may ''not be recognized or understood by the uninitiated observer.''

As chairman of the powerful House commerce committee, Mr. Dingell would send ''Dingellgrams'' -- demands for information from federal agencies -- drafted by the N.R.A. Other times, on learning of a lawmaker's plan to introduce a bill, he would scribble a note to an aide saying, ''Notify N.R.A.''

Beginning in the 1970s, he pushed the group to fund legal work that could help win court cases and enshrine policy protections. The impact would be far-reaching: Some of the earliest N.R.A.-backed scholars were later cited in the Supreme Court's District of Columbia vs. Heller decision affirming an individual right to own a gun, as well as a ruling last year that established a new legal test invalidating many restrictions.

The files of Mr. Dingell, the longest-serving member of Congress, were donated to the University of Michigan but remained off-limits for nearly eight years. They were only made available in May, five months after The Times began pressing for their release.

Mr. Barr, who has remained on the N.R.A. board since leaving government in 2003, said in an interview that he did not recall the memos he wrote to Mr. LaPierre, which were among the congressman's papers at the University of West Georgia. But during his nearly six years in office while also a N.R.A. director, he said, the group ''never approached me to do anything that I didn't want to do or that I would not have done anyway.''

''I'm doing it as a member of Congress who also happens to be an N.R.A. board member,'' Mr. Barr said.

N.R.A. manuals say its board has a ''special trust'' to ensure the organization's success and to protect the Second Amendment ''in the legislative and political arenas.'' Under ethics rules, lawmakers may serve as unpaid directors of nonprofits, and the gun group is classified by the I.R.S. as a nonprofit ''social welfare organization.'' No current legislators serve on its board.

In 2004, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence objected to three Republican lawmakers then serving as unpaid N.R.A. directors: Mr. Craig and Representatives Don Young of Alaska and Barbara Cubin of Wyoming. The Brady organization argued that their fiduciary duty to the N.R.A. conflicted with their government roles.

''Here, the lobbyist and the lobbied are the same,'' said the complaint. It was rejected by Senate and House ethics committees.

Mr. Dingell eventually left the N.R.A. board. The turning point was his support for a 1994 crime bill that included an assault weapons ban. In a terse resignation letter, he acknowledged a problem in serving as an elected official and a director -- though he would continue to work closely with the group for years.

''I deeply regret,'' Mr. Dingell wrote, ''that the conflict between my responsibilities as a Member of Congress and my duties as a board member of the National Rifle Association is irreconcilable.''

'Patriotic Duty'

John Dingell was comfortable with firearms at an early age: When not blasting ducks with a shotgun, he was plinking rats with an air gun in the basement of the U.S. Capitol, where he served as a page. They were pursuits he picked up from his father, a New Deal Democrat representing a House district in Detroit's ***working-class*** suburbs, who enjoyed hunting and championed conservation causes.

After serving in the Army in World War II, the younger Mr. Dingell earned a law degree and worked as a prosecutor. He succeeded his father in 1955 at age 29. Nicknamed ''the Truck'' as much for his forceful personality as his 6-foot-3 frame, Mr. Dingell was an imposing presence in the House, where he became a Democratic Party favorite for pushing liberal causes like national health insurance.

Mr. Dingell recalled, in a 2016 interview, that he saw President John F. Kennedy ''fairly frequently'' at the White House and generally ''traveled the same philosophical path.''

''Except on firearms,'' he added.

In December 1963, just weeks after Mr. Kennedy was murdered with a rifle bought through an N.R.A. magazine ad, Mr. Dingell complained at a hearing about ''a growing prejudice against firearms'' and defended buying guns through the mail. His advocacy made him popular with the N.R.A., and by 1968 he had joined at least one other member of Congress on its board.

Historically, the N.R.A.'s opposition to firearms laws was tempered. Founded in 1871 by two Union Army veterans -- a lawyer and a former New York Times correspondent -- the association promoted rifle training and marksmanship. It did not actively challenge the Supreme Court's view, stated in 1939, that the Second Amendment's protection of gun ownership applied to membership in a ''well regulated Militia'' rather than an individual right unconnected to the common defense.

During the 1960s, public outrage over political assassinations and street violence led to calls for stronger laws, culminating in the Gun Control Act, the most significant firearms bill since the 1930s. The law would restrict interstate sales, require serial numbers on firearms and make addiction or mental illness potential disqualifiers for ownership. The N.R.A. was divided, with a top official complaining about parts of the bill while also saying it was something ''the sportsmen of America can live with.''

President Lyndon B. Johnson wanted the bill to be even stronger, requiring gun registration and licensing, and angrily blamed an N.R.A. letter-writing campaign for weakening it. The Justice Department briefly investigated whether the group had lobbied without registering, and in F.B.I. interviews, N.R.A. officials ''pointed out'' that members of Congress sat on its board, as if that defused any lobbying concerns. (The case was closed when the N.R.A. agreed to register.)

The debate over the Gun Control Act agitated Mr. Dingell, his files show. He asked the Library of Congress to research Nazi-era gun confiscations in Germany to help prove that regulating firearms was a slippery slope. He considered investigating NBC News for a gun rights segment he viewed as one-sided. At an N.R.A. meeting, he railed about a ''patriotic duty'' to oppose the ''ultimate disarming of the law-abiding citizen.''

As Mr. Johnson prepared to sign the act in fall 1968, Mr. Dingell was convinced that gun ownership faced an existential threat and wrote to an N.R.A. executive suggesting a bold strategy.

The group, he said, must ''begin moving toward a legislative program'' to codify an individual's right to bear arms ''for sporting and defense purposes.'' It was a major departure from the Supreme Court's sparse record on Second Amendment issues up to that point. The move would neutralize arguments for tighter gun restrictions in Congress and all 50 states, he said.

''By being bottomed on the federal constitutional right to bear arms,'' he wrote, ''these same minimal requirements must be imposed upon state statutes and local ordinances.''

A New Aggressiveness

Mr. Dingell's legislative acumen proved indispensable to the gun lobby.

The 1972 Consumer Products Safety Act, designed to protect Americans from defective products, might have reduced firearms accidents that killed or injured thousands each year. But the N.R.A. viewed it as a backdoor to gun control, and Mr. Dingell slipped in an amendment to the new law, exempting from regulatory oversight items taxed under ''section 4181 of the Internal Revenue Code'' -- which only covers firearms and ammunition.

While Mr. Dingell's office was publicly boasting in 1974 of his bill to restrict ''Saturday night specials,'' cheap handguns often used in crimes, C.R. Gutermuth, then the N.R.A.'s president, confided in a private letter that the congressman had only introduced it to ''effectively prevent'' stronger bills. ''Obviously, this comes under the heading of legislative maneuvering and strategy,'' he wrote.

Still, the public generally favored stricter limits. After a 3-year-old Baltimore boy accidentally killed a 7-year-old friend with an unsecured handgun, a constituent wrote to Mr. Dingell asking, ''How long is it going to be before Congress takes effective action?'' He instructed an aide to ''not answer.''

When the N.R.A. board met in March 1974, Mr. Gutermuth reported that ''Congressman Dingell and some of our other good friends on The Hill keep telling us that we soon will have another rugged firearms battle on our hands.'' Yet he expressed dismay that N.R.A. staff had not come up with a ''concrete proposal'' to fend it off.

Mr. Dingell had an idea.

In memos to the board, he complained of the N.R.A.'s ''leisurely response to the legislative threat'' and proposed a new lobbying operation. Handwritten notes reflect just how radical his plans were. He initially said the group, which traditionally stayed out of political races, would ''not endorse candidates for public office'' -- only to cross that out with his pen; the N.R.A. would indeed start doing that, through a newly created Political Victory Fund.

The organization's old guard, whose focus continued to be largely on hunting and sports shooting, was uncomfortable. Mr. Gutermuth, a conservationist with little political experience, wrote to a colleague that Mr. Dingell ''wants an all out action program that goes way beyond what we think we dare sponsor.''

''John seems to think that we should become involved in partisan politics,'' he said.

Mr. Dingell got his way. A 33-page document -- ''Plan for the Organization, Operation and Support of the NRA Institute for Legislative Action'' -- was wide-ranging. The proposal, largely written by Mr. Dingell, called for an unprecedented national lobbying push supported by grass-roots fund-raising, a media operation and opposition research.

It would ''maintain files for each member of Congress and key members of the executive branch, relative to N.R.A. legislative interests,'' and ''using computerized data, bring influence to bear on elected officials.'' The plan reflected Mr. Dingell's savvy as a lawmaker: ''For greatest effectiveness and economy, whenever possible, influence legislation at the lowest level of the legislative structure and at the earliest time.''

Walt Sanders, a former legislative director for Mr. Dingell, said the congressman viewed the N.R.A. as useful to his goal of protecting and expanding gun rights, particularly by heading off efforts to impose new restrictions.

''He believed very strongly that he could affect gun control legislation as a senior member of Congress and use the resources of the N.R.A. as leverage,'' Mr. Sanders said.

The changes mirrored an increasingly uncompromising outlook within the N.R.A. membership. In what became known as the ''Revolt at Cincinnati,'' a group of hard-liners seized control of the group at its 1977 convention.

The coup drew inspiration from Mr. Dingell, who a month before had circulated a blistering attack on the incumbent leadership. He was revered by many members, who saw little distinction between his roles as a lawmaker and an N.R.A. director, and would write letters praising his fight on their behalf against ''gun-grabbers.''

In his responses, he would sometimes correct the impression that he represented the N.R.A. in Congress.

''I try to keep my responsibilities in the two capacities separate so that there is no basic conflict,'' he wrote to one constituent.

Cultural Shift

When gunshots claimed the life of John Lennon in December 1980 and nearly killed President Ronald Reagan a few months later, the N.R.A. readied itself for a familiar battle. Its officials, meeting in May 1981, grumbled that their ''priorities, plans and activities have necessarily been altered.''

But remarkably, no new gun restrictions made it through Congress.

The group saw the failure of gun control efforts to gain traction as a validation of its new agenda and a sign that, with Reagan's election, there was ''a new mood in the country.'' The N.R.A. and its congressional allies seized the moment, eventually pushing through the most significant pro-gun bill in history, the Firearms Owners' Protection Act of 1986, which rolled back elements of the Gun Control Act.

The bill -- largely written by Mr. Dingell but sponsored by Representative Harold L. Volkmer, a Missouri Democrat who would later join the N.R.A. board -- was opposed by police groups. It lifted some restrictions on gun shows, sales of mail-order ammunition and the interstate transport of firearms.

The N.R.A. also went ahead with Mr. Dingell's plans ''to develop a legal climate that would preclude, or at least inhibit, serious consideration of many anti-gun proposals.'' A strategy document from April 1983 laid out the long-term goal: ''When a gun control case finally reaches the Supreme Court, we want Justices' secretaries to find an existing background of law review articles and lower court cases espousing individual rights.''

The document listed several scholars the N.R.A. was supporting. Decades later, their work would be cited in the Supreme Court's landmark 2008 decision in Heller, affirming gun ownership as an individual right. And it would surface in last year's New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen ruling, which established a right to carry a firearm in public and a novel legal test weakening gun control efforts -- prompting lower courts to invalidate restrictions on ownership by domestic abusers and on guns with serial numbers removed.

Key to those victories were appointments of conservative justices by N.R.A.-backed Republican presidents. By the time Antonin Scalia -- author of the Heller opinion -- was nominated by Reagan in 1986, the joke was that the ''R'' in N.R.A. stood for Republican, and internal documents from that era are laced with partisan rhetoric.

A 1983 report by a committee of N.R.A. members identified the perceived enemy as liberal elites: ''college educated, intellectual, political, educational, legal, religious and also to some extent the business and financial leadership of the country,'' inordinately affected by the assassinations of ''men they admired'' in the 1960s.

Lawmakers joining the board during that time -- Mr. Ashbrook, Mr. Craig and Mr. Stevens -- were all Republicans. Mr. Craig, a conservative gun enthusiast raised in a ranching family, would become ''probably the most important'' point person for the N.R.A. in Congress after Mr. Dingell, said David Keene, a longtime board member and former N.R.A. president.

''He was actually like having one of your own guys there,'' Mr. Keene said in an interview.

He added, however, that a legislator need not have been a board member to be supportive of the group's ambitions.

Mr. Craig did not respond to requests for comment, and Mr. Ashbrook and Mr. Stevens are dead. The N.R.A. did not respond to requests for comment.

Mr. Dingell, under increasing pressure as a pro-gun Democrat, faced a reckoning of sorts in 1994, when Congress took up an anti-crime bill that would ban certain semiautomatic rifles classified as assault weapons. He opposed the ban but favored the rest of the legislation.

A year earlier, he had angered fellow Democrats by voting against the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, which imposed a background check requirement. This time, after intense lobbying that included urgent calls from President Bill Clinton, Mr. Dingell lent crucial support for the new legislation -- and resigned from the N.R.A. board.

His wife, Representative Debbie Dingell, a proponent of stronger gun laws who now occupies his old House seat, said her husband faced a backlash from pro-gun extremists that left him deeply disturbed.

''He had to have police protection for several months,'' Ms. Dingell said in an interview. ''We had people scream and yell at us. It was the first time I had seen that real hate.''

Despite voting for the ban, Mr. Dingell almost immediately explored getting it overturned. Notes from 1995 show his staff weighing support for a repeal proposal, conceding that ''a solid explanation will have to be made to the majority of our voters who favor gun control.''

'Best Foot Forward'

Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold were too young to legally purchase a firearm, so in November 1998 they enlisted an 18-year-old friend to visit a gun show in Colorado and buy them two shotguns and a rifle. Five months later, they used the weapons, along with an illegally obtained handgun, to kill 12 students and one teacher at Columbine High School.

The massacre was a turning point for a country not yet numbed to mass shootings and for the N.R.A., criticized for pressing ahead about a week later with plans for its convention just miles from Columbine. That sort of response would be repeated years later, after a teenager killed 19 students and two teachers in Uvalde, Texas, and the N.R.A. went on with its convention in the state shortly afterward.

After Columbine, the organization mobilized against a renewed push for gun control. It had a new lawmaker-director to help: Mr. Barr, who had joined the board in 1997.

A staunchly conservative lawyer with a libertarian bent, Mr. Barr was among the House Republicans to lead the impeachment of Mr. Clinton. He served on the Judiciary Committee, which has major sway over gun legislation, and proved an eager addition to the N.R.A. leadership.

Mr. Barr wrote to another director with a standing offer to use his Capitol Hill office to ensure that any ''information you have is cranked into the legislative equation.'' Mr. Barr's chief of staff sent the congressman a memo saying the gun group wanted him to review the agenda for a meeting on the ''upcoming legislative session'' and ''make any changes or additions.''

The post-Columbine legislative battle centered on a bill to extend three-day background checks to private sales at gun shows, something the N.R.A. vigorously opposed, saying most weekend shows ended before a check could be completed. In the Senate, Mr. Craig engineered an amendment softening the impact, and Mr. Barr worked the House, earning them praise at an N.R.A. board meeting as ''two people that put our best foot forward.''

The N.R.A. also turned to an old hand: Mr. Dingell.

Together, they came up with another amendment that narrowed the gun shows affected and required background checks to be completed in 24 hours or else the sale would go through. Publicly, Mr. Dingell argued that the shortened time window was reasonable.

But his papers include notes explaining that while most background checks are done quickly, some take up to three days because the buyer ''has been charged with a crime'' and court records are needed. Gun shows mostly happen on weekends, when courthouses ''are, of course, closed.''

''It is becoming increasingly tougher to make our case that 24 hours is indeed enough time to do the check,'' a member of Mr. Dingell's staff wrote to an N.R.A. lobbyist.

Nevertheless, Mr. Dingell succeeded in amending the bill. He tried to win over his fellow Democrats with a baldly partisan message: ''We're doing this so that we can become the majority again. Very simply, we need Democrats who can carry the districts where these matters are voting issues.''

But his colleagues pulled their support. Representative Zoe Lofgren, a California Democrat who fought for the stronger bill, said she believed Mr. Dingell was ''trying to make progress, and had, he felt, some credibility with the N.R.A. that might allow him to do that.''

''Even though what he wanted to do was far from what I wanted to do,'' she said.

At the N.R.A., the collapse of the bill was seen as a victory. An internal report cited Mr. Dingell's ''masterful leadership.'' A year later the group honored him with a ''legislative achievement award.''

'We Can Help'

Despite the victories, Mr. Barr saw bigger problems ahead. In memos to Mr. LaPierre in late 1999, he warned that the ''entire debate on firearms has shifted'' and advised holding ''an ''issues summit.''

Specifically, he pointed to civil lawsuits seeking to hold the firearms industry liable for making and marketing guns used in violent crimes. Gun control advocates saw them as a way around the political stalemate in Washington -- Smith & Wesson, for instance, chose to voluntarily adopt new standards to safeguard children and deter theft.

Mr. Barr had introduced a bill that would protect gun companies from such lawsuits, but lamented that ''I have received absolutely zero interest, much less support, from the firearms industry.''

''We can help the industry through our efforts here in the Congress,'' he wrote.

Mr. Craig took up the issue in the Senate, drafting legislation that mirrored Mr. Barr's House bill. After Mr. Barr lost re-election in 2002, a new version of his liability law was sponsored by others, with N.R.A. guidance. To draw support from moderates, an incentive was added mandating that child safety locks be included when a handgun is sold, but N.R.A. talking points assured allies that the provision ''does not require any gun owner to actually use the device.''

The political climate shifted enough under President George W. Bush and the Republican-controlled Congress that the assault weapons ban of 1994, which had a 10-year limit, was allowed to sunset, and the gun industry's liability shield finally passed in 2005. The twin developments helped turbocharge the firearms market.

The private equity firm Cerberus Capital soon began buying up makers of AR-15 semiautomatic rifles and aggressively marketing them as manhood-affirming accessories, part of a sweeping change in the way military-style weapons were pitched to the public. The number of AR-15-type rifles produced and imported annually would skyrocket from 400,000 in 2006 to 2.8 million by 2020.

Asked about his early role in pressing the N.R.A. for help with the liability law, Mr. Barr said he believed the legal threat was significant enough ''that the Congress step in.''

''The rights that are front and center for the N.R.A., the Second Amendment, are very much under attack and need to be defended,'' Mr. Barr said. ''And I defended them both as a member of Congress in that capacity and in my private capacity as a member of the N.R.A. board.''

Sensitivities

With each new mass shooting in the 2000s, pressure built on Congress to act, and the politics of gun rights became more polarized.

The N.R.A. lost another of its directors in Congress -- Mr. Craig was arrested for lewd conduct in an airport men's room and chose not to run again in 2008. But by then, the group's aggressive use of campaign donations and candidate ''report cards'' had achieved a virtual lock on Republican caucuses.

That left Mr. Dingell increasingly marginalized in the gun debate. For a time, his connections were useful to Democrats; in 2007, after the shooting deaths of 32 people at Virginia Tech, he helped secure N.R.A. support to strengthen the collection of mental health records for background checks.

But by December 2012, when Adam Lanza, 20, shot to death 20 children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut, any vestige of good will between the N.R.A. and Democrats was gone. When House Democrats created a Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, they included the 86-year-old Mr. Dingell as one of 11 vice chairs, but his input was limited.

Notes from a task force meeting in January 2013 show that when it was Mr. Dingell's turn to speak, he joked that he was the ''skunk at the picnic'' who had set up the N.R.A.'s lobbying operation -- the ''reason it's so good.'' He went on to underscore the rights of hunters and defend the N.R.A., saying it was ''not the Devil.''

A few days earlier, he had privately conferred with N.R.A. representatives. Handwritten notes show that they discussed congressional support for new restrictions and the N.R.A.'s desire to delay legislation:

''Need to buy time to put together package can vote for, and get support, also for sensitivities to die down,'' the notes said.

Three months later, a bipartisan gun control proposal failed after implacable resistance from the N.R.A. It was not until June 2022, after the Uvalde shooting, that a major firearms bill was passed -- the first in almost 30 years. The legislation, which had minimal Republican support and fell far short of what Democrats had sought, required more private gun sellers to obtain licenses and perform background checks, and funded state ''red flag'' laws allowing the police to seize firearms from dangerous people.

By the time Mr. Dingell retired from the House in 2015, his views on gun policy had evolved, according to his wife, who said he no longer trusted the N.R.A.

''I can't tell you how many nights I heard him talking to people about how the N.R.A. was going too far, how they didn't understand the times,'' Ms. Dingell said. ''He was a deep believer in the Second Amendment, and at the end he still deeply believed, but he also saw the world was changing.''

In June 2016, after 49 people were killed in a mass shooting at an Orlando, Fla., nightclub, Ms. Dingell joined fellow Democrats in occupying the House floor as a protest. When she gave a speech, in the middle of the night, she broached the difference of opinion on guns she had with her husband.

''You all know how much I love John Dingell. He's the most important thing in my life,'' she said. ''And yet for 35 years, there's been a source of tension between the two of us.''

Mr. Dingell, too, briefly addressed that tension in a memoir published shortly before he died. He recalled that as he watched a recording of his wife's speech the following morning, ''I thought about all the votes I'd taken, all the bills I'd supported,'' and ''whether the gun debate had gotten too polarized.''

''As Debbie had said with such passion the night before, 'Can't we have a discussion?''' he wrote. ''And I thought about the role I know I played in contributing to that polarization.''

Julie Tate contributed research.Julie Tate contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/30/us/politics/nra-congress-firearms.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/30/us/politics/nra-congress-firearms.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Representative John D. Dingell Jr.'s papers show his sway. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LAUREN VICTORIA BURKE/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A1)

Representative John D. Dingell Jr. in 2008. While shaping gun laws, the Michigan Democrat also sat on the board of the N.R.A. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL ROSENBAUM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

NOVEMBER 1999: After the Columbine massacre, Representative Bob Barr, a Republican and an N.R.A board member, urged the organization's leader, Wayne LaPierre, to head off firearms legislation. (A16)

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK HARRIS) (A16-A17)

NOVEMBER 1996: Through his chief of staff, Mr. Dingell received a ''thank you'' note from an N.R.A. lobbyist for helping to address the association's objections to certain gun restrictions for domestic abusers. (A17)

John David Dingell Sr. served in Congress as a New Deal Democrat. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HARRIS & EWING, VIA LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

President Lyndon B. Johnson signing the Gun Control Act in 1968, the most significant guns law since the '30s. (PHOTOGRAH BY ASSOCIATED PRESS)

The head of the N.R.A. Wayne LaPierre, right, at a 2002 campaign event for Representative Bob Barr of Georgia. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIK S. LESSER/GETTY IMAGES)

Representative John D. Dingell Jr. at a skeet-shooting event in 2002. The longest-serving member of Congress was comfortable with firearms at an early age. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUGLAS GRAHAM/ROLL CALL/GETTY IMAGES)

DECEMBER 1975: Mr. Dingell wrote to a constituent explaining his dual role as a member of Congress and member of the N.R.A. board of directors. ''I try to avoid mixing my hats,'' he wrote.

1995: Aides to Mr. Dingell considered options for trying to repeal an assault weapons ban that was part of a 1994 crime bill he supported. It would signal the end of his tenure with the N.R.A.

OCTOBER 1999: Mr. LaPierre pressed Mr. Dingell to oppose extending background checks to private sales at gun shows. The bill failed and the N.R.A. cited Mr. Dingell's ''masterful leadership.''

JANUARY 2002: The N.R.A. board discussed how Senator Larry E. Craig, an Idaho Republican and N.R.A. director, helped scuttle an effort in Congress to require the use of gun safety locks. (A18) This article appeared in print on page A1, A16, A17, A18.

**Load-Date:** July 30, 2023

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[***Fetterman vs. Oz: The Debate Aftermath; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66PY-TX41-JBG3-6559-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 27, 2022 Thursday 22:10 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 1235 words

**Highlight:** Readers discuss John Fetterman’s debate performance and how his stroke affects his candidacy. Also: Lower taxes and social inequality; negative political ads.

**Body**

To the Editor:

Re “[*Debate Showing Elicits Worries in Pennsylvania*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/26/us/politics/fetterman-debate-pennsylvania-democrats.html)” (front page, Oct. 27):

I see much gnashing of teeth among supporters of John Fetterman for his less than stellar performance in debating Mehmet Oz. If this had been a competition to see who would be captain of the school debate team, I would feel the same and tell John to come back and try again after his recovery is further along.

But these made-for-TV debates do not capture how they would perform as a U.S. senator, someone who needs to be very familiar with the issues faced by all Pennsylvania residents to effectively represent their interests.

John Fetterman is a longtime Pennsylvania resident who spent years as mayor of Braddock learning about the difficulties faced by citizens of a ***working-class*** town and then almost four years as lieutenant governor learning from citizens all around the state.

The very wealthy Dr. Oz has virtually nothing in common with typical Pennsylvanians, giving [*over $20 million*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/22/politics/oz-fetterman-pennsylvania-loan-fundraise) to his own campaign after moving to the state in late 2020 because Pat Toomey was not running for re-election. Does anyone seriously think he would be in Pennsylvania otherwise?

For those reasons, I have no doubt that John Fetterman will be far better able than Dr. Oz to work with President Biden and others in the Senate to craft effective legislation to improve the lives of Pennsylvanians and all Americans.

Ken Perkins

Pittsburgh

To the Editor:

Watching the debate between John Fetterman and Mehmet Oz, one could not help feeling for Mr. Fetterman. Political views aside, I give Mr. Fetterman points for his strength and willingness to put himself out there when he is clearly compromised.

However, I fault his selfishness for continuing to run because he is not doing the best for the people of Pennsylvania, win or lose. He is clearly unable at this time to be a fully capable and functioning senator — he may recover and be close to his old self, or he may not.

He should have, in the best interest of the people (and his own health), stepped down and let the Democrats run another candidate. If and when he recovers he can try to run again. I think his ego stood in the way of doing the right thing for himself, his family and the people of Pennsylvania.

Michael Eckstut

Princeton, N.J.

To the Editor:

I spent a long career studying and taking care of patients with aphasia, or language impairment, secondary to strokes and other neurological disorders.

I have been very disappointed and disturbed by the publicity about the language problems evident in John Fetterman’s speeches during the Senate campaign in Pennsylvania, and the language difficulties that he experienced during his recent debate with the Republican candidate, Dr. Mehmet Oz.

As discussed in the [*Opinion guest essay*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/25/opinion/brain-stroke-recovery-fetterman.html) by Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, a neuroscientist (nytimes.com, Oct. 25), the brain has a remarkable ability to heal. Aphasia affects language, not intellect, and patients with mild aphasia have normal cognitive and intellectual functioning. Language deficits from a stroke improve over months and years.

Mr. Fetterman’s use of a monitor to facilitate his understanding of questions during an interview no more disqualifies him from serving as a senator than would the use of a cane or a walker after a stroke.

People with post-stroke language disorders can function fully in employment. I hope that readers will understand that aphasia is a handicap but not a disqualifier from elected office.

Howard S. Kirshner

Nashville

The writer, a neurologist, is professor emeritus at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine and serves on the board of the National Aphasia Association.

To the Editor:

One of my favorite movie lines is from the W.C. Fields film “It’s a Gift.” The Fields character is confronted by a man who declares, “You’re drunk!” Fields responds: “Yeah, and you’re crazy. I’ll be sober tomorrow and you’ll be crazy for the rest of your life.”

John Fetterman has made great strides since his stroke in May, has no cognitive deficits and, with luck, will fully recover. On the other hand, his opponent, Dr. Mehmet Oz, shows no signs of dropping his support for an ex-president willing to subvert democracy rather than admit defeat, is fine with allowing county or state officials to control women’s bodies, and even continues to maintain that he’s a Pennsylvanian.

One hopes the voters of the Keystone State will be as good as the title of another Fields movie, “You Can’t Cheat an Honest Man.”

Kenneth M. Coughlin

New York

To the Editor:

Dr. Mehmet Oz’s unfitness for office is startling. He refused to accept that Joe Biden was fairly elected, joining the MAGA cult of election “deniers,” even though he has recently started to deny his denial. Donald Trump, who has endorsed Dr. Oz, has already announced his [*intent to challenge an Oz loss*](https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/trump-midterm-elections-challenge-oz-fetterman-philadelphia-1234616197/)in Pennsylvania.

During the debate Dr. Oz made a breathtaking statement that ought to have been the headline — that abortion decisions rightfully belong to “women, doctors, local political leaders.”

John Fetterman is successfully recovering from a stroke. His speech is impaired, but not his mind. What is wrong with Mehmet Oz cannot be cured.

Patricia Goldsmith

Livingston, N.Y.

Lower Taxes and Societal Inequality

To the Editor:

Re “[*This Heir to a Fortune Wants It Taken Away for Fairness’ Sake*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/21/world/europe/marlene-engelhorn-wealth-tax.html?searchResultPosition=1)” (Saturday Profile, Oct. 22):

Kudos to Marlene Engelhorn, the subject of your profile, for speaking out against societal inequality through insufficient taxation. She points out that the very rich not only get what they want but also, through philanthropy, decide who gets to share, what and how. I support her view favoring democratic allocation of excess wealth.

And it is not just heirs born into multimillions who have benefited here. For decades our country has been throwing money at me through dramatic reductions in levels of taxation throughout my lifetime.

My lower-middle-class parents raised my brother and me hoping (as I recall my late mother saying) that we would be in the 90 percent tax bracket that existed then. To her that meant our success. We both became lawyers.

Those like us in the baby boomer generation fortunate to become professionals, learn useful trades or run successful businesses have done very well. Our outsized share of wealth today owes a great deal to those lowered tax rates. And the vast accumulation of wealth today by the few (especially in the tech world) is greatly adding to our inequality problem.

Marsha N. Cohen

San Francisco

The writer is a professor at the U.C. Hastings College of the Law.

Stop the Negative Political Ads

To the Editor:

If, like me, you are sick of the constant stream of political ads, with their claims that are often misleading or false, and if you lament the millions of dollars behind those ads, I have a suggestion:

Stop thinking of them as political ads and treat them for what they are: job applications presented to us, the prospective employers. It is our taxes, after all, that will be used to foot the bill to pay the salaries of the winning candidates.

Demand that anyone who wants an interview must forget about the “other guy” and tell us about themselves, why they are qualified for the position, what they feel are their biggest assets and challenges, and their goals, should we hire them.

So, let’s contact all the candidates and warn them that negative ads reduce their chances of success.

Marie Conn

Hatboro, Pa.

This article appeared in print on page A25.

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[***The Secret History of Gun Rights: How Lawmakers Armed the N.R.A.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68TT-0SC1-JBG3-621V-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** US; politics

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**Highlight:** They served in Congress and on the N.R.A.’s board at the same time. Over decades, a small group of legislators led by a prominent Democrat pushed the gun lobby to help transform the law, the courts and views on the Second Amendment.

**Body**

They served in Congress and on the N.R.A.’s board at the same time. Over decades, a small group of legislators led by a prominent Democrat pushed the gun lobby to help transform the law, the courts and views on the Second Amendment.

Long before the National Rifle Association tightened its grip on Congress, won over the Supreme Court and prescribed more guns as a solution to gun violence — before all that, Representative John D. Dingell Jr. had a plan.

First jotted on a yellow legal pad in 1975, it would transform the N.R.A. from a fusty club of sportsmen into a lobbying juggernaut that would enforce elected officials’ allegiance, derail legislation behind the scenes, redefine the legal landscape and deploy “all available resources at every level to influence the decision making process.”

“An organization with as many members, and as many potential resources, both financial and influential within its ranks, should not have to go 2d or 3d Class in a fight for survival,” Mr. Dingell wrote, advocating a new aggressive strategy. “It should go First Class.”

To understand the ascendancy of gun culture in America, the files of Mr. Dingell, a powerful Michigan Democrat who [*died in 2019*](https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2019/02/07/john-dingell-michigan-dies-obituary/1339577002/), are a good place to start. That is because he was not just a politician — he simultaneously sat on the N.R.A.’s board of directors, positioning him to influence firearms policy as well as the private lobbying force responsible for shaping it.

And he was not alone. Mr. Dingell was one of at least nine senators and representatives, both Republicans and Democrats, with the same dual role over the last half-century — lawmaker-directors who helped the N.R.A. accumulate and exercise unrivaled power.

Their actions are documented in thousands of pages of records obtained by The New York Times, through a search of lawmakers’ official archives, the papers of other N.R.A. directors and court cases. The files, many of them only recently made public, reveal a secret history of how the nation got to where it is now.

Over decades, politics, money and ideology altered gun culture, reframed the Second Amendment to embrace ever broader gun rights and opened the door to relentless marketing driven by fear rather than sport. With more than 400 million firearms in civilian hands today and mass shootings now routine, Americans are bitterly divided over what the right to bear arms should mean.

The lawmakers, far from the stereotype of pliable politicians meekly accepting talking points from lobbyists, served as leaders of the N.R.A., often prodding it to action. At seemingly every hint of a legislative threat, they stepped up, the documents show, helping erect a firewall that impedes gun control today.

“Talk about being strategic people in a place to make things happen,” an N.R.A. executive gushed at a board meeting after Congress voted down gun restrictions following the 1999 Columbine shooting. “Thank you. Thank you.”

The fact that some members of Congress served on the N.R.A. board is not new. But much of what they did for the gun group, and how, was not publicly known.

Representative Bob Barr, a Georgia Republican, sent confidential memos to the N.R.A. leader Wayne LaPierre, urging action against gun violence lawsuits. Senator Ted Stevens, an Alaska Republican, chided fellow board members for failing to advance a bill that rolled back gun restrictions, and told them how to do it.

Republican Representative John M. Ashbrook of Ohio co-wrote a letter to the board describing “very subtle and complex” tactics to support “candidates friendly to our cause and actions to defeat or discipline those who are hostile.” Senator Larry E. Craig, an Idaho Republican who was a key strategic partner for the N.R.A., flagged and scuttled a proposal to require the use of gun safety locks.

And then there was Mr. Dingell. In a private letter in October 1978, the N.R.A. president, Lloyd Mustin, said his “insights and guidance on the details of any gun-related matter pending in the Congress” were “uniformly successful.” Just as valuable, he said, was the congressman’s stealthy manipulation of the legislative process.

“These actions by him are often carefully obscured,” Mr. Mustin wrote, so they may “not be recognized or understood by the uninitiated observer.”

As chairman of the powerful House commerce committee, Mr. Dingell would send “Dingellgrams” — demands for information from federal agencies — drafted by the N.R.A. Other times, on learning of a lawmaker’s plan to introduce a bill, he would scribble a note to an aide saying, “Notify N.R.A.”

Beginning in the 1970s, he pushed the group to fund legal work that could help win court cases and enshrine policy protections. The impact would be far-reaching: Some of the earliest N.R.A.-backed scholars [*were later cited*](https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/554/570/#tab-opinion-1962738) in the Supreme Court’s District of Columbia vs. Heller decision affirming an individual right to own a gun, as well as a ruling last year that established a [*new legal test*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/23/us/supreme-court-ny-open-carry-gun-law.html) invalidating many restrictions.

The files of Mr. Dingell, the longest-serving member of Congress, were donated to the University of Michigan but remained off-limits for nearly eight years. They were only made available in May, five months after The Times began pressing for their release.

Mr. Barr, who has remained on the N.R.A. board since leaving government in 2003, said in an interview that he did not recall the memos he wrote to Mr. LaPierre, which were among the congressman’s papers at the University of West Georgia. But during his nearly six years in office while also a N.R.A. director, he said, the group “never approached me to do anything that I didn’t want to do or that I would not have done anyway.”

“I’m doing it as a member of Congress who also happens to be an N.R.A. board member,” Mr. Barr said.

N.R.A. manuals say its board has a “special trust” to ensure the organization’s success and to protect the Second Amendment “in the legislative and political arenas.” Under ethics rules, lawmakers may serve as unpaid directors of nonprofits, and the gun group is classified by the I.R.S. as a nonprofit “social welfare organization.” No current legislators serve on its board.

In 2004, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence objected to [*three Republican lawmakers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2004/03/08/opinion/senator-from-the-nra.html) then serving as unpaid N.R.A. directors: Mr. Craig and Representatives Don Young of Alaska and Barbara Cubin of Wyoming. The Brady organization argued that their fiduciary duty to the N.R.A. conflicted with their government roles.

“Here, the lobbyist and the lobbied are the same,” said the complaint. It was rejected by Senate and House ethics committees.

Mr. Dingell [*eventually left*](https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1994-08-22-mn-29906-story.html) the N.R.A. board. The turning point was his support for a 1994 crime bill that included an assault weapons ban. In a terse resignation letter, he acknowledged a problem in serving as an elected official and a director — though he would continue to work closely with the group for years.

“I deeply regret,” Mr. Dingell wrote, “that the conflict between my responsibilities as a Member of Congress and my duties as a board member of the National Rifle Association is irreconcilable.”

‘Patriotic Duty’

John Dingell was comfortable with firearms at an early age: When not blasting ducks with a shotgun, he was [*plinking rats*](https://rollcall.com/2014/03/04/the-dean-john-dingells-office-on-display/) with an air gun in the basement of the U.S. Capitol, where he served as a page. They were pursuits he picked up from his father, a New Deal Democrat representing a House district in Detroit’s ***working-class*** suburbs, who enjoyed hunting and championed conservation causes.

After serving in the Army in World War II, the younger Mr. Dingell earned a law degree and worked as a prosecutor. He [*succeeded his father*](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/john-dingell-longest-serving-congressman-retire) in 1955 at age 29. Nicknamed “the Truck” as much for his forceful personality as his 6-foot-3 frame, Mr. Dingell was an imposing presence in the House, where he became a Democratic Party favorite for pushing liberal causes like national health insurance.

[*Mr. Dingell recalled*](https://www.emkinstitute.org/resources/john-d-dingell-jr-oral-history), in a 2016 interview, that he saw President John F. Kennedy “fairly frequently” at the White House and generally “traveled the same philosophical path.”

“Except on firearms,” he added.

In December 1963, just weeks after Mr. Kennedy was murdered with a rifle bought through an N.R.A. magazine ad, Mr. Dingell complained at a hearing about “a growing prejudice against firearms” and defended buying guns through the mail. His advocacy made him popular with the N.R.A., and by 1968 he had joined at least one other member of Congress on its board.

Historically, the N.R.A.’s opposition to firearms laws was tempered. [*Founded in 1871*](https://home.nra.org/about-the-nra/) by two Union Army veterans — a lawyer and a former New York Times correspondent — the association promoted rifle training and marksmanship. It did not actively challenge the Supreme Court’s view, [*stated in 1939*](https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/307/174/#tab-opinion-1936360), that the Second Amendment’s protection of gun ownership applied to membership in a “well regulated Militia” rather than an individual right unconnected to the common defense.

During the 1960s, public outrage over political assassinations and street violence led to calls for stronger laws, culminating in the [*Gun Control Act*](https://time.com/5429002/gun-control-act-history-1968/), the most significant firearms bill since the 1930s. The law would restrict interstate sales, require serial numbers on firearms and make addiction or mental illness potential disqualifiers for ownership. The N.R.A. was divided, with a top official complaining about parts of the bill [*while also saying*](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2011/09/the-secret-history-of-guns/308608/) it was something “the sportsmen of America can live with.”

President Lyndon B. Johnson wanted the bill to be even stronger, requiring gun registration and licensing, and angrily blamed an N.R.A. letter-writing campaign for weakening it. The Justice Department briefly investigated whether the group had lobbied without registering, and in [*F.B.I. interviews*](https://archive.org/details/foia_National_Rifle_Association-HQ-1/page/n119/mode/2up), N.R.A. officials “pointed out” that members of Congress sat on its board, as if that defused any lobbying concerns. (The case was closed when the N.R.A. agreed to register.)

The debate over the Gun Control Act agitated Mr. Dingell, his files show. He asked the Library of Congress to research Nazi-era gun confiscations in Germany to help prove that regulating firearms was a slippery slope. He considered investigating NBC News for a gun rights segment he viewed as one-sided. At an N.R.A. meeting, he railed about a “patriotic duty” to oppose the “ultimate disarming of the law-abiding citizen.”

As Mr. Johnson prepared to sign the act in fall 1968, Mr. Dingell was convinced that gun ownership faced an existential threat and wrote to an N.R.A. executive suggesting a bold strategy.

The group, he said, must “begin moving toward a legislative program” to codify an individual’s right to bear arms “for sporting and defense purposes.” It was a major departure from the Supreme Court’s [*sparse record*](https://supreme.justia.com/cases-by-topic/gun-rights/) on Second Amendment issues up to that point. The move would neutralize arguments for tighter gun restrictions in Congress and all 50 states, he said.

“By being bottomed on the federal constitutional right to bear arms,” he wrote, “these same minimal requirements must be imposed upon state statutes and local ordinances.”

A New Aggressiveness

Mr. Dingell’s legislative acumen proved indispensable to the gun lobby.

The 1972 Consumer Products Safety Act, designed to protect Americans from defective products, [*might have reduced*](https://consumerfed.org/pdfs/buyerbeware.pdf) firearms accidents that killed or injured thousands each year. But the N.R.A. viewed it as a backdoor to gun control, and Mr. Dingell slipped in an amendment to the new law, exempting from regulatory oversight items taxed under “section 4181 of the Internal Revenue Code” — which only covers firearms and ammunition.

While Mr. Dingell’s office was publicly boasting in 1974 of his bill to restrict “Saturday night specials,” cheap handguns often used in crimes, C.R. Gutermuth, then the N.R.A.’s president, confided in a private letter that the congressman had only introduced it to “effectively prevent” stronger bills. “Obviously, this comes under the heading of legislative maneuvering and strategy,” he wrote.

Still, the public generally favored stricter limits. After a 3-year-old Baltimore boy accidentally killed a 7-year-old friend with an unsecured handgun, a constituent wrote to Mr. Dingell asking, “How long is it going to be before Congress takes effective action?” He instructed an aide to “not answer.”

When the N.R.A. board met in March 1974, Mr. Gutermuth reported that “Congressman Dingell and some of our other good friends on The Hill keep telling us that we soon will have another rugged firearms battle on our hands.” Yet he expressed dismay that N.R.A. staff had not come up with a “concrete proposal” to fend it off.

Mr. Dingell had an idea.

In memos to the board, he complained of the N.R.A.’s “leisurely response to the legislative threat” and proposed a new lobbying operation. Handwritten notes reflect just how radical his plans were. He initially said the group, which traditionally stayed out of political races, would “not endorse candidates for public office” — only to cross that out with his pen; the N.R.A. would indeed start doing that, through a newly created [*Political Victory Fund.*](https://www.nrapvf.org/)

The organization’s old guard, whose focus continued to be largely on hunting and sports shooting, was uncomfortable. Mr. Gutermuth, [*a conservationist*](https://indianamemory.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16066coll63/id/1012) with little political experience, wrote to a colleague that Mr. Dingell “wants an all out action program that goes way beyond what we think we dare sponsor.”

“John seems to think that we should become involved in partisan politics,” he said.

Mr. Dingell got his way. A 33-page document — “Plan for the Organization, Operation and Support of the NRA Institute for Legislative Action” — was wide-ranging. The proposal, largely written by Mr. Dingell, called for an unprecedented national lobbying push supported by grass-roots fund-raising, a media operation and opposition research.

It would “maintain files for each member of Congress and key members of the executive branch, relative to N.R.A. legislative interests,” and “using computerized data, bring influence to bear on elected officials.” The plan reflected Mr. Dingell’s savvy as a lawmaker: “For greatest effectiveness and economy, whenever possible, influence legislation at the lowest level of the legislative structure and at the earliest time.”

Walt Sanders, a former legislative director for Mr. Dingell, said the congressman viewed the N.R.A. as useful to his goal of protecting and expanding gun rights, particularly by heading off efforts to impose new restrictions.

“He believed very strongly that he could affect gun control legislation as a senior member of Congress and use the resources of the N.R.A. as leverage,” Mr. Sanders said.

The changes mirrored an increasingly uncompromising outlook within the N.R.A. membership. In what became known as the “Revolt at Cincinnati,” a group of hard-liners [*seized control*](https://www.saf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Revolt-at-Cincinnati.pdf) of the group at its 1977 convention.

The coup drew inspiration from Mr. Dingell, who a month before had circulated a blistering attack on the incumbent leadership. He was revered by many members, who saw little distinction between his roles as a lawmaker and an N.R.A. director, and would write letters praising his fight on their behalf against “gun-grabbers.”

In his responses, he would sometimes correct the impression that he represented the N.R.A. in Congress.

“I try to keep my responsibilities in the two capacities separate so that there is no basic conflict,” he wrote to one constituent.

Cultural Shift

When gunshots claimed the life of John Lennon in December 1980 and nearly killed President Ronald Reagan a few months later, the N.R.A. readied itself for a familiar battle. Its officials, meeting in May 1981, grumbled that their “priorities, plans and activities have necessarily been altered.”

But remarkably, no new gun restrictions made it through Congress.

The group saw the [*failure of gun control*](https://www.lib.niu.edu/1981/ii810806.html) efforts to gain traction as a validation of its new agenda and a sign that, with Reagan’s election, there was “a new mood in the country.” The N.R.A. and its congressional allies seized the moment, eventually pushing through the most significant pro-gun bill in history, the Firearms Owners’ Protection Act of 1986, which [*rolled back*](https://www.justice.gov/archive/opd/AppendixC.htm) elements of the Gun Control Act.

The bill — largely written by Mr. Dingell but sponsored by Representative Harold L. Volkmer, a Missouri Democrat who would later join the N.R.A. board — was opposed by police groups. It lifted some restrictions on gun shows, sales of mail-order ammunition and the interstate transport of firearms.

The N.R.A. also went ahead with Mr. Dingell’s plans “to develop a legal climate that would preclude, or at least inhibit, serious consideration of many anti-gun proposals.” A strategy document from April 1983 laid out the long-term goal: “When a gun control case finally reaches the Supreme Court, we want Justices’ secretaries to find an existing background of law review articles and lower court cases espousing individual rights.”

The document listed several scholars the N.R.A. was supporting. Decades later, their work would be cited in the Supreme Court’s landmark [*2008 decision*](https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/554/570/) in Heller, affirming gun ownership as an individual right. And it would surface in last year’s New York State Rifle &amp; Pistol Association v. Bruen ruling, which established a right to carry a firearm in public and a novel legal test weakening gun control efforts — prompting lower courts to invalidate restrictions on ownership by domestic abusers and on guns with serial numbers removed.

Key to those victories were appointments of conservative justices by N.R.A.-backed Republican presidents. By the time Antonin Scalia — author of the Heller opinion — was nominated by Reagan in 1986, the joke was that the “R” in N.R.A. stood for Republican, and internal documents from that era are laced with partisan rhetoric.

A 1983 report by a committee of N.R.A. members identified the perceived enemy as liberal elites: “college educated, intellectual, political, educational, legal, religious and also to some extent the business and financial leadership of the country,” inordinately affected by the assassinations of “men they admired” in the 1960s.

Lawmakers joining the board during that time — Mr. Ashbrook, Mr. Craig and Mr. Stevens — were all Republicans. Mr. Craig, a conservative gun enthusiast raised in a ranching family, would become “probably the most important” point person for the N.R.A. in Congress after Mr. Dingell, said David Keene, a longtime board member and former N.R.A. president.

“He was actually like having one of your own guys there,” Mr. Keene said in an interview.

He added, however, that a legislator need not have been a board member to be supportive of the group’s ambitions.

Mr. Craig did not respond to requests for comment, and Mr. Ashbrook and Mr. Stevens are dead. The N.R.A. did not respond to requests for comment.

Mr. Dingell, under increasing pressure as a pro-gun Democrat, faced a reckoning of sorts in 1994, when Congress took up an [*anti-crime bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/22/us/crime-bill-overview-house-approves-crime-bill-after-days-bargaining-giving.html) that would ban certain semiautomatic rifles classified as assault weapons. He opposed the ban but favored the rest of the legislation.

A year earlier, he had angered fellow Democrats by voting against the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, which imposed a background check requirement. This time, after intense lobbying that included urgent calls from President Bill Clinton, Mr. Dingell lent crucial support for the new legislation — and resigned from the N.R.A. board.

His wife, Representative Debbie Dingell, a proponent of [*stronger gun laws*](https://debbiedingell.house.gov/issues/issue/?IssueID=16231) who now occupies his old House seat, said her husband faced a backlash from pro-gun extremists that left him deeply disturbed.

“He had to have police protection for several months,” Ms. Dingell said in an interview. “We had people scream and yell at us. It was the first time I had seen that real hate.”

Despite voting for the ban, Mr. Dingell almost immediately explored getting it overturned. Notes from 1995 show his staff weighing support for a repeal proposal, conceding that “a solid explanation will have to be made to the majority of our voters who favor gun control.”

‘Best Foot Forward’

Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold were too young to legally purchase a firearm, so in November 1998 they enlisted an 18-year-old friend to [*visit a gun show*](https://coloradosun.com/2021/04/12/guns-used-in-colorado-mass-shootings/) in Colorado and buy them two shotguns and a rifle. Five months later, they used the weapons, along with an illegally obtained handgun, to kill 12 students and one teacher at Columbine High School.

The massacre was a turning point for a country not yet numbed to mass shootings and for the N.R.A., criticized for [*pressing ahead*](https://www.npr.org/2021/11/09/1049054141/a-secret-tape-made-after-columbine-shows-the-nras-evolution-on-school-shootings) about a week later with plans for its convention just miles from Columbine. That sort of response would be repeated years later, after a teenager killed 19 students and two teachers in Uvalde, Texas, and the N.R.A. went on with its convention in the state shortly afterward.

After Columbine, the organization [*mobilized*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/post/history-lesson-the-nras-support-for-expanded-background-checks/2013/04/18/fb2ee58e-a875-11e2-8302-3c7e0ea97057_blog.html) against a renewed push for gun control. It had a new lawmaker-director to help: Mr. Barr, who had joined the board in 1997.

A staunchly conservative lawyer with a libertarian bent, Mr. Barr was among the House Republicans to lead the impeachment of Mr. Clinton. He served on the Judiciary Committee, which has major sway over gun legislation, and proved an eager addition to the N.R.A. leadership.

Mr. Barr wrote to another director with a standing offer to use his Capitol Hill office to ensure that any “information you have is cranked into the legislative equation.” Mr. Barr’s chief of staff sent the congressman a memo saying the gun group wanted him to review the agenda for a meeting on the “upcoming legislative session” and “make any changes or additions.”

The post-Columbine legislative battle centered on a bill to extend three-day background checks to private sales at [*gun shows*](https://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/stories/1999/05/14/jackson.guns/), something the N.R.A. vigorously opposed, saying most weekend shows ended before a check could be completed. In the Senate, Mr. Craig engineered an amendment softening the impact, and Mr. Barr worked the House, earning them praise at an N.R.A. board meeting as “two people that put our best foot forward.”

The N.R.A. also turned to an old hand: Mr. Dingell.

Together, they came up with another amendment that narrowed the gun shows affected and required background checks to be completed in 24 hours or else the sale would go through. Publicly, Mr. Dingell argued that the shortened time window was reasonable.

But his papers include notes explaining that while most background checks are done quickly, some take up to three days because the buyer “has been charged with a crime” and court records are needed. Gun shows mostly happen on weekends, when courthouses “are, of course, closed.”

“It is becoming increasingly tougher to make our case that 24 hours is indeed enough time to do the check,” a member of Mr. Dingell’s staff wrote to an N.R.A. lobbyist.

Nevertheless, Mr. Dingell succeeded in amending the bill. He tried to win over his fellow Democrats with a baldly partisan message: “We’re doing this so that we can become the majority again. Very simply, we need Democrats who can carry the districts where these matters are voting issues.”

But his colleagues [*pulled their support*](https://www.nytimes.com/1999/06/19/us/guns-schools-overview-gun-control-bill-rejected-house-bipartisan-vote.html). Representative Zoe Lofgren, a California Democrat who fought for the stronger bill, said she believed Mr. Dingell was “trying to make progress, and had, he felt, some credibility with the N.R.A. that might allow him to do that.”

“Even though what he wanted to do was far from what I wanted to do,” she said.

At the N.R.A., the collapse of the bill was seen as a victory. An internal report cited Mr. Dingell’s “masterful leadership.” A year later the group honored him with a “legislative achievement award.”

‘We Can Help’

Despite the victories, Mr. Barr saw bigger problems ahead. In memos to Mr. LaPierre in late 1999, he warned that the “entire debate on firearms has shifted” and advised holding an “issues summit.”

Specifically, he pointed to civil lawsuits seeking to hold the firearms industry liable for making and marketing guns used in violent crimes. Gun control advocates saw them as a way around the political stalemate in Washington — Smith &amp; Wesson, for instance, chose to voluntarily adopt [*new standards*](https://www.bradyunited.org/legal-case/smith-wesson-settlement) to safeguard children and deter theft.

Mr. Barr had introduced a bill that would protect gun companies from such lawsuits, but lamented that “I have received absolutely zero interest, much less support, from the firearms industry.”

“We can help the industry through our efforts here in the Congress,” he wrote.

Mr. Craig took up the issue in the Senate, drafting legislation that mirrored Mr. Barr’s House bill. After Mr. Barr lost re-election in 2002, a new version of his liability law was sponsored by others, with N.R.A. guidance. To draw support from moderates, an incentive was added mandating that child safety locks be included when a handgun is sold, but N.R.A. talking points assured allies that the provision “does not require any gun owner to actually use the device.”

The political climate shifted enough under President George W. Bush and the Republican-controlled Congress that the assault weapons ban of 1994, which had a 10-year limit, was allowed to sunset, and the gun industry’s [*liability shield*](https://www.thetrace.org/2020/01/gun-industry-legal-immunity-plcaa/) finally passed in 2005. The twin developments helped turbocharge the firearms market.

The private equity firm Cerberus Capital soon began buying up makers of AR-15 semiautomatic rifles and [*aggressively marketing*](https://www.ammoland.com/2010/05/bushmaster-man-card/#axzz7rF6OLdrB) them as manhood-affirming accessories, part of a [*sweeping change*](https://rockinst.org/blog/the-sandy-hook-remington-settlement-consequences-for-gun-policy/) in the way military-style weapons were pitched to the public. The number of AR-15-type rifles produced and imported annually would skyrocket from 400,000 in 2006 to 2.8 million by 2020.

Asked about his early role in pressing the N.R.A. for help with the liability law, Mr. Barr said he believed the legal threat was significant enough “that the Congress step in.”

“The rights that are front and center for the N.R.A., the Second Amendment, are very much under attack and need to be defended,” Mr. Barr said. “And I defended them both as a member of Congress in that capacity and in my private capacity as a member of the N.R.A. board.”

Sensitivities

With each new mass shooting in the 2000s, pressure built on Congress to act, and the politics of gun rights became more polarized.

The N.R.A. lost another of its directors in Congress — Mr. Craig [*was arrested*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/28/washington/28craig.html) for lewd conduct in an airport men’s room and chose not to run again in 2008. But by then, the group’s aggressive use of campaign donations and candidate “report cards” had achieved a virtual lock on Republican caucuses.

That left Mr. Dingell increasingly marginalized in the gun debate. For a time, his connections were useful to Democrats; in 2007, after the shooting deaths of 32 people at Virginia Tech, he [*helped secure*](https://www.ocregister.com/2007/06/13/house-toughens-gun-checks/) N.R.A. support to strengthen the collection of mental health records for background checks.

But by December 2012, when Adam Lanza, 20, shot to death 20 children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut, any vestige of good will between the N.R.A. and Democrats was gone. When House Democrats created a Gun Violence Prevention [*Task Force*](https://mikethompson.house.gov/newsroom/press-releases/gun-violence-prevention-task-force-chair-mike-thompson-announces-policy), they included the 86-year-old Mr. Dingell as one of 11 vice chairs, but his input was limited.

Notes from a task force meeting in January 2013 show that when it was Mr. Dingell’s turn to speak, he joked that he was the “skunk at the picnic” who had set up the N.R.A.’s lobbying operation — the “reason it’s so good.” He went on to underscore the rights of hunters and defend the N.R.A., saying it was “not the Devil.”

A few days earlier, he had privately conferred with N.R.A. representatives. Handwritten notes show that they discussed congressional support for new restrictions and the N.R.A.’s desire to delay legislation:

“Need to buy time to put together package can vote for, and get support, also for sensitivities to die down,” the notes said.

Three months later, a bipartisan gun control [*proposal failed*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/gun-control-overhaul-is-defeated-in-senate/2013/04/17/57eb028a-a77c-11e2-b029-8fb7e977ef71_story.html) after implacable resistance from the N.R.A. It was not until June 2022, after the Uvalde shooting, that a [*major firearms bill*](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-61919752) was passed — the first in almost 30 years. The legislation, which had minimal Republican support and fell far short of what Democrats had sought, required more private gun sellers to obtain licenses and perform background checks, and funded state “red flag” laws allowing the police to seize firearms from dangerous people.

By the time [*Mr. Dingell retired*](https://www.politico.com/story/2014/02/john-dingell-retirement-103844) from the House in 2015, his views on gun policy had evolved, according to his wife, who said he no longer trusted the N.R.A.

“I can’t tell you how many nights I heard him talking to people about how the N.R.A. was going too far, how they didn’t understand the times,” Ms. Dingell said. “He was a deep believer in the Second Amendment, and at the end he still deeply believed, but he also saw the world was changing.”

In June 2016, after 49 people were killed in a mass shooting at an Orlando, Fla., nightclub, Ms. Dingell joined fellow Democrats in [*occupying the House*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/23/us/politics/house-democrats-stage-sit-in-to-push-for-action-on-gun-control.html) floor as a protest. When she gave a speech, in the middle of the night, she broached the difference of opinion on guns she had with her husband.

“You all know how much I love John Dingell. He’s the most important thing in my life,” she said. “And yet for 35 years, there’s been a source of tension between the two of us.”

Mr. Dingell, too, briefly addressed that tension in a memoir published shortly before he died. He recalled that as he watched a recording of his wife’s speech the following morning, “I thought about all the votes I’d taken, all the bills I’d supported,” and “whether the gun debate had gotten too polarized.”

“As Debbie had said with such passion the night before, ‘Can’t we have a discussion?’” he wrote. “And I thought about the role I know I played in contributing to that polarization.”

Julie Tate contributed research.

Julie Tate contributed research.

PHOTOS: Representative John D. Dingell Jr.’s papers show his sway. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LAUREN VICTORIA BURKE/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A1); Representative John D. Dingell Jr. in 2008. While shaping gun laws, the Michigan Democrat also sat on the board of the N.R.A. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL ROSENBAUM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); NOVEMBER 1999: After the Columbine massacre, Representative Bob Barr, a Republican and an N.R.A board member, urged the organization’s leader, Wayne LaPierre, to head off firearms legislation. (A16); PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK HARRIS) (A16-A17); NOVEMBER 1996: Through his chief of staff, Mr. Dingell received a “thank you” note from an N.R.A. lobbyist for helping to address the association’s objections to certain gun restrictions for domestic abusers. (A17); John David Dingell Sr. served in Congress as a New Deal Democrat. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HARRIS &amp; EWING, VIA LIBRARY OF CONGRESS); President Lyndon B. Johnson signing the Gun Control Act in 1968, the most significant guns law since the ’30s. (PHOTOGRAH BY ASSOCIATED PRESS); The head of the N.R.A. Wayne LaPierre, right, at a 2002 campaign event for Representative Bob Barr of Georgia. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIK S. LESSER/GETTY IMAGES); Representative John D. Dingell Jr. at a skeet-shooting event in 2002. The longest-serving member of Congress was comfortable with firearms at an early age. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUGLAS GRAHAM/ROLL CALL/GETTY IMAGES); DECEMBER 1975: Mr. Dingell wrote to a constituent explaining his dual role as a member of Congress and member of the N.R.A. board of directors. “I try to avoid mixing my hats,” he wrote.; 1995: Aides to Mr. Dingell considered options for trying to repeal an assault weapons ban that was part of a 1994 crime bill he supported. It would signal the end of his tenure with the N.R.A.; OCTOBER 1999: Mr. LaPierre pressed Mr. Dingell to oppose extending background checks to private sales at gun shows. The bill failed and the N.R.A. cited Mr. Dingell’s “masterful leadership.”; JANUARY 2002: The N.R.A. board discussed how Senator Larry E. Craig, an Idaho Republican and N.R.A. director, helped scuttle an effort in Congress to require the use of gun safety locks. (A18) This article appeared in print on page A1, A16, A17, A18.

**Load-Date:** January 30, 2024

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[***Labour Greets Sunak in Parliament With Hostile Questions***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66PX-64B1-JBG3-64FW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Mark Landler

**Body**

The opposition's lines of attack, starting with Mr. Sunak's choice of home secretary and his wife's wealth, gave a glimpse of where it sees vulnerabilities in the governing Conservatives.

LONDON -- A day after King Charles III welcomed him to the 1844 room in Buckingham Palace, laying out a table of treats for the festive holiday of Diwali, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak ventured into the less genteel confines of the House of Commons. His Labour Party opponents skipped the treats.

''He's so weak he's done a grubby deal, trading national security, because he was scared to lose another leadership election,'' Labour's leader, Keir Starmer, said on Wednesday, ripping into Mr. Sunak for naming an immigration hard-liner to his cabinet only a week after she was fired from her post for a security violation.

From there, Mr. Starmer moved on to the evils of non-domiciled tax status, a loophole used by Mr. Sunak's wife, Akshata Murty, to avoid paying British taxes on her global income. Earlier this year, Ms. Murty, the daughter of an Indian technology billionaire, agreed to pay those taxes in the future.

''I don't need to explain to the prime minister how non-dom status works -- he already knows all about that,'' Mr. Starmer said, moments after he had congratulated Mr. Sunak on becoming the first ''British-Asian prime minister.''

It was a bracing debut for Mr. Sunak in the weekly political cage match known as prime minister's questions, and it gave a glimpse of how Labour planned to frame its case against the Conservative Party's new leader, its third in seven weeks. Mr. Starmer described a governing party out of control, bereft of ideas, with a standard-bearer who could not relate to the anxieties of ordinary people.

Sitting on a lead of more than 30 percentage points in polls, with the Conservatives still traumatized by their recent chaos and an economy plunging into recession, Labour plans to press its advantage against Mr. Sunak. But it faces obstacles, including Mr. Sunak's button-down, technocratic style and a policy record that stands in stark contrast to that of his failed predecessor, Liz Truss.

If anything, Mr. Sunak is closer in style to Mr. Starmer, a low-key human-rights lawyer who served as head of the Crown Prosecution Service. With a knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II for his ''services to law and criminal justice'' and an advanced law degree from Oxford, Mr. Starmer has the elite credentials of Mr. Sunak, though he comes from a ***working-class*** background.

Mr. Starmer, 60, used his forensic skills to great effect against Ms. Truss and Boris Johnson during prime minister's questions. But in Mr. Sunak, 42, he has a well-prepared adversary who is fast on his feet.

''My record is clear,'' Mr. Sunak declared, looking unruffled by Mr. Starmer, as his backbenchers cheered and whooped. ''When times are difficult in this country, I will always protect the most vulnerable.''

As chancellor of the Exchequer under Mr. Johnson, Mr. Sunak doled out billions of dollars in aid to people who had lost their jobs because of the coronavirus pandemic. During the Conservative Party's leadership contest last summer, he warned presciently that cutting taxes at a time of double-digit inflation, as Ms. Truss promised, was a ''fairy tale'' that would hurt Britain's reputation and leave people worse off.

In just two days in office, Mr. Sunak has already created the impression of a government coming back to its senses after the chaos of Ms. Truss and the scandals of her predecessor, Mr. Johnson. On Wednesday, the new chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, said he would delay the publication of a detailed fiscal statement from next Monday to Nov. 17 to gather better projections of growth and public finances.

With Mr. Hunt scrapping virtually all of Ms. Truss's tax cuts, Mr. Sunak's policy might not end up looking all that different from that of a Labour government. One exception, of course, is non-domiciled tax status, which Labour has vowed to eliminate, raising at least a billion pounds ($1.13 billion) for the British Treasury.

That illustrates both the advantages and pitfalls of a single-minded focus on Mr. Sunak's wealth. Political analysts said that pounding the prime minister for his affluent lifestyle alone would not appeal to voters who are not already reliable Labour supporters. But linking it to his wife's tax status raises a fairness issue that could hurt Mr. Sunak, particularly if he is cutting spending and raising taxes on others.

''If they simply go after Sunak for being Sunak -- and there are plenty of people on the left of the party who are willing to do that -- that won't really fly with the voters whose support they need,'' said Steven Fielding, a professor of political history at the University of Nottingham.

''But if they can pinpoint that Sunak is personally benefiting from a tax break that most people view as totally illegitimate,'' he continued, ''that raises questions about whether he is serious about solving these issues.''

Labour will be helped by the memories of Ms. Truss's trickle-down experiment, Professor Fielding said, because it ''established an almost instinctual notion of what the Conservative Party is all about, which is to take care of the well-off.''

By highlighting the rehabilitated cabinet minister, Mr. Starmer also sought to discredit Mr. Sunak's promise to run a government of ''integrity, professionalism and accountability.'' The minister, Suella Braverman, was appointed as home secretary, the same job from which she had been fired by Ms. Truss, ostensibly because she sent a government document on her personal email.

Mr. Sunak said that Ms. Braverman recognized that she had made an ''error of judgment,'' but that he was delighted to bring her back to the cabinet, declaring that she would crack down on crime and defend Britain's borders.

In fact, political analysts said, Ms. Braverman's greatest value for Mr. Sunak is that she backed him during the recent leadership contest. She is a popular figure on the party's right, and her endorsement gave him crucial momentum to thwart Mr. Johnson's efforts to catch him in the race for nominating votes. Her appointment, they said, was a simple quid pro quo.

But it could pose problems for Mr. Sunak down the road: Ms. Braverman and Ms. Truss clashed over immigration policy, with the home secretary favoring a tough approach that would cut the number of arrivals, while her boss was open to a more moderate approach because it could drive faster economic growth.

Mr. Starmer did not get into those nuances, analysts said, because Labour faces its own complicated calculus on immigration. Many of the ''red wall'' voters that it wants to win back in the next election favor tighter immigration laws. Labour's pitch is not for open borders, but to make laws smarter and police the borders better.

For the Labour leader, however, Ms. Braverman was useful to paint Mr. Sunak as a compromised leader, hostage to the right wing of his party and powerless to transform the ethos of a party that favors the rich.

''He's not on the side of working people,'' Mr. Starmer concluded. ''That's why the only time he ran in a competitive election he got trounced by the former prime minister who herself got beaten by a lettuce,'' he said, referring to a tongue-in-cheek contest held by The Daily Star tabloid, which asked whether Ms. Truss would survive in office longer than the shelf life of a head of lettuce.

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, said Wednesday that Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was ''not on the side of working people.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRY NICHOLLS/REUTERS JESSICA TAYLOR/UK PARLIAMENT, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS) This article appeared in print on page A12.

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[***Young Kenyans Are Being Asked to Crown Their New Oppressor, and the Answer Is No; Guest essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:664G-3KH1-JBG3-61VK-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1100 words

**Byline:** Samira Sawlani

**Highlight:** Presented with two stalwarts of the status quo, many are opting out.

**Body**

NAIROBI, Kenya — It was a sight to behold. Scores of young people, excited and expectant, gathered in Nairobi, chanting slogans and waving banners. But it was no entertainment: They were there for a campaign rally. In the months leading up to Kenya’s elections on Tuesday, the scene was repeated across the country. Here, it seemed, were the future custodians of the country taking a lively interest in the political process.

But appearances can be deceptive. Some, it turned out, attended only on the promise of payment; others were paid [*to gather crowds*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKj_Nia9jM0) from nearby. The actual enthusiasm of the country’s young, in contrast to the contrived air of engagement, is rather cooler. While those age 18 to 35 make up 75 percent of the population, only about [*40 percent*](https://www.theafricareport.com/216515/kenya-2022-elections-how-will-the-low-number-of-young-registered-voters-play-out/) of people from that cohort have registered to vote.

For some, this lackluster showing was evidence of worrisome apathy among the country’s youth. And sure enough, the early signs from [*Tuesday’s vote*](https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/early-signs-show-tight-kenyan-presidential-election-2022-08-10/), where turnout across the board was low, at around 60 percent, suggest that the young stayed home in large numbers. But the charge of apathy misses the point. For many young Kenyans, refusing to vote is not a result of disinterest or indifference or even ignorance. It is instead — as Mumbi Kanyago, a 26-year-old communications consultant, told me — a “political choice.”

You can see why. The two leading candidates in Kenya’s election, William Ruto and Raila Odinga, who are neck and neck in the early count, are both established members of the political class. They sit at the apex of a system that has failed to counter endemic [*youth unemployment*](https://www.statista.com/statistics/1134402/youth-unemployment-rate-in-kenya-by-age-group/), skyrocketing [*debt*](https://www.statista.com/statistics/1223191/cumulative-external-debt-of-kenya/) and a rising [*cost of living*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-61881651). In the eyes of many young people, expecting change from such stalwarts of the status quo is a fool’s errand. If the choice is a false one, they reason, better to refuse it altogether than collude in a fiction.

On the surface, the two candidates seem pretty different. Mr. Ruto has branded himself a “hustler,” sharing stories about how he sold chicken by the roadside before his rise through the ranks to businessman and political leader — a back story that has earned him support from members of the ***working class***, despite [*allegations*](http://kenyalaw.org/caselaw/cases/view/83639) [*of corruption*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-kenya-courts-idUSBRE95R0U520130628). Mr. Odinga, by contrast, is political royalty. This is his fifth attempt to win the presidency, and his years of experience and exposure have earned him a kind of star power few can match.

But the differences obscure the underlying similarities. Mr. Ruto, the newer candidate, has been deputy president for nearly a decade. Mr. Odinga is not only the country’s most famous opposition leader but has also been backed by the current president. Both candidates profess — often when animatedly addressing crowds — to care deeply about the electorate and its troubles. Yet in the eyes of many young voters, both belong to the same flawed system. They have no faith that either could seriously change things for the better.

With good reason. In the dozens of conversations I had with young Kenyans, one refrain kept coming up: Politicians are out for themselves, not the country. In their view, self-interest and financial advancement are why politicians seek office. There’s something to it, certainly. The country regularly ranks poorly in [*corruption scores*](https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/kenya), and the two leading parties have members accused of graft and corruption in their ranks. The candidates like to talk about tackling corruption: Mr. Ruto [*has said*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-africa-62219044) he would deal with the problem “firmly and decisively,” and Mr. Odinga has branded corruption one of the “[*four enemies*](https://twitter.com/RailaOdinga/status/1553644129443205120)” of the country. But given their tolerance of dubious behavior, these promises fall flat.

Kenya can ill afford such self-serving leadership. Parts of the country are experiencing what the United Nations has [*described*](https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/horn-africa-drought-regional-humanitarian-overview-call-action-published-4-july-2022) as “the worst drought in 40 years” in the Horn of Africa, with some 4.1 million people in Kenya suffering from severe food insecurity. The cost of food and fuel, thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, has risen sharply. If that were not bad enough, the country — in part because of the government’s borrowing spree over the past decade — is heavily laden with debt, and inflation is at a [*five-year*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-30/kenyan-inflation-at-five-year-high-of-7-9-breaches-target) high. But in response to this troubling situation, the candidates have offered little more than bickering and bragging.

In the absence of substantial policy, there could at least be symbolic representation of the young. But there, too, things are lacking. In 2017, Kenyans age 18 to 34 made up roughly 24 percent of all candidates. Less than a tenth of them won office, under 3 percent of the total. With such a tiny number of young people making the cut in electoral politics, who could blame the young, without representation or recourse to a more responsive state, for turning away?

Still, young people in the country have found other ways to engage in political work — in community projects, mutual aid programs and social centers. One example is the [*Mathare Social Justice Center*](https://www.matharesocialjustice.org/about-msjc/) in Nairobi, which aims to promote social justice for the community living in Mathare, an area historically subject to police brutality, extrajudicial killings and land grabs.

In this way, Kenyans are in step with other developments on the continent, where young people have sought alternative means to make their voices heard. For instance, [*young Sudanese*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/07/world/africa/sudan-protest-movement.html) have been bravely organizing and leading protests since October last year, demanding a return to civilian rule. In Nigeria, the young are at the forefront of a movement against police brutality that erupted with the enormous [*#EndSARS protests*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/12/world/africa/nigeria-protests-police-sars.html) in 2020. And young people [*in Guinea*](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/14/timeline-a-year-of-bloody-protests-in-guinea) played a huge part in the 2019-20 mass protests against the president’s attempt to run for a third term.

Of course, the right to vote and participate in elections is a hard-won privilege, which many around the world are denied. But demanding that people vote, no matter how limited the candidates, is akin to exhorting people to joyously crown their oppressors. Citizens, after all, have the right to choose. And democracy does not begin and end at the ballot box.

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PHOTO: A campaign rally in Kisumu, Kenya, in early August. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Patrick Meinhardt/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Not Exactly Pink Yard Flamingos***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68CV-NFF1-JBG3-601R-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

A professor decorated a sidewalk in Georgetown with 10-foot sculptures of Bumblebee and Optimus Prime. The well-heeled locals were not pleased.

The thing about putting a pair of 10-foot metal Transformers statues outside your townhouse in the most picturesque district of the nation's capital is that the neighbors are going to have opinions.

And on Prospect Street in Georgetown, they were not pleased.

The statues -- Bumblebee and Optimus Prime, two of the good guys from the long-running ''Transformers'' movie franchise -- appeared in January 2021 outside the white-brick home of Newton Howard, a cognitive scientist and machine-learning expert with ties to the intelligence community.

He had ordered them from a factory in Taiwan to the tune of more than $25,000 each. Where large brick planters had once blended in with the local aesthetic, there was now something akin to outsider art by way of an anonymous welder and Hollywood's reinterpretation of 1980s toys.

Plenty of people love the statues, which resemble invaders from the future, in a neighborhood that does its best to hang on to its cobblestone past. Students at nearby Georgetown University can't get enough. Neither can tourists: The Transformers statues have their own entry on Google Maps as a place of interest, with 4.9 stars. ''The best part of visiting Georgetown,'' one reviewer declared.

''People are at my door every day,'' Dr. Howard, 53, said at his home on a recent afternoon. ''It doesn't bother me. I find it to be beautiful that actually people are appreciating things.''

But some of his neighbors are less enthusiastic, and the critics of his notion of a Georgetown-appropriate sidewalk display have been trying to get rid of Bumblebee and Optimus Prime for more than two years.

Dr. Howard, a bald man with an unplaceable accent, wears dark round eyeglasses that come equipped with a camera and a microprocessor that allows him to translate languages on the spot, he said.

He paid $3.75 million for the townhouse and moved in during the pandemic. In 2021, he snapped up the one next door for $4.8 million. The homes lie close to his job at Georgetown University School of Medicine, where he is a research professor in the department of biochemistry and molecular and cellular biology. (He added to his real estate holdings in 2022, when he bought a $3.6 million home in Potomac, Md. It has 14 bathrooms and a bocce court.)

Putting up the Transformers wasn't the only thing Dr. Howard did to irritate his Georgetown neighbors, who learned shortly after his arrival that he wasn't some sort of shabby, retiring professor. He had flashy taste and he liked to show it off, parking a number of expensive cars on Prospect Street: a yellow McClaren 720S (new ones start at $310,000), a 2005 Porsche Carrera GT (which goes for $1.4 million and up), a Porsche 918 (fewer than 1000 were made, and they go for well over $1 million). Not to mention an MRAP truck and a small airplane from his collection that he once parked in front of his home. The car show came to a stop only after he received complaints.

A rich guy with loud cars is one thing, a known story. The Transformers were something else altogether. They quickly became a flashpoint in Georgetown, and on the internet, after the local news site DCist reported on the efforts of Dr. Howard's neighbors to get the statues removed.

Sally Quinn, the author and longtime Georgetown resident, said she was firmly in the anti-Transformers camp. ''I think they're really ugly,'' she said. ''Some people may like them. You know, everybody's taste in art is different. But that's not the point.''

The point, she continued, was historical preservation: ''People come to Georgetown because it's Georgetown. It's a beautiful, quaint village.''

But the author Kitty Kelley, who said she has lived in the neighborhood for ''two husbands,'' or since 1977, sent Dr. Howard a handwritten card in support of his sidewalk flair.

''All you have to do is take a walk through Georgetown, and you're going to see gnomes and wrought-iron benches,'' said Ms. Kelley, who is known for her dishy biographies of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis (''Jackie Oh!''), Oprah and Nancy Reagan. ''You'll see cement lions of all sizes. So why should this man be deprived of using the space right outside his front door?''

''Maybe it isn't Picasso,'' she continued. ''It isn't a sculpture by Degas, but I think he's entitled.''

Ms. Kelley noted that her own outdoor decorations have included topiary monkeys, a seven-foot bird feeder and ''an angel who's shooting something across the yard.''

So: Was Dr. Howard a champion of free expression who found himself on a crusade against exclusionary zoning and ''snooty neighbors,'' as Slate cast him? Or was he an attention-seeking scofflaw with questionable taste?

Or maybe this was simply a case of an eccentric and mysteriously rich guy being eccentric and mysteriously rich.

Neighbors Weigh In

Georgetown is not the most futuristic place. Some of the streets still have cobblestone and the remains of streetcar tracks. The neighborhood is filled with pastel rowhouses from the 18th and 19th centuries and with newer homes meant to recall the older structures.

The area also has its share of stately brick mansions that make you wonder who lives there, or used to. Often, it's someone well-off, but occasionally it's a someone someone. Power players in media, politics and entertainment -- like Madeleine Albright, Ben Bradlee, Katherine Graham, John Kerry, Joe Lieberman and Elizabeth Taylor -- have called Georgetown home. But it wasn't always Washington's glamour spot.

''Georgetown was kind of a dump in the early 20th century,'' said George Derek Musgrove, the co-author of the 2017 study ''Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital.''

The old houses had largely fallen into disrepair, and the neighborhood was home to ***working-class*** Irish and African Americans. Then, with the explosion of government hiring during the New Deal, Ivy League graduates moved in. They fixed up their homes in an array of styles until the national craze for historical preservation took hold. In 1950, ''Old Georgetown'' was designated a federal historic district, with all the restrictions on home modification that entailed.

''By the time you get to 1960, and John Kennedy leaves his Georgetown mansion on N Street for the White House, you just couldn't afford to get in if you wanted to,'' Mr. Musgrove said.

A lot of the residents support efforts to keep things more or less the same. Catherine Emmerson, whose family lives close to Dr. Howard, helped start the Prospect Street Citizens' Association a few years ago to stop a condo conversion that would have blocked local residents' views of the Potomac River.

When the Transformers arrived, the group had a new target.

It's not that the association was against celebrating film history. In fact, its members argued that the condo conversion would have threatened something that ought to be a landmark (and now is): a set of steep steps on Prospect Street, built in 1895, that appeared in ''The Exorcist.'' (Think: tumbling priest.)

But that was ''The Exorcist.'' A film. (Maybe?) An old movie, at least. The ''Transformers'' franchise, which has grossed more than $5 billion across six films, was more like ... I.P. (Michael Bay, the ''Transformers'' producer, declined to comment on Dr. Howard's decorating choices or the neighbors' reaction.)

And the Citizens' Association had clear recourse. Before putting up the statues, Dr. Howard did not apply for any kind of permit, despite Georgetown's historic status and the fact that the sidewalk is public space.

There is a process, a local official emphasized when he appeared in front of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission via video in March 2021, three months after Bumblebee and Optimus Prime had become part of the neighborhood. And he had bypassed it entirely.

The commission went on to inform him that, before gaining approval, he would have to apply to something else: the Old Georgetown Board, a federal body of three architects that ruled on any changes to the exteriors of properties.

Ms. Emmerson and another neighbor, the author and former television journalist Luke Russert, also weighed in. Ms. Emmerson argued that the statues represented a safety hazard and drew crowds of disruptive gawkers. (Dr. Howard later had his Transformers bolted in place.)

Mr. Russert was more blunt. ''What's to stop someone from putting up a statue of Joseph Stalin and saying, well, this is provocative, it's art, it speaks to me?'' he argued. ''They are a nuisance, they are an eyesore, and they detract from the spirit of the neighborhood.''

As tensions continued, Dr. Howard said he started hearing two terms that he had never heard before -- NIMBY and YIMBY. (''Not in my backyard'' vs. ''Yes in my backyard.'') The pro-development crowd wanted to claim him as a hero. He declined to ally himself, exactly. Instead, Dr. Howard argued, his statues were all about ''the American idea,'' because they welcomed visitors to a cloistered part of the city.

''You don't want to just come up with ways to shut down your neighborhood so nobody comes into it,'' he said.

His critics disputed the notion that he was motivated by an idea of civic good. ''His repeated disregard for the law and procedure tells a story of someone who is not operating in good faith for the collective community,'' Ms. Emmerson wrote in an email to The New York Times.

'The Real Tony Stark'

There was no horde outside Dr. Howard's townhouse on a recent Sunday afternoon. A young man paused to snap a photo of his 2-year-old son standing with the statues. The toddler's blue and yellow shoes matched Optimus Prime's color scheme.

From the rooftop, a six-foot Optimus Prime statue peeked down at the street. It had once stood at the front door, but after the initial controversy Dr. Howard commissioned a taller version for the sidewalk. Then he moved the original, perched as if part of some SWAT team on the lookout for any Decepticons.

The interior of Dr. Howard's home, which he said he decorated himself, resembled a lair. The glassy back of the townhouse overlooks the Potomac, where the buzz of jets headed into and out of Reagan National Airport adds to the techno-paradise vibe. Motorcycles were parked in the living areas as objets, and five more Transformer statues stood guard. There was also a giant model of Iron Man, a Marvel superhero dear to Dr. Howard.

''A lot of people used to call me the real Tony Stark,'' he said, referring to Iron Man's alter ego.

The memorabilia on display included his concealed carry permit, as well as framed photographs of him with Bill Clinton and Tim Tebow, the former N.F.L. quarterback who became known for kneeling in prayer on the field. Dr. Howard, who said he is a follower of Messianic Judaism, a religion sometimes referred to colloquially as Jews for Jesus, said that he and Mr. Tebow belong to the same fellowship group. (Mr. Tebow couldn't be reached for comment.)

His home was fastidious, except for a half-built child's toy in the living room. Dr. Howard has four children, ranging in age from 5 to 26, he said. (The older children are from a previous marriage.) He and his wife, Rebecca, are also fostering five Afghan refugees, he added.

Senator Markwayne Mullin, Republican of Oklahoma, became friends with Dr. Howard through a shared interest in Afghanistan.''I call him Tony Stark," he said. ''I would have called him that without the statue.'' (Senator Mullin made a splash in 2021 for personally trying to escort Americans out of Afghanistan after Kabul fell to the Taliban, against the explicit wishes of the State and Defense Departments. Dr. Howard was ''very involved'' in similar efforts, Senator Mullin said.)

The professor -- who is, duh, a fan of the ''Transformers'' movies -- said the sculptures had a deeper meaning for him. Not only did they represent machines and humans coexisting in harmony, he said, but the word ''transform'' had a great deal of personal significance.

''I like changing things when you're in a status quo and they're wrong,'' he said. ''When one looks at themselves and feels self-pity and falls into dwellings of darkness, you should transform.''

Dr. Howard has gone through several transformations himself. He was born in the Sinai Peninsula when Israel controlled it. His family -- Egyptian Jews who ended up living in France, he said -- moved to the United States when he was 11.

He said he joined the Army at 18, then worked as a linguist in Michigan ''across various agencies,'' specializing in Arabic, Farsi and Dari. He changed his name around that time because, he said, ''it was offered by an agency.'' He declined to provide more detail.

''There's a lot of things during that phase of my career that should be kept secret,'' he said.

Dr. Howard -- whose doctorates include concentrations in mathematics and neuroscience, and who holds an appointment at the University of Oxford alongside the one at Georgetown -- is a curious mix of limelight-seeking and discreet. After college, he said, he worked in military intelligence. He later did work for InQTel, which is functionally the C.I.A.'s venture capital fund.

What precisely he did to get rich is unclear. He said his wealth resulted from selling various businesses, some of which he could not talk about. The walls of his townhouse are filled with commemorative plaques of his patents, many of which have defense industry applications, including ''Wireless Network for Routing a Signal Without Using a Tower'' and ''System and Method for Automated Detection of Situational Awareness.''

He said he suffered a traumatic brain injury in 2000 while delivering medical supplies, though he declined to offer more detail. After his recovery, he decided to focus on applying the principles of machine learning to the human brain, and turned to neuroscience. ''I figured instead of sitting and getting my brain worked on, I would work on it myself by studying it,'' he said.

His ventures include Aiberry, a start-up that tries to use A.I. analysis to improve on mental health screening. He said he hoped to help solve the problem of degenerative diseases like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's with a cloud-connected device implanted in the brain, using A.I. to optimize the levels of deep brain stimulation.

In other words, he would like to help human beings preserve their humanity by becoming a little more machine.

The Ruling

The Old Georgetown Board seems to rule with an iron fist -- just try putting up a neon sign in the neighborhood -- but its power is advisory. The city of Washington, D.C., has the real authority to enforce decisions, but the influence of neighbors complaining in unison cannot be discounted.

Topher Mathews, a commissioner for Georgetown's Advisory Neighborhood Commission, said that the Transformers mess wouldn't even make his top five neighborhood dramas of the past 10 years. Easily outstripping it, for instance, was the agita caused over the opening on O Street of Call Your Mother Deli, which attracts long lines.

And locals love to bring up the Tree Incident of 2018, which involved a new homeowner's decision to prune and cut down magnolia trees on his property, which happened to be the former home of Ms. Onassis. In response, a neighbor created a Halloween display with a mock tombstone reading, ''Beloved magnolia 1840-2018 destroyed R.I.P.,'' and a grim reaper that announced ''Tree Killer Lives There.''

Dr. Howard has argued that his statues constitute meaningful public art. The ''Transformers'' movies follow a classic good-versus-evil struggle in which the Autobots (the good guys) work to save humanity from the Decepticons (the bad guys). Reviewing the first installment of the franchise in 2007, Manohla Dargis of The New York Times wrote that it was ''part car commercial, part military recruitment ad, a bumper-to-bumper pileup of big cars, big guns and, as befits its recently weaned target demographic, big breasts.''

The Old Georgetown Board took up the matter of Dr. Howard's statues in spring 2021, and the city gave him a six-month permit to keep them up. But well after the six months was up, Bumblebee and Optimus Prime were still in place.

By the time the board met again, in April 2023, Dr. Howard claimed that he had spent tens of thousands of dollars fighting to keep his statues up, an amount that included legal and architect advisory fees and city fines.

This time, the board ordered him to take the statues down. Instead of complying, Dr. Howard appealed to the D.C. Public Space Committee. He also rebuffed offers from the Advisory Neighborhood Commission to help him find another place in the neighborhood to display his statues.

Dr. Howard seems to enjoy the attention that has come with the ongoing case. He has talked extensively with the press about his crusade. He was flattered that Paramount, the studio behind the Transformers movie, had invited him to the Washington premiere of the next installment, ''Transformers: Rise of the Beasts,'' which comes out June 9.

As DCist and The Washington Post chronicled the twists and turns of the neighborhood drama, sentiment online seemed to swing his way. A student at Georgetown University started a Change.org petition, signed by more than 900 people, to keep the statues up. ''This is so dumb,'' Hayden Gise, an Advisory Neighborhood Commission vice chair who lives in a neighborhood close to Georgetown, wrote on Twitter. ''Let him live oh my god. Everyone loves property rights until some guy does something cool.''

On May 25, the statues' fate went before the Public Space Committee. Dr. Howard had hired Paul Strauss, D.C.'s shadow senator, to represent him. Or, as Mr. Strauss put it, he was acting as counsel for Optimus Prime, while a colleague represented Bumblebee.

''People have misunderstood the issue,'' Mr. Strauss said. ''You talk about compatibility with a historic district? Technically, these guys are millennia old. I mean, they're prehistoric.''

Mr. Strauss and Dr. Howard also persuaded Peter Cullen and Dan Gilvezan, actors who voiced Optimus Prime and Bumblebee on the 1980s cartoon series based on the toys, to attest at the hearing about the history and significance of the nearly 40-year franchise.

The entreaties didn't work. The D.C. Public Space Committee denied Dr. Howard a permit, meaning that he would have to take the statues down himself, or the city would. It wasn't a question of art; it was a question of following the rules.

Dr. Howard didn't seem inclined to stand down. Before the meeting, he suggested that he would appeal a ruling against him on First Amendment grounds. His lawyer clarified that they saw the issue as one of equal protection: Plenty of people fill their sidewalk planters in Georgetown and never get dinged for it. Why is his client required to seek a permit for what is in his planter?

After the meeting, Dr. Howard said he thought he would apply for a new permit. But he seemed deflated.

''I'm sad,'' he said in a text to a reporter, adding,''What do you think I should do?''

The victory that Dr. Howard said he was seeking was a moral one.

''I know what these Transformers mean to me,'' he said. ''What does it mean to them?''

As of June 1, the statues were still standing.

Kitty Bennett contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/01/style/when-the-neighbors-dont-share-your-vision-and-that-vision-involves-transformers-statues.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/01/style/when-the-neighbors-dont-share-your-vision-and-that-vision-involves-transformers-statues.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Bumblebee, left, and Optimus Prime in Washington's Georgetown neighborhood. (ST1)

Top, Newton Howard greeting tourists. Center row, the interior of his home includes more Transformers sculptures and motorcycles, left, while a smaller Optimus Prime watches over the neighborhood from the rooftop. Above is the Optimus Prime out front, with flowers in hand. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZAK ARCTANDER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST2) This article appeared in print on page ST1, ST11.

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[***Labour Party Comes Out Swinging at Britain’s New Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66PR-5531-JBG3-6447-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

The opposition’s lines of attack, starting with Mr. Sunak’s choice of home secretary and his wife’s wealth, gave a glimpse of where it sees vulnerabilities in the governing Conservatives.

LONDON — A day after King Charles III welcomed him to the 1844 room in Buckingham Palace, laying out a table of treats for the festive holiday of Diwali, [*Prime Minister Rishi Sunak*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/10/25/world/uk-prime-minister-rishi-sunak#some-britons-fear-sunak-is-too-rich-to-understand-working-class-suffering)ventured into the less genteel confines of the House of Commons. His Labour Party opponents skipped the treats.

“He’s so weak he’s done a grubby deal, trading national security, because he was scared to lose another leadership election,” Labour’s leader, Keir Starmer, said on Wednesday, ripping into Mr. Sunak for naming an immigration hard-liner to [*his cabinet*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/25/world/europe/sunak-cabinet-appointments.html?searchResultPosition=1) only a week after she was fired from her post for a security violation.

From there, Mr. Starmer moved on to the evils of non-domiciled tax status, a loophole used by Mr. Sunak’s wife, Akshata Murty, to avoid paying British taxes on her global income. Earlier this year, Ms. Murty, the daughter of an Indian technology billionaire, agreed to pay those taxes in the future.

“I don’t need to explain to the prime minister how non-dom status works — he already knows all about that,” Mr. Starmer said, moments after he had congratulated Mr. Sunak on becoming the first “British-Asian prime minister.”

It was a bracing debut for Mr. Sunak in the weekly political cage match known as prime minister’s questions, and it gave a glimpse of how Labour planned to frame its case against the Conservative Party’s new leader, its third in seven weeks. Mr. Starmer described a governing party out of control, bereft of ideas, with a standard-bearer who could not relate to [*the anxieties of ordinary people*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/10/25/world/uk-prime-minister-rishi-sunak/some-britons-fear-sunak-is-too-rich-to-understand-working-class-suffering?smid=url-share).

Sitting on a lead of more than 30 percentage points in polls, with the Conservatives still traumatized by their recent chaos and an economy plunging into recession, Labour plans to press its advantage against Mr. Sunak. But it faces obstacles, including Mr. Sunak’s button-down, technocratic style and a policy record that stands in stark contrast to that of his failed predecessor, Liz Truss.

If anything, Mr. Sunak is closer in style to Mr. Starmer, a low-key human-rights lawyer who served as head of the Crown Prosecution Service. With a knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II for his “services to law and criminal justice” and an advanced law degree from Oxford, Mr. Starmer has the elite credentials of Mr. Sunak, though he comes from a ***working-class*** background.

Mr. Starmer, 60, used his forensic skills to great effect against Ms. Truss and Boris Johnson during prime minister’s questions. But in Mr. Sunak, 42, he has a well-prepared adversary who is fast on his feet.

“My record is clear,” Mr. Sunak declared, looking unruffled by Mr. Starmer, as his backbenchers cheered and whooped. “When times are difficult in this country, I will always protect the most vulnerable.”

As chancellor of the Exchequer under Mr. Johnson, Mr. Sunak doled out billions of dollars in aid to people who had lost their jobs because of the coronavirus pandemic. During the Conservative Party’s leadership contest last summer, he warned presciently that cutting taxes at a time of double-digit inflation, as Ms. Truss promised, was a “fairy tale” that would hurt Britain’s reputation and leave people worse off.

In just two days in office, Mr. Sunak has already created the impression of a government coming back to its senses after the chaos of Ms. Truss and the scandals of her predecessor, Mr. Johnson. On Wednesday, the new chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, said he would delay the publication of [*a detailed fiscal statement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/26/business/rishi-sunak-uk-economic-plan.html) from next Monday to Nov. 17 to gather better projections of growth and public finances.

With Mr. Hunt scrapping virtually all of Ms. Truss’s tax cuts, Mr. Sunak’s policy might not end up looking all that different from that of a Labour government. One exception, of course, is non-domiciled tax status, which Labour has vowed to eliminate, raising at least a billion pounds ($1.13 billion) for the British Treasury.

That illustrates both the advantages and pitfalls of a single-minded focus on [*Mr. Sunak’s wealth*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/24/world/europe/rishi-sunak-wealth-worth.html). Political analysts said that pounding the prime minister for his affluent lifestyle alone would not appeal to voters who are not already reliable Labour supporters. But linking it to [*his wife’s tax status*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/10/world/europe/rishi-sunak-taxes-uk.html?searchResultPosition=8) raises a fairness issue that could hurt Mr. Sunak, particularly if he is cutting spending and raising taxes on others.

“If they simply go after Sunak for being Sunak — and there are plenty of people on the left of the party who are willing to do that — that won’t really fly with the voters whose support they need,” said Steven Fielding, a professor of political history at the University of Nottingham.

“But if they can pinpoint that Sunak is personally benefiting from a tax break that most people view as totally illegitimate,” he continued, “that raises questions about whether he is serious about solving these issues.”

Labour will be helped by the memories of Ms. Truss’s trickle-down experiment, Professor Fielding said, because it “established an almost instinctual notion of what the Conservative Party is all about, which is to take care of the well-off.”

By highlighting the rehabilitated cabinet minister, Mr. Starmer also sought to discredit Mr. Sunak’s promise to run a government of “integrity, professionalism and accountability.” The minister, Suella Braverman, was appointed as home secretary, the same job from which she had been [*fired by Ms. Truss*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/19/world/europe/liz-truss-uk-parliament.html?searchResultPosition=5), ostensibly because she sent a government document on her personal email.

Mr. Sunak said that Ms. Braverman recognized that she had made an “error of judgment,” but that he was delighted to bring her back to the cabinet, declaring that she would crack down on crime and defend Britain’s borders.

In fact, political analysts said, Ms. Braverman’s greatest value for Mr. Sunak is that she backed him during the recent leadership contest. She is a popular figure on the party’s right, and her endorsement gave him crucial momentum to thwart Mr. Johnson’s efforts to catch him in the race for nominating votes. Her appointment, they said, was a simple quid pro quo.

But it could pose problems for Mr. Sunak down the road: Ms. Braverman and Ms. Truss clashed over immigration policy, with the home secretary favoring a tough approach that would cut the number of arrivals, while her boss was open to a more moderate approach because it could drive faster economic growth.

Mr. Starmer did not get into those nuances, analysts said, because Labour faces its own complicated calculus on immigration. Many of the “red wall” voters that it wants to win back in the next election favor tighter immigration laws. Labour’s pitch is not for open borders, but to make laws smarter and police the borders better.

For the Labour leader, however, Ms. Braverman was useful to paint Mr. Sunak as a compromised leader, hostage to the right wing of his party and powerless to transform the ethos of a party that favors the rich.

“He’s not on the side of working people,” Mr. Starmer concluded. “That’s why the only time he ran in a competitive election he got trounced by the former prime minister who herself [*got beaten by a lettuce*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/19/world/europe/liz-truss-lettuce-stream.html?searchResultPosition=1),” he said, referring to a tongue-in-cheek contest held by The Daily Star tabloid, which asked whether Ms. Truss would survive in office longer than the shelf life of a head of lettuce.

PHOTO: Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, said Wednesday that Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was “not on the side of working people.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY JESSICA TAYLOR/UK PARLIAMENT, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS) This article appeared in print on page A12.

**Load-Date:** October 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Is Homeownership Slipping Even Further Out of Reach for New Yorkers?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66XW-X5D1-DXY4-X2TY-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** NYREGION

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**Byline:** Mihir Zaveri

**Highlight:** In a city of renters, the turbulent pandemic housing market is making it harder than ever to buy a home.

**Body**

In a city of renters, the turbulent pandemic housing market is making it harder than ever to buy a home.

Jennifer Kopp decided early, when she was a child growing up in public housing in the Sheepshead Bay neighborhood of Brooklyn, that she would be the first in her family to own a home.

This fall, that goal appeared to draw closer: After more than 20 years of renting, Ms. Kopp was approved for a program that would help cover a down payment if she found a place by December.

The city-run program, [*called HomeFirst*](https://www.nyc.gov/site/hpd/services-and-information/homefirst-down-payment-assistance-program.page), is designed to provide a loan of up to $100,000 to first-time buyers who are New York City residents with limited incomes. A family of four that earns less than about $106,000 could qualify, and the loan may be forgiven, if the recipient keeps the home as a primary residence, among other requirements.

But Ms. Kopp, 42, a teaching assistant with a young son, soon ran into problems. Prices were beyond her reach, pushed up by a pandemic buying frenzy that left very few homes on the market. Interest rates, at[*their highest level in two decades*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/04/realestate/housing-market-interest-rates.html), made mortgages too expensive. Ms. Kopp, who earns about $45,000 a year at a public school in Brooklyn, may need to borrow against her retirement funds or abandon the search.

“It makes a person who is living paycheck to paycheck, trying to just achieve a little slice of what they once would have called the ‘American dream’ — it’s making it literally impossible,” she said.

Affording a home has grown increasingly difficult for many Americans, given these widespread housing shortages and economic swings. But the challenges can be at their most extreme in New York City, where residents like Ms. Kopp may have to postpone the dream indefinitely.

The city’s [*homeownership rate of just over 31 percent*](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdfs/services/2021-nychvs-selected-initial-findings.pdf), which is about the same as [*the figure from 2011*](https://rentguidelinesboard.cityofnewyork.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/2011findings.pdf), is roughly half the nationwide number and less than nearly every other major American city. Between the second quarter of 2019 and 2022, as the typical home price rose to nearly four times the median family income nationally, the price of a home in New York City has remained more than nine times that level, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

The situation is reinforcing worries about the city’s long-term health: As home owning becomes even more out of reach, racial wealth disparities could be exacerbated and more middle- and ***working-class*** families could be driven out.

“It’s one of those hard, difficult problems that we have to tackle, or else we’re going to end up with a city that’s only affordable to the very, very wealthy,” said Christie Peale, the chief executive and executive director of the Center for New York City Neighborhoods, a nonprofit group that pushes for affordable homeownership.

The city’s large proportion of renters mirrors other cities and reflects the “huge flows” of people coming and going, especially young and transient people attracted to the city’s job opportunities and cultural life, said Mark Willis, a senior policy fellow at New York University’s Furman Center.

“Homeownership makes less sense if you’re not there for the long run,” he said.

The homes that do get built tend to be more expensive because of high land and development costs, said Jonathan Miller, the president of Miller Samuel, a real estate appraisal and consulting firm.

Nearly everything is more costly now, in large part because of the city’s housing shortage. But the economic and social fluctuations during the pandemic have made the situation worse.

“You had a huge run-up in home prices, compounded with a huge run-up in interest rates,” said Laurie Goodman, an institute fellow and founder of the Housing Finance Policy Center at the Urban Institute, a nonprofit research organization. “The result was a huge increase in un-affordability.”

The income required to afford a home in, for example, the middle-third of the New York City area market in September 2019 was about $117,450, assuming a 30-year fixed rate mortgage, according to an analysis by the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies. That jumped more than 59 percent to almost $187,000 in September 2022.

Frederick Ferby Jr., 33, grew up with his mother in an apartment in the Rockaways in Queens, which had recurring pest and other problems. His father struggled to maintain and pay off the loan for a house in Jamaica.

Those experiences influenced Mr. Ferby’s choice of where to buy a home.

An IT engineer, he pays a below-market monthly fee of around $700 for an apartment in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, and could afford a monthly mortgage of around $2,000. He looked at some places in the Bronx that fit his price range, but none felt large enough for the price.

“To find something decent, at least in the boroughs, it’s difficult,” he said. He is now considering moving to New Jersey.

Mayor Eric Adams has made boosting “affordable homeownership” — and trying to bridge the racial wealth disparities — a key piece of his housing agenda. The homeownership rate for Black residents is roughly 27 percent, and for Hispanic and Latino residents it is roughly 17 percent, well below the 42 percent rate for white New Yorkers.

When the mayor announced his housing plan earlier this year, he said he wanted to “put the dream of homeownership back in the hands of working people and remind New Yorkers that leaving this city isn’t an option.”

It is unclear if Black and Latino home buyers have been hurt or helped by recent shifts in the market. Some [*data show that in New York State and nationwide*](https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/new-data-show-black-and-latino-homeownership-rates-increased-during-pandemic), the homeownership rate for Black and Latino renters increased between 2019 and 2021, probably in part because of low interest rates at the beginning of the pandemic.

In the most recent fiscal year, the city spent $9 million helping people make down payments and helped finance renovations for more than 120 one- to four-family homes, as part of a broader focus on homeownership.

But the efforts still fall short of the kind of transformative public investments that could meaningfully increase the rates of homeownership. Some advocates and politicians on the left are calling for a much higher investment and the creation of [*new forms of multifamily housing*](https://smhttp-ssl-58547.nexcesscdn.net/nycss/images/uploads/pubs/Pathways_to_Social_Housing_V11.pdf) owned by tenants and neighbors or nonprofits.

There are trade-offs to government investments in homeownership, housing advocates acknowledge.

Because the cost of buying is so high, it means public dollars may not reach as many people as programs targeting rentals. Enabling people to build wealth essentially means a home has appreciated and is no longer as cheap as it once was.

“The challenge for government is: How do you invest in affordable homeownership in a way that’s affordable over successive generations?” Ms. Peale said.

Without additional assistance, owning a home remains out of reach for many.

Jewel Ghosh, originally from Bangladesh, came to New York City in 2014 because of its big immigrant population and robust public transportation.

Mr. Ghosh, a doctor, lived in an basement before moving into a two-bedroom apartment in Ozone Park, Queens, this summer. He now lives there with his parents, wife and baby boy.

He has searched for a bigger place to buy. But as a city health department employee making about $70,000 a year and supporting his entire family on that income, he said he cannot afford the $700,000 homes he sees on the market.

“It’s my personal opinion that there is no balance with the income and the expenses,” Mr. Ghosh said. “One of the basic needs — living — is very difficult.”

For Ms. Kopp, the teaching assistant, not being able to afford a home is one reason she dreams of leaving the city. But she is afraid of uprooting her life and that of her son.

“I have a city pension, I have health benefits and I have job security,” she said.

But she added, “I definitely would love to leave New York.”

PHOTOS: Far right, public housing on the Lower East Side. New York City’s homeownership rate of 31 percent is roughly half the nationwide number. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSHUA BRIGHT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB1); The economic and social fluctuations during the pandemic have made the housing situation worse. Above, Jennifer Kopp and her son live in a rental on Staten Island. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY OLGA GINZBURG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; WINNIE AU FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB4) This article appeared in print on page MB1, MB4.

**Load-Date:** November 27, 2022

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[***The Key Insights From Our First Poll of the 2022 Midterms***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XY-JCR1-DXY4-X1HV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 16, 2022 Saturday 16:49 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 961 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** A summary of the findings includes deep dissatisfaction among voters and potential fertile ground for new candidates in 2024.

**Body**

A summary of the findings includes deep dissatisfaction among voters and potential fertile ground for new candidates in 2024.

Which side has the most energy heading into November? More polls will come as the midterm elections near, but for now we’ve wrapped up our first New York Times/Siena survey, and here are some notable takeaways:

Voters are not happy. Just 13 percent of registered voters said America was heading in the right direction. Only 10 percent said the economy was excellent or good. And a majority of voters said the nation was too politically divided to solve its challenges. As a point of comparison, each of these figures shows a more pessimistic electorate than in October 2020, when the pandemic was still raging and Donald J. Trump was president.

Joe Biden is in trouble. His approval rating in our poll was in the low 30s. That’s lower than we ever found for Mr. Trump.

Democrats would rather see someone else get the party’s nomination in 2024. Mr. Biden’s age was as much of an issue among voters as his overall job performance. Of course, he probably would have trailed “someone else” ahead of the last presidential primary as well, but he still won the nomination because his opposition was weak or fractured. Still, it’s a sign that Mr. Biden is much weaker than the typical president seeking re-election. It could augur a contested primary.

Trump isn’t doing great, either. Like Mr. Biden, Mr. Trump has become less popular over the last two years. The number of Republicans who hold an unfavorable view of him has doubled since our final polling in 2020. He’s now under 50 percent in a hypothetical 2024 Republican primary matchup.

Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida is already at 25 percent in an early test of the Republican primary. Mr. Trump may still be the front-runner, but the polls increasingly look more like the early surveys from the Democratic primary in 2008 — when Hillary Clinton found herself in an extremely close race and ultimately lost to Barack Obama — than the polls ahead of the Democratic primary in 2016, when she won a protracted battle against Bernie Sanders.

Many voters do not want to see a 2020 rematch. Mr. Biden still led Mr. Trump in a hypothetical 2024 matchup, 44 percent to 41 percent. What was surprising: Ten percent of respondents volunteered that they would not vote at all or would vote for someone else if those were the two candidates, even though the interviewer didn’t offer those choices as an option.

The midterm race starts out close, with voters nearly evenly divided on the generic congressional ballot (voters are asked whether they prefer Democrats or Republicans to be in control of Congress). That’s a little surprising, given expectations of a Republican landslide this year.

The news is helping Democrats. The news has been bad for Democrats, from recent court rulings to their frustrations in trying to stop mass shootings, but for the moment it may be helping the Democratic Party. Around 30 percent of voters combined said topics related to guns, abortion and democracy were the most important problem facing the country, and Democrats had a wide lead among these voters. It’s a big change from earlier in the cycle, when immigration, crime and questions about school curriculums seemed likely to dominate the campaign — and help Republicans.

Support for abortion rights is up in the wake of the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn Roe v. Wade. Sixty-five percent said they thought abortion should be completely or mostly legal, up from 60 percent in the last Times/Siena poll that asked about the issue, in September 2020.

Class polarization continues. In recent years, Democrats have made gains among well-educated voters while Republicans have made gains among voters without a college degree. That trend is not stopping, the poll shows. Inflation and the economy are dragging Democrats down among ***working-class*** voters — perhaps notably among Hispanic Americans — while issues like guns, abortion rights and threats to democracy are motivating the party’s white college-educated voters.

There are signs of a shifting racial coalition. For the first time in a Times/Siena national poll, Democrats’ share of support from white college graduates was higher than for nonwhite voters — a remarkable sign of the shift in political energy in the Democratic coalition. As recently as the 2016 congressional elections, Democrats won more than 70 percent of nonwhite voters while losing among white college graduates.

Voters of both parties are increasingly skeptical about the country’s institutions and its future. A majority of voters say the American system of government does not work, and that major reforms are needed or even a complete overhaul. Most voters say the political system can no longer address the nation’s problems, with the young being particularly pessimistic. And voters of both parties vary widely in their interpretations of events like the Jan. 6 storming of the Capitol.

For more detail, here is the full list of Times articles derived from the poll:

[*Most Democrats Don’t Want Biden in 2024, New Poll Shows*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/11/us/politics/biden-approval-polling-2024.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article) (July 11)

[*Half of G.O.P. Voters Ready to Leave Trump Behind, Poll Finds*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/12/us/politics/trump-approval-polling-2024.html) (July 12)

[*As Faith Flags in U.S. Government, Many Voters Want to Upend the System*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/13/us/politics/government-trust-voting-poll.html) (July 13)

[*Poll Shows Tight Race for Control of Congress as Class Divide Widens*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/13/upshot/poll-2022-midterms-congress.html) (July 13)

[*Could the Midterms Be Tighter Than Expected?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/13/podcasts/the-daily/midterms.html) (“The Daily,” July 13)

[*Young Voters Are Fed Up With Their (Much) Older Leaders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/14/us/politics/youth-voters-midterms-polling.html) (July 14)

[*Voters See a Bad Economy, Even if They’re Doing OK*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/15/business/economy/inflation-economy-polling.html)(July 15)

PHOTO: Abortion rights supporters in Columbia, S.C., this month. Democrats may benefit from the backlash against the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn Roe v. Wade. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sean Rayford for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 17, 2023

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[***The Breathe of God***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68KT-VHB1-JBG3-6495-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 2, 2023 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 4398 words

**Byline:** By Marcela Valdes

**Body**

The sanctuary of Northside church in Charlotte, N.C., is built for joyous adoration. Enormous speakers hang from its domed ceiling, along with an elaborate system of colored lights. Its semicircular stage has wide, carpeted steps that lead down on all sides to rows and rows of wine red pews, which hold about 2,700 people. The evening I visited last February, they filled to capacity with Latino families who had come to see the evangelical superstar Marcos Witt.

While the crowd gathered, Pastor Witt addressed his team in a greenroom cluttered with filing cabinets. ''Guys, this is night No. 30,'' Witt said. Thirty meant they were halfway through his América Ora y Adora (America Prays and Adores) tour, which began in spring 2022. His sister, who is also a pastor, pulled out a little bottle of ''anointing oil,'' which she rolled onto the wrists of every member of the group: the musicians, the pastor-singers, the sound and video techs and Miriam Witt, his wife of 37 years. The blend of olive oil and fragrance served as a reminder of their purpose: not just to perform music and satisfy fans but to call upon the Holy Spirit and bring people closer to God.

A few minutes after 7, they stepped onstage and plunged into the first song, ''Hemos Venido a Buscarte'' (''We've Come to Seek You''), an unreleased song that sounds a little like early U2. ''Jesus, I've come to seek you/Jesus, I've come to hear you,'' Witt and the other pastors crooned in Spanish over a thrumming combination of synth sounds and drums.

Onstage, Witt dresses like a man dodging attention: dark pants and dark long-sleeve shirts, his only ornaments a bead bracelet, a wedding ring and tortoiseshell glasses. But his attitude is playful and confident. ''You wanted to come hear Marcos Witt,'' he said, after a few songs. ''Relax. Yes, we're going to sing from the oldies and from the new ones.'' But they were also going to pray. ''Jesus Christ is still on the throne,'' he told them. ''Tonight we're going to focus on him.''

Most Americans have never heard of Marcos Witt, but he estimates that over the past 40 years he has sold roughly 27 million copies of his albums worldwide. (Most of these sales were through nontraditional venues, like churches, that do not report numbers to tracking agencies.) He has sold out arenas in Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Santiago, São Paulo, San Salvador, Miami and Los Angeles. He has won six Latin Grammy Awards, including one last year for his 34th solo album, ''Viviré'' (''I Will Live''). For his fans, he is more than a singer-songwriter. He is a conduit to the divine. ''My music carries the breath of God,'' he told me. ''Through our songs, God is hugging on people.''

In the 1980s, Witt revolutionized evangelical worship in Spanish by infusing praise songs with disco and new-wave stylings to appeal to a younger generation. In 1994, he founded the first of dozens of schools all over Latin America to train other musical worship leaders. In the 2000s, he built one of the largest Spanish-language evangelical congregations in the United States at Lakewood Church in Houston. At the same time, he inspired the next generation of Christian musical artists with his Latin Grammy wins. ''He brought to the forefront that it was possible to do this overtly Christian music, música de alabanza, and still have it sound well produced and have it sound cool,'' Leila Cobo, chief Latin content officer at Billboard magazine, explained. ''He's not making rinky-dink music on a little organ.''

His breakout album from 1988, ''Adoremos!'' (''Let's Adore!''), and its follow-ups ''Proyecto Alabanza Adoración'' (''Project Praise and Worship,'' 1990) and ''Tú y Yo'' (''You and Me,'' 1991) attracted younger Latin Americans by setting Scripture-inspired lyrics to the accompaniment of keyboards, electric guitars and drums. Many older pastors accused Witt of Satanism when these albums came out. The drum set, they said, was an instrument of the devil, and no godly music could sound anything like Bruce Springsteen or Billy Joel. But younger Latin Americans flocked to his concerts, filling stadiums. They were smitten not only by his pop and rock stylings but also by his way of addressing God.

During his years at Bible college in Texas, Witt soaked himself in the works of a musical ministry movement known as Praise and Worship, whose origins can be traced to Pentecostals in Canada during the 1940s. Before Praise and Worship, the Rev. Michael Herron, one of Witt's mentors, explained to me, the tone of most church songs was vaguely historical: They were about God, about Christ, about the crucifixion. Praise and Worship songs sounded more like love letters. ''They were sung personally to the Lord,'' Pastor Herron says. In this way, Witt's lyrics nudge people to foster their own direct relationship with the divine. Comparing Witt's music to ''that wind'' that blew through the Pentecost, Daniel de León Sr., pastor of Templo Calvario in Santa Ana, Calif., says, ''It stirred the church from the bottom up.''

Witt, 61, may no longer be the most popular Christian worship artist among younger Latinos and Latin Americans -- that laurel seems to belong to the group Miel San Marcos -- but he is still determined to bring people to Christ. The América Ora y Adora (A.O.A.) tour is his latest effort. All its music and prayer happens in Spanish. In our conversations, he compared the tour to the unit that powers up a jet airplane before it takes off. ''The Latino church is the jet,'' he emphasized. Witt knows its strengths and weaknesses. He has been working with Spanish-speaking evangelicals all his life. A.O.A. is designed to energize their congregations.

The Latino Protestant community in the United States, which is largely Pentecostal or charismatic, has never been more influential than it is today. It is also navigating strong winds that will affect its future: the secularization of Latino youth, the politicization of congregations, the rivalries among pastors and the hungry interest of Anglo evangelicals, who may aid or co-opt its growing power.

That night in North Carolina, Witt introduced the audience to the Rev. Rusty Price, who learned Spanish while working as a missionary in Cuba and founded Camino Church in Charlotte, a major sponsor of A.O.A.'s tour through the state. ''I want to thank all the immigrants for coming to my country,'' Price said, and the audience whooped with delight. ''God has sent you here to save the United States.''

Jonathan Mark Witt Holder was a missionary kid: born in San Antonio, Texas, and raised as Marcos in Durango, Mexico. His Anglo American Pentecostal parents devoted their lives to helping evangelical churches in Mexico. For most of his childhood, Witt believed that his vocation was different, which is why he became a classically trained pianist and a dramatic tenor. In his early years, he felt torn between two worlds: one that cherished music and another that cherished Christ. One afternoon when he was 17, he resolved the conflict by dedicating all his musical capacity to the Lord. ''From that day to this,'' he told me, ''it was all about, How can I use music to let people know about the love of Christ?'' Witt never performs songs about anything else.

After bringing the Praise and Worship movement to Latin America during his 20s and 30s, Witt moved to Houston with his wife and their four children, in part because the airport was a hub for flights to South America. In Texas, Witt signed a contract with Lakewood Church to lead a congregation there in Spanish. When the megachurch's pastor Joel Osteen approached Witt in 2002, roughly 500 people were donning headphones every Sunday to listen to Osteen's service in simultaneous translation. By the time Witt left 10 years later, Lakewood's Spanish-language service drew an in-person attendance of approximately 6,000 people every Sunday.

Lakewood became a model for Anglo evangelicals interested in attracting Spanish speakers to their churches. It was especially well positioned to welcome Latinos because it had already moved, years earlier, closer to Pentecostalism. Founded as Lakewood Baptist Church, it left the denomination decades ago, after Osteen's father embraced faith healing. The shift was part of a larger national trend. Over the past half-century, as charismatic worship became more common in the United States, practices like speaking in tongues and faith healing have met with greater acceptance, and the number of nondenominational Protestants in the United States has grown. In recent years they surpassed the number of mainline Protestants.

Lakewood needed more than doctrinal sympathy, however, to win more Spanish-speaking Christians. For all its size, the Hispanic evangelical community in the United States is quite fragmented. ''Here, there are a lot of 50-member churches, and there is no power,'' Witt said in a 2013 interview. ''We cannot even agree enough to have a cup of coffee.'' The rivalries, he told me, can be ''mind-numbing.''

Some of the divisions are national. In most neighborhood churches, if the pastors are from El Salvador, so is their congregation. Ditto if they're from Guatemala, Argentina or other Latin American countries. As an Anglo raised in Mexico, Witt has a more fluid national identity, and the decades he spent touring Central and South America with local Christians gave him more experience in the region than most Latin Americans. At Lakewood, he leveraged that advantage. ''I would use examples of food from different countries, and people would crack up: Oh, my gosh, he knows our food!'' He also deliberately adopted a more uniform Spanish, erasing many of his Mexican telltales.

Latino evangelicals argue over the right way to be baptized, or whether congregations should be organized into groups of 12 disciples, or which aspects of Scripture they should emphasize. For Witt, however, the only measure that counts is whether you have been bathed in the blood of Christ and embraced Jesus as your personal savior. ''I'm not about proselytizing people,'' he says. ''So you're Catholic? That's fine, but I need you to know Jesus. You're a Baptist? Great, but you need to know Jesus. So you're a Mormon? Fantastic; you need to know Jesus. So I'm more about people knowing who Jesus is than what brand or denomination or religion.''

This inclusive approach has made Witt popular at a time when American evangelism is fending off a demographic threat. Christians' share of the population has been shrinking over the past two decades. The changes are especially stark among millennials. Last year, Pew Research Center issued a report noting that if current trends continue, by 2070 the United States may no longer be a majority-Christian nation.

Given these patterns, it makes sense that Anglo institutions like Lakewood have begun wooing Spanish speakers. If they make inroads among Hispanics -- the fastest-growing group of evangelicals -- they have a better chance of ensuring their own relevance in the future.

''We're going to do away with monochromatic American evangelicalism,'' the Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, told me. ''In the next 20 years, if the Lord tarries, you're going to see less and less of all-white churches and all-Black churches. You're going to see a lot of more beautiful churches that look like a Skittles bag. And I think that's a byproduct of the Latino community.''

Many Anglo megachurches already host Spanish-language congregations, but not all their efforts are as equitable as Lakewood's. Osteen gave Witt the same sanctuary that he used, as well as the leeway to preach whatever he wished. But at Templo Calvario, Pastor de León has been receiving calls from Latino pastors who say that their congregations are treated like second-class guests in an Anglo house. Often, he says, Anglo pastors instruct their Spanish-speaking colleagues to parrot the content of their sermons. ''This has been a problem we've had all over the United States,'' de León says.

For Latinos like him, the inequality feels especially galling because their pastoral tradition dates back to the early days of Pentecostalism. The first Latino Pentecostal pastors were ordained in 1909 at the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles by one of the movement's founders, the Rev. William J. Seymour. Templo Calvario was founded by Latinos in 1925 -- and has seeded hundreds of other churches. ''God has raised our churches, just like the Anglos','' de León says. ''We have always pushed to do our own thing.''

In May, América Ora y Adora arrived in Kansas, and Maria Magdalena Rado de Espinoza, 64, traveled more than an hour to City Center Church with her 21-year-old granddaughter to see Witt, whom Rado listened to as a teenager in Peru. Back then, in the 1980s, her Pentecostal group held its meetings in the middle of a park on the outskirts of Lima because they had no church of their own. Strangers called them ''crazies'' and hurled rocks at them while they prayed. But Witt's music brought young people to God, she said. On Saturday nights, her group blared it on a cassette player, and other teenagers stopped by to find out what was happening, because their worship sounded like a party.

Berenice Merlos, 40, took her seat in the sanctuary with her husband and her four children. Merlos started listening to Witt with her grandmother when she was about 5. The little girl and the old woman held hands in an apartment in a rough neighborhood of Mexico City, singing ''Te Amo'' (''I Love You'') and ''Tu Misericordia'' (''Your Mercy''). ''It was a moment of very intimate worship, between her and I and God,'' Merlos says. Later, when she was 10, Merlos and her family saw Witt in concert. Together they sat way at the top of a Mexico City arena. When the crowd sang ''Poderoso'' (''Powerful''), she watched thousands of people below her lift their right hands as they praised the power of God. It was breathtaking. Witt's music gave Merlos a way to verbalize what she saw happening, the way God moved the arena and renewed her family. The only thing that allowed her father to escape alcoholism and drug addiction, Merlos says, was God's mighty hand.

These days a smaller share of Latinos are embracing God the way Merlos and Rado did. Even though the number of evangelicals keeps rising as the size of the Latino population climbs, the portion of Latinos who identify as evangelical has stabilized over the past decade at around 15 percent. At the same time, Pew Research has found, the percentage of Latinos who identify as atheist, agnostic or ''nothing in particular'' has steadily grown. In 2010, these more secular Latinos made up only 10 percent of the Hispanic population; in 2022, they were nearly a third.

Even so, Latino evangelicals have become an increasingly coveted voting bloc in swing states like Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia -- in part because they have proved themselves more interested in voting than Latinos who are Catholic or more secular.

It's also because they seem open to persuasion from both parties. According to a Pew Research survey conducted last August, a quarter of Latino evangelicals believe that Donald Trump should run for president again in 2024. But Pew has also found that Latino evangelicals are just as likely to say that Democrats represent their interests as that Republicans do. Sixty-nine percent believe that abortion should be illegal in all or most cases. Yet 70 percent believe it's more important to control gun ownership than to protect the right to bear arms.

Perhaps no issue better reveals the group's nuances than economic inequality. ''If you define economic justice via the lens of socialism, communism, the majority of evangelicals, according to Pew, would be opposed,'' Rodriguez notes. ''If you say, Are Latino evangelicals fully committed to addressing poverty in the name of Jesus? Absolutely -- and absolutely with three exclamation points.''

For many Latino evangelicals, drug rehabilitation, criminal justice and combating racism are top issues, right behind preserving life and religious liberty. The differences between their priorities and those of their Anglo counterparts come from experience. ''When there was white urban flight, the Latino Pentecostals stayed in the city,'' the Rev. Gabriel Salguero, president of the National Latino Evangelical Coalition, says. Their pastors walked alongside refugees, drug addicts and prisoners, as well as ***working-class*** families, small-business owners and, in rural areas, farmworkers. For pastors, Salguero says, the most important question is: How does this policy affect the people we serve?

This question thrust Witt into national politics after he began pastoring at Lakewood. There he witnessed firsthand the plight of undocumented immigrants in America. Every week he encountered someone whose parent or child or loved one was recently deported. Latinos were so frightened of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that if they saw uniformed officers outside the church, they often left. Witt regularly welcomed those who did enter the sanctuary with a version of: We're so happy to have you here. By the way, the police out there, they're just to direct traffic. That's not ICE. ''We had to say that for months before word got out where people weren't doing the U-turns when they'd see a cop,'' he recalls.

Shocked and outraged, Witt joined Esperanza, a faith-based organization in Philadelphia, in their efforts to reform federal immigration policy. The group's president, the Rev. Luis Cortés Jr., told me that in the early 2000s, no other Anglo evangelical leader associated with a megachurch would speak out publicly in favor of immigration reform. But Witt lobbied politicians in Texas and on Capitol Hill, traveling to Washington almost every two months at his own expense. He was present at the White House in 2004 when President George W. Bush announced a proposal to revamp immigration policies.

But after Senator Barack Obama won the presidential election in 2008, the same year that Witt endorsed Senator John McCain for president, Witt stepped back from politics. He said that the Democratic win had nothing to do with it. The real break came in 2006, he insisted, after Senator John Cornyn, the Texas Republican, promised Witt over the phone that he would do everything in his power to fight for a comprehensive immigration-reform bill. Then he voted against it. ''I was so angry and disappointed, I think I spent three days in bed,'' Witt says. ''I went, like, into this depression.'' About a week later, he told Miriam that he was done with Washington. (A spokeswoman for Cornyn denied that the senator would have promised to support an immigration bill that he ended up voting against.)

''This impasse that we've been living now for decades and decades is absolutely mind-boggling,'' Witt says. ''How they can live with themselves, making the promises and not doing a thing?'' The hypocrisy drove him away.

So as other Spanish-speaking evangelicals grew increasingly politicized, the Witts turned deliberately apolitical. ''Nothing ever that I know of in the Bible says, Oh, you got to believe this or be with this party,'' Miriam says. ''That's just not there. There's grace for all.''

''There are people very close to me who, ideologically, are very far from me,'' Witt says. ''I love them with my whole heart because they're my family. And I'll never stop loving them no matter what their ideology is.''

His only activism now is combating secularization. At every A.O.A. event, he invites attendees under 25 to approach the stage and commit themselves to Christ. The first time he did it, he was stunned to witness roughly half his audience step forward. His core fans may be older, but mothers and grandmothers bring him their young.

In Kansas, Rado and Merlos were each delighted to watch their children take their places before the stage. Merlos's eldest, 15-year-old Mizrahim, was the first of several whom Witt singled out. ''What's your name?'' Witt asked. When the boy answered, Witt replied, ''God is going to use you.''

On the morning after the A.O.A. event at City Center Church, Witt held a conference for Christian leaders in the church's smaller sanctuary. Some 75 people gathered there. When Witt arrived, the mood in the room was noticeably detached. These men and women, most of them middle-aged, led their own congregations and had their own ideas about worship. They sat in clumps, sorted by churches, many with their arms crossed.

Witt stood alone behind a keyboard and began improvising a selection of old hymns. At first, he would break from singing frequently with in-jokes about the hymnal they all used in church when they were young. I'm like you, the subtext read, I was brought up just like you. Within 10 minutes, he had them on their feet singing. Moments later, he started his song ''Temprano Te Buscaré'' (''Early I'll Search for You''), and Merlos, who is a pastor in Kansas, fell to her knees in the front row, offering her hands to God. By the time the audience sat down again, wariness had given way to warmth. ''That's the power of worship,'' Witt explained to me later. ''When I get out and sing a few songs that they all identify with, bam! They come together.''

Witt's gifts as a worship leader made the room more receptive when he switched roles and began interviewing a parade of A.O.A. sponsors: the development organization Living Water International, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, the technology platform Gloo. A.O.A. needs these sponsors to subsidize its free tickets because the average voluntary donation to its events is only $3. The tour has broken even only because Witt performs free.

By necessity, many of the pastors and leaders in the room that morning embraced the same approach; they worked day jobs and shepherded their flocks essentially as volunteers. Latino evangelicals, on average, simply donate less money to their churches, which makes it tough for smaller churches to stay afloat.

This is one reason some pastors in Kansas embraced the advantages of leading Spanish-language congregations from within Anglo megachurches: They no longer worried about rent. The Rev. Enrique Uria -- who grew a Spanish-language congregation to 600 members from 180 for the Family Church in McAllen, Texas, and now is pastor of another congregation for Hope Chapel in Kansas City, Kan. -- pointed out another key motivation: Second-generation Latinos often abandon their parents' churches.

''We're losing many of the young Hispanics,'' he says. ''And the ones who stay leave for a church in English, because their friends are there.'' If you build a contemporary Spanish service within an English-language church, he argues, you have a better chance of holding on to your teenagers and 20-somethings.

Witt himself tries to host A.O.A. events at Anglo megachurches for two reasons. They have fantastic sound systems, and rival Latino churches tend to view them as neutral ground. If A.O.A. happens at the biggest Hispanic church in a given city, he says, then the pastors of that city's many small and medium-size churches often feel slighted and instruct their congregations to stay away.

Even in Kansas, several pastors told their congregants not to attend A.O.A. at City Center Church. Some may have been afraid of losing their followers to its Spanish-language congregation, which the pastors Tommy and Janeth Torres started in 2019. Others may simply have opposed the way that the Torreses conduct services. ''We broke the mold,'' Tommy told me. He grew up attending old-school churches, the kind with three-hour services that don't allow women to attend wearing pants. But at City Center, their service lasts no more than 90 minutes; they use a fog machine, and women can wear what they want. The Torreses, who began as youth pastors, want to reach millennials where they are. They host small groups not just for married couples but also for single mothers, divorced women and blended families.

These are the kinds of innovations that Witt likes to support. ''Stop trying to correct how your brother does his ministry,'' he told the pastors that morning. ''You already have your own.'' Jesus, he reminded them, said you can't pour new wine into old wineskins; the old leather breaks, and the new wine spills. ''Are you already an old leather?'' he asked. The boomers and Gen X-ers in the room laughed uncomfortably. Witt chuckled, too, but he wouldn't let them go. ''Eh? It's something one has to ask oneself,'' he pushed. ''If you live in constant indignation, how can the new wine flow through your life?''

When Witt was the young rebel and older pastors set his cassettes and CDs on fire, he vowed to support the young Christians who came up behind him. Now he pushed the older pastors to stay young as well: to minister with joy and humor, to stop fighting with one another and to rejoice in the souls they saved, no matter how many or few they were. ''Maybe you already saw that pastor whom everyone says is crazy,'' he said. ''Go to that pastor and bless that pastor.''

Before every A.O.A. event, Witt prays for God to give him the discernment to understand the needs of the people who come. Some places are jubilant, others weepy. Charlotte was euphoric. Kansas was reserved. He wants to be used for the Holy Spirit's own ends. ''I'm going to get out onstage and get as small as I can so God can get as big as he can,'' he told me. When it works, the pastors, the songs and the prayers touch people's deepest needs for healing, for community, for love. That Saturday morning, I watched the transmutation again when Witt instructed the leaders to pray for one another. They formed new circles of three or four around the room. Onstage, Witt sang one of his greatest songs, ''Tu Fidelidad'' (''Your Faithfulness''), written by Miguel Cassina. The sweet, aching ballad embraced the pastors, but now they ignored Witt. Heads bent together, they were busy with their own work. If the jet of the Latino evangelical church takes off, they will be its fuel.

Maridelis Morales Rosado is a documentary photographer and photo editor, born in Puerto Rico and based in New York City. Her practice explores themes of culture, identity and sense of place.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Berenice Merlos, a pastor in Kansas, started listening to Witt with her grandmother as a child in Mexico City. Opening pages: Witt performing at Center City Church in Kansas. (MM35

MM36-MM37)

At every América Ora y Adora event, Witt invites attendees under 25 to approach the stage and commit themselves to Christ. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARIDELIS MORALES ROSADO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM38-MM39) This article appeared in print on page MM34, MM35, MM36, MM37, MM38, MM39.

**Load-Date:** July 2, 2023

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[***Was There a Biden Boom?; Paul Krugman***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6644-36K1-DXY4-X3F6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 9, 2022 Tuesday 12:30 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1049 words

**Byline:** Paul Krugman

**Highlight:** And if so, why aren’t people feeling it?

**Body**

Two weeks ago, I wrote a [*newsletter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/26/opinion/recession-gdp-economy-nber.html) that I foolishly considered somewhat anodyne, not likely to get much reaction. It seemed probable that the initial estimate for G.D.P. growth in the second quarter would be negative and that many people would declare that this meant the United States was in a recession. So I spent some time pedantically explaining why we don’t actually use “two negative quarters” to define recessions and why, given other data, America probably wasn’t in one.

Silly me. I immediately received the biggest wave of hate mail I’ve gotten since the Iraq War, although it tapered off as many other economists and institutions declared that we weren’t in recession — not yet, anyway — and it pretty much vanished after Friday’s [*monster jobs report*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/05/business/economy/biden-recession-jobs-report.html?smid=url-share).

But absence of a recession aside, one question I get asked is what happened to the “Biden boom” I — and many other economists — predicted?

And the answer is, it happened! But Americans aren’t feeling it, and it’s worth asking why.

So, about that boom. Here’s a chart of jobs gained since Inauguration Day under Joe Biden and the Former Guy:

Obviously there was a plunge in employment in 2020, as the Covid-19 pandemic forced the temporary shutdown of much of the economy. But one thing I haven’t seen widely noted is that job growth under Biden has been so fast that the economy added substantially more jobs in the past 18 months than were added in Trump’s first 37 months — that is, before the pandemic recession began.

I’m not saying that Biden deserves all the credit for this employment boom. When he took office, the U.S. economy was already in the process of recovering many of the jobs lost to the pandemic, although unemployment has fallen much faster than [*most forecasters*](https://www.philadelphiafed.org/-/media/frbp/assets/surveys-and-data/survey-of-professional-forecasters/2020/spfq420.pdf?la=en) were expecting in late 2020. But it’s kind of a moot point, anyway: Presidents often, dare I say usually, receive credit or blame for economic developments that have little to do with their policies.

So why doesn’t Biden get credit for the Biden boom, which is a real thing? Part of the answer is that people may not know about it. [*Some polling*](https://navigatorresearch.org/news/new-polling-fewer-than-one-in-five-americans-believe-the-economy-is-creating-jobs-despite-record-job-growth-in-2022/) suggests that the public may not be aware that we’ve been creating jobs at all, let alone at a record pace. And we’re in a partisan environment where politicians — let’s not bothsides this, right-wing politicians — can make obviously false assertions and have their supporters believe them. The other day Trump told a crowd that gas in California costs [*$8.25 a gallon*](https://twitter.com/GasBuddyGuy/status/1555945246017593347), and nobody laughed. (It was actually $5.43 at the time.)

Yet there has, of course, been a genuine dark side to the Biden boom: inflation. And people really dislike inflation. They would probably dislike it even if their incomes were keeping up. They definitely dislike it when prices are rising faster than wages, so the purchasing power of their income falls.

And inflation has, in fact, been outpacing wages since Biden took office; employment may be way up, but the real wages of those with jobs are down. We can argue about whether this episode is bad enough to justify the extreme negativity of public opinion about Biden and his economy, but it’s certainly a bad thing.

But what accounts for the inflation? That’s a huge subject, with scores if not hundreds of dueling studies, but there’s one fairly simple point that I think is clear: The inflation that people really hate, inflation that runs ahead of wage growth, is overwhelmingly a result of forces that were outside the control of the Biden administration, or any U.S. policymaker.

The Federal Reserve, which usually runs U.S. macroeconomic policy — the White House sometimes matters, but most of the time it’s the Fed’s show — has long made use of the concept of “core” inflation: inflation excluding volatile components, typically food and energy. The idea is that core inflation gives a better picture than the overall number of whether the economy is running too hot. In the post-pandemic era, with wild swings in things like the price of used cars, there have been questions about whether traditional core inflation excludes enough stuff. But for today’s purposes, I’ll stick with the traditional definition.

The big critique of Bidenomics, which has a lot of justification, is that big spending last year produced too much of a Biden boom, which led to a rise in core inflation; now the Fed has no choice but to squeeze the economy with higher interest rates until underlying inflation comes down.

But this policy mistake, if that’s what it was, has little to do with the reasons Americans are unhappy despite the jobs boom.

Here’s a comparison of two definitions of real wages for nonsupervisory workers since Biden took office. (I look at this type of worker because it’s a better indicator than the overall average of what’s happening to the ***working class***.)

The lower line shows wages adjusted for overall consumer prices and tells us what we already know: Inflation has run faster than wage growth, so real wages are significantly down. The upper line, however, adjusts only for core prices, and it’s basically flat.

I’m sure this will be misinterpreted, no matter what I say, but I’m not saying that Americans should care only about core inflation: What matters for families is the cost of living, in all its components. What the chart does show, however, is that the component of inflation that upsets Americans most — inflation faster than wage growth — is overwhelmingly a result of forces, like the prices of globally traded commodities, that weren’t driven by U.S. economic policy.

In other words, the reasons people feel so bad about the U.S. economy have a lot to do with events outside U.S. control.

That won’t stop voters from punishing Democrats for inflation, although the odds are that over the next few months we’ll see a reversal of what happened over the past year and a half: Job growth will probably slow, but many prices will come down, especially gasoline, which dropped to an average of about $4 a gallon on Tuesday.

Anyway, the Biden boom was real. It just got overshadowed by inflation, much of which had nothing to do with U.S. policy.

Quick Hits

Not a recession, says the [*Dallas Fed*](https://www.dallasfed.org/research/economics/2022/0802).

Is the American job market [*too good*](https://theovershoot.co/p/is-americas-job-market-too-good)

[*Expected inflation*](https://www.newyorkfed.org/microeconomics/sce#/) is coming down.

Polarized [*economic sentiment*](https://data.sca.isr.umich.edu/fetchdoc.php?docid=70409).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 9, 2022

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[***Adams leads New York City mayoral primary after winning big outside Manhattan.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6307-MWP1-DXY4-X3YP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 23, 2021 Wednesday 22:09 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

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**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Highlight:** Runners-up Maya Wiley and Kathryn Garcia captured significant parts of the city, too, and it make take weeks to declare a winner.

**Body**

Runners-up Maya Wiley and Kathryn Garcia captured significant parts of the city, too, and it make take weeks to declare a winner.

Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, held a strong lead on Wednesday, the day after the Democratic primary for mayor of New York City, but the race was far from over.

Mr. Adams gave a triumphant speech on Tuesday night and thanked a long list of supporters who were part of a coalition that included Black and Latino voters, union members and a broad swath of the city outside Manhattan.

He had more than [*31 percent of first-choice votes*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/23/nyregion/nyc-mayor-primary-results-precinct-map.html) among the nearly 800,000 Democratic votes reported so far. In cities with ranked-choice elections, the candidate who is leading in the first round of voting usually prevails in the final count.

Mr. Adams’s closest competitors, Maya Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio, and Kathryn Garcia, a former city sanitation commissioner, had their own corridors of support. Ms. Wiley performed well in some predominantly Black neighborhoods in Brooklyn, and in Astoria and Long Island City in Queens. Ms. Garcia had strong support in Manhattan and in parts of the areas known as Brownstone Brooklyn.

If Mr. Adams emerges as the winner after absentee ballots and ranked choices are tabulated in the coming weeks, it could blunt the momentum of the progressive movement in New York City and reinforce the idea that public safety has become the top issue for voters.

“Adams used his approach on policing of saying we need justice and safety simultaneously to fuse together that traditional coalition,” said Bruce Gyory, a veteran Democratic strategist.

Ms. Wiley told her supporters on Tuesday night that the race was not over.

“Fifty percent of the votes are about to be recalculated,” she said to cheers.

Many voters ranked Ms. Wiley and Ms. Garcia in the first two spots on their ballots, and it is possible that one of them could capture many of the other’s supporters. Both are vying to be the city’s first female mayor, and both made that a central message of their campaigns.

Mr. Adams ran as a ***working-class*** underdog and focused on communities that were hit hard by the pandemic, a message he touched on during his primary night speech, said Christina Greer, an associate professor of political science at Fordham University.

“There are so many communities feeling left out and Adams, as his authentic self, seemed just as angry and hurt and inspired as those communities,” Ms. Greer said.

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Democrats' Midterm Hurdle: A Dour National Mood***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65C5-B731-DXY4-X295-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 3, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 17

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**Byline:** By Katie Glueck

**Body**

Crucial left-leaning voters have soured on President Biden, and Americans of all stripes are angry. Democratic leaders can't agree on what to tell them.

LAKEWOOD, Ohio -- At a Whole Foods in one moderate Cleveland suburb, shoppers recently worried about war, inflation, a ''scary'' political climate -- and a Democratic Party some saw as slow to address the nation's burning problems.

At a house party for a left-wing congressional candidate across town, attendees fretted over the high cost of living and exorbitant student loan debt as they weighed their choices in Ohio's primary elections on Tuesday.

And at a campaign event for Representative Shontel Brown here in Lakewood, a liberal city near Cleveland, not everyone seemed impressed by President Biden.

''He's OK,'' allowed Yolanda Pace-Owens, 46, who works in security. She said that she had voted for Mr. Biden and still admired him, but that she was alarmed by a pandemic-era rise in violent crime. ''We just got to do better,'' she said.

Nearly six months before the midterm elections, Mr. Biden and the Democrats face staggering challenges and signs of dampened enthusiasm among nearly every constituency that powered their 2020 presidential and 2018 midterm victories, according to polls and more than two dozen interviews with voters, elected officials and party strategists across the country.

Yet Democrats are still struggling with how to even discuss the nation's greatest challenges -- much less reach a consensus on how to right the ship.

The party's problems run deep, as Mr. Biden's lead pollster has privately warned the White House for months. Independent voters backed Mr. Biden in 2020, but his approval rating with independents now hovers in the 30s. He has underperformed with voters of color in some surveys. Warning signs have emerged among suburban voters. And Mr. Biden's approval rating has deteriorated with young people even though he won them overwhelmingly in 2020.

In a midterm environment heavily shaped by the president's approval rating, all of those numbers are gravely worrying for Democratic candidates, who are left with tough questions about how to engage unsettled voters and reinvigorate their base.

How much time should they spend trying to show voters they grasp the pain of inflation, compared with efforts to remind them of low unemployment? Should they pursue ambitious policies that show Democrats are fighters, or is it enough to hope for more modest victories while emphasizing all that the party has passed already?

And even when candidates try to tell that story, is anyone listening?

''Voters hear us, but I don't know that we have convinced voters as to how these things will affect them on a personal level,'' Representative James E. Clyburn of South Carolina, the third-ranking House Democrat, said in a recent interview. ''We're not connecting with the voters on the level that they can connect with.''

As Mr. Biden confronts the lingering pandemic, war in Ukraine and historical headwinds -- the president's party typically loses seats in midterm elections -- he has acknowledged his party's messaging challenges, worrying recently that amid crises, ''we haven't sold the American people what we've actually done.''

The president, a consummate retail politician who some Democrats had hoped would be more visible, is now pursuing a more robust travel schedule to sell his party's agenda and accomplishments, and he is highlighting some contrasts with Republicans.

Allies and some voters note that polling is partially driven by anger over extraordinary events, including the war's impact on gas prices, that the White House could not fully control. But Mr. Biden's advisers say that the president is working to demonstrate that Democrats understand voters' struggles and are moving to fix them, as the party's lawmakers make a fresh push for a range of legislative priorities, especially concerning prices. On Thursday, Mr. Biden also said that he was considering wiping out some student loan debt.

A new Washington Post-ABC poll also showed some positive signs for Mr. Biden and the Democrats, though Republicans retained significant advantages on issues including inflation, the economy and crime.

''While President Biden and Democrats work to lower costs and continue the historic economic recovery made possible by the American Rescue Plan, Republicans have done everything they can to try to stand in the way,'' Jaime Harrison, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, said in a statement.

Yet months of national polls show that Americans have a vastly different perception of the party in power. Even in overwhelmingly liberal Los Angeles, private Democratic polling in April found Mr. Biden's favorability rating at only 58 percent, according to a person with direct knowledge of the data.

Democratic tensions over messaging have been on display in Ohio, where candidates in this week's primaries reflect the full spectrum of competing views.

Ms. Brown, who faces a contested primary in a safely Democratic seat and was endorsed by Mr. Biden, is running hard on the bipartisan infrastructure law.

She echoed other House Democrats in promoting the message that ''Democrats have been delivering.''

But Biden advisers have privately indicated that pitch tests poorly as a party slogan. And at another Ohio event in late April, Nina Turner, a former state senator who is challenging Ms. Brown from the left in a rematch, suggested that Democrats had not delivered nearly enough.

She urged, among other priorities, universal cancellation of student debt -- or, at a minimum, canceling $10,000 in federal student debt per borrower (Ms. Brown also supports some student debt forgiveness measures). Mr. Biden, who endorsed the $10,000 goal in 2020, has postponed payments, and significant student debt has been erased during his tenure, but some have called on him to do much more. He may take further action, and there is still time to make more progress on the Democratic agenda.

But for now, many on the left are disappointed that Democrats, despite controlling Washington, have run aground in the divided Senate on priorities like the climate and voting rights.

''People can forgive you, even if you can't get something done,'' Ms. Turner said. ''What they don't like is when you're not fighting. And we need to see more of a fighting spirit among the Democratic Party.''

On the other end of the party's ideological spectrum is Representative Tim Ryan, a moderate Ohio Democrat running for Senate in a state that has veered rightward. He is casting himself as a fighter for the ***working class*** and highlighting measures like the infrastructure law, while seeking some cultural and political distance from many others in his party.

In an interview, Mr. Ryan cheered a ruling to eliminate mask mandates on airlines and public transportation, which is now being challenged. ''Masks suck,'' he said. ''I think we're all tired of it.''

Asked which national Democratic surrogates he would welcome, he cited Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio, Senator Jon Tester of Montana and Senator Gary Peters of Michigan -- but asked specifically about Mr. Biden or Vice President Kamala Harris, Mr. Ryan said: ''This is my race. I'm going to be the face of this.'' (Biden advisers noted that the president has recently appeared with Democrats in competitive races.)

And as of Friday, Mr. Ryan was one of seven Democratic candidates who have run ads this year that mentioned inflation, according to the media tracking firm AdImpact. By contrast, dozens of Republican candidates and allied groups have done the same. In polls, Americans have cited inflation as a top issue.

''Burying your head in the sand,'' Mr. Ryan said, ''is not the way to approach it.'' Asked about the biggest challenges facing his party, he replied, ''A response to the inflation piece is a big hurdle.''

He also cited ''a national brand that is not seen as connected to the ***working-class*** people, whether they're white or Black or brown.''

Lou McMahon, a registered Democrat who said he did not vote in the last two presidential elections because he did not like his choices, sounded open to Mr. Ryan in an interview at Ms. Brown's event. But asked to assess Democrats in Washington generally, he replied, ''Promise, but not delivered,'' citing both stalled legislative ambitions and Mr. Biden's pledge to help heal partisan divisions.

''The targets and the aspirations were maybe beyond the reach,'' said Mr. McMahon, 58, an environmental lawyer. ''The reuniting that was so much of the promise hasn't played out in reality quite that way.''

Celinda Lake, a veteran Democratic strategist and a pollster on Mr. Biden's 2020 campaign, said that ''there's nobody in America more deeply disappointed in how divided America is than Joe Biden.''

''He does communicate it, but I think it helps a lot when he's on the road,'' she said.

Republicans face their own midterm difficulties. Many candidates have adopted former President Donald J. Trump's relentless focus on the false notion of a stolen 2020 election, a stance that swing voters may dismiss as extreme. In some primaries, the party runs the risk of nominating seriously flawed general-election candidates.

Democratic officials hope their prospects will brighten as primary contests are settled and candidates draw sharper direct contrasts with their opponents -- and they are already trying to define that choice.

On one side, they say, are bomb-throwing Republicans who are caught up in cultural battles, fealty to Trumpism and a controversial tax and social safety net proposal. On the other, Democrats argue, is a party that passed major infrastructure and pandemic relief measures, and spearheaded the confirmation of the first Black woman to the Supreme Court. Mr. Biden has also moved to combat gun violence, confronting Republican efforts to portray Democrats as weak on crime.

Many Democratic candidates are also raising vast sums of money, a sign of voter engagement.

''Our members have a great record of results, and the other side is offering nothing except anger and fear,'' said Representative Sean Patrick Maloney of New York, the chair of the House Democratic campaign arm. ''My message is: We're getting good things done. We're part of the solution. Give us a little more time.''

Time indeed remains, and Democrats could reverse their fortunes in an unpredictable environment -- but it is also possible that in the fall, the outlook will be largely unchanged.

''The problem with midterm elections is, they're not really a choice,'' said David Axelrod, who served as a senior adviser to former President Barack Obama. ''They tend to be a referendum on the party that controls the White House.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/02/us/politics/democrats-midterms-ohio.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/02/us/politics/democrats-midterms-ohio.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Representative Shontel Brown of Ohio embraces the message ''Democrats have been delivering.''

Nina Turner, who is challenging Ms. Brown, suggested that Democrats had not delivered enough.

Representative Tim Ryan, center right, is running for Senate in an Ohio that has veered rightward. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DUSTIN FRANZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 3, 2022

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[***London Theatergoers Are on the Edge of His Seats***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66P9-K3P1-DXY4-X4K9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1275 words

**Byline:** Alex Marshall

**Highlight:** One family firm supplies seating for most of the West End’s theaters, from flexible new spaces to Victorian treasures. Its chief designer reveals some tricks and traps of the trade.

**Body**

One family firm supplies seating for most of the West End’s theaters, from flexible new spaces to Victorian treasures. Its chief designer reveals some tricks and traps of the trade.

LONDON — Earlier this month, during the first performance at [*the West End’s newest theater, @sohoplace*](https://sohoplace.org/), the audience repeatedly cheered the actors performing [*“Marvellous,” a comedy about a British eccentric*](https://www.timeout.com/london/theatre/marvellous-review). At one point, several hundred theatergoers even applauded a technician who came on to clean the floor.

But there was one person key to the evening whom no one cheered, whooped or even politely clapped. And Andrew Simpson, the designer of the theater’s seats, was happier that way.

“If a seat’s good, you don’t notice it,” he said. “You only notice it when it’s bad.” In the world of theater seating, he added, “No news is good news.”

Simpson, 62, is in a position to know. He is the lead designer at [*Kirwin &amp; Simpson*](https://www.kirwin-simpson.com/), a family firm his grandfather founded that started out patching upholstery in a local movie house during World War II and now supplies the seats for most West End theaters. (It works with some in New York, too, including the Hudson Theater and St. Ann’s Warehouse.)

The West End is challenging territory for a seating designer. Many of the London theaters Simpson caters for are Victorian jewel-boxes: tight, ornate spaces built with more attention to gradations of social class than to comfort.

Originally, according to David Wilmore of [*Theatresearch, a company that restores historic theaters*](https://www.theatresearch.co.uk/) in Britain, they would have had a few front rows of luxurious armchairs — known as fauteuils — for their wealthiest patrons. Everyone else sat on wooden benches. When middle-class visitors were finally accorded seats, Wilmore said, theaters preserved their old sightlines by forcing the sitters bolt upright — “part of that Victorian strictness in all areas: ‘You jolly well better sit up and listen!’”

That won’t do for seats that now often cost hundreds of dollars to occupy.

A recent tour of Kirwin &amp; Simpson’s works in Grays, a ***working-class*** town east of London, included a room filled with rolls of multicolored cloth and a shed where five men were busy screwing, stapling and gluing sleek maroon seats for the forthcoming Ronald O. Perelman Performing Arts Center in New York. One warehouse is filled with emergency replacements, so that if a seat rips at, say, the Victoria Palace Theater — the London home of “Hamilton” — a new, perfectly matching one can be installed within hours.

Each theater needs many types of seats. The new, 602-capacity @sohoplace has 12 types, according to Simpson, all removable to allow different styles of staging, but some tricky older spaces require far more.

There are high chairs with built-in footrests, to give a clear view from the back of Victorian balconies where front-row patrons would once have sat directly on a low step. There are chairs with wide backs, but smaller seats, designed to fit perfectly into tight curves, and others with hinged armrests that can be raised so wheelchair users to slip into them. And there may be any number of things in between. Andrew Lloyd Webber’s Theater Royal, Drury Lane, has over 160 different designs, with widths and angles tweaked to ensure the best view.

The seats themselves have become less cluttered over time, losing accessories like ashtrays and wire cages for men to store their top hats. But in the most cramped spaces, Simpson still sometimes employs an illusion. Short armrests make a narrow aisle feel wider, he said, because visitors don’t have to squeeze past them to get to their places, and they are then less inclined to start thinking about how little legroom they have. “It’s all psychology,” he added.

It similarly helped if the show was a hit. “If the stuff onstage is really good,” he said, “then people don’t mind what they’re sitting on. If it’s anything less than that, then the surroundings come into focus, shall we say.”

Even with the good will of a good show, it can be tough to accommodate theatergoers of varying shapes, sizes and tastes. Nica Burns, the chief executive of Nimax Theaters, the company behind @sohoplace, said she wanted the seats in all her venues to be comfortable for short people like her (she’s 5 foot 2 inches), who don’t want their feet to dangle in midair, and for tall people like her 6 foot 3 inch husband. While the theater was being designed, she kept two Kirwin &amp; Simpson seats in her office and asked visitors try them. But, she said, “you’ll never find a seat that suits everybody.”

One demand that Simpson hears increasingly is for [*wider seats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/20/arts/music/bigger-seats-san-francisco-opera.html). Last year, Sofie Hagen, a popular comedian, [*began a campaign on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/SofieHagen/status/1433757886493167617?s=20&amp;t=yC3Gcm_BxG_sXb3x7UDrrQ), urging theaters to publish details of seat widths on their websites, to help larger people like her decide if they wanted to attend. “The amount of times I’ve gone to see a musical only to be in constant, excruciating pain,” Hagen wrote. “Once I had to leave before the show even started because the seat was too narrow.”

Hagen said in a telephone interview that every venue on her current British tour had agreed to display details of the width of their seats and she hoped more would follow. “If theaters had signs up saying ‘Fat people are not welcome,’ people would be like, ‘What?’,” she said, “but that’s subliminally the message we’re being told.”

At @sohoplace, some dozen seats at the orchestra level and balcony discreetly offer an extra three inches of width, on top of the standard 20 or so. Simpson, the designer, said that during a test event he had happily shared one with his 27-year-old son.

For some, however, a big seat might be a little too much comfort. Seats that leave theatergoers “practically rubbing shoulders with one another” make for more of a communal experience, Wilmore, the theater restorer, said.

Michael Billington, who resigned in 2019 after nearly 50 years as The Guardian’s chief theater critic, said he felt “a degree of austerity” helped keep audiences awake. For example, Shakespeare’s Globe in London has both Elizabethan-style standing space and backless wooden benches: Billington described those benches as “a form of terror,” but added that he certainly paid attention whenever he sat on one.

The new seats at @sohoplace drew typically mixed reviews from some of their first paying users. In interviews with a dozen audience members at the recent “Marvellous” performance, seven were glowing. John Yee, 22, visiting from Canada and sitting in the balcony, said they were “comfy as hell.”

Josh Townsend, who had a spot in the orchestra level, said he was 6 foot 2 and often struggled with seats that lacked legroom, yet @sohoplace’s were “really good.” The week before, he had watched “Dear Evan Hansen” in London’s Noël Coward Theater — whose seats are also by Kirwin &amp; Simpson — and his legs were jammed against the seat in front. This was a huge improvement, he said.

But though she had loved the show, Ayesha Girach, 26, a doctor, said the seats were so hard they were “probably the most uncomfortable” she had ever sat in. She then praised those at the Gillian Lynne Theater, just a few blocks away, where she’d recently seen “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.” “Those were really comfy,” she said. They were Kirwin &amp; Simpson seats, too.

PHOTOS: Top, the Sondheim Theater in London has a capacity of more than 1,000. The seats are by Kirwin &amp; Simpson, which also designed the seat above for @sohoplace, a new West End theater. Andrew Simpson, above right, is Kirwin &amp; Simpson’s lead designer and the grandson of its founder. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOM JAMIESON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page C5.

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***On Politics: A Big Day in Michigan***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YD0-X0F1-DXY4-X4PT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 10, 2020 Tuesday 07:14 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1269 words

**Byline:** Giovanni Russonello

**Highlight:** It may not be Super, but it’s a pretty important Tuesday. 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

* The presidential primary race is a game of dominoes, and they may start falling very quickly in favor of Joe Biden.

1. Six primaries take place across the country tonight, in the first round of voting since Biden’s big victories on Super Tuesday last week. The major contest is in Michigan, where polls suggest Bernie Sanders is in danger of suffering a painful loss. He upset Hillary Clinton in the state four years ago, giving him momentum as the primary moved into the spring.
2. A weak finish this year in a comparable two-person race would show that Sanders has lost ground among certain key groups, particularly white voters with college degrees — and that he has failed to pick up much-needed support among black voters, who are likely to break hard for Biden.
3. Sanders is aiming his pitch squarely at female voters in a way he rarely has before. He released a reproductive health care plan on Saturday, and as the Rev. Jesse Jackson endorsed Sanders on Sunday, he said the senator had pledged to nominate a black woman to the Supreme Court. Sanders has also begun to level attacks against Biden for his past support of the Hyde Amendment, which bars the use of federal money for most abortions, and Biden’s criticism (decades ago) of the Roe v. Wade decision. Sanders tends to perform better with men than women, but his campaign is targeting what it sees as a potential weak spot for Biden, while seeking to appeal to some of Elizabeth Warren’s former supporters, who were overwhelmingly women.
4. The domino effect from Michigan could be huge: There are contests next week in two of its Midwestern neighbors, Illinois and Ohio, as well as in delegate-rich Florida. But Sanders will have a chance to revive himself when he and Biden face off on Sunday in their first one-on-one debate.
5. Another chance: Washington State. It’s the second-most-populous state holding its primary today, and is much more favorable territory for Sanders. He won in a landslide there in 2016, when Washington was still a caucus state (historically a favorable format to Sanders). But [*the race looks much closer*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) this time. The vote will occur under the pall of the coronavirus, which has killed more than a dozen people in the state. Sanders has not visited the state since last month.
6. The recent surge of good news for Biden has paved the way for a wide lead in national polls. Both CNN and Quinnipiac University released national surveys on Monday showing Sanders trailing by double digits. The Quinnipiac poll, which had the wider margin, put Biden at 54 percent and Sanders at 35 percent. Sanders leads among liberals and young voters, but he picked up hardly any new support among older voters as the field has narrowed. Biden has him beat by more than seven to one among voters 65 and over, according to Quinnipiac.
7. In Michigan too, polls paint a disheartening picture for Sanders: A [*Monmouth University survey*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) out Monday showed him trailing Biden by 15 points among likely voters.
8. Just a few weeks ago, Michael Bloomberg got taken to task on national television for forcing female employees to abide by nondisclosure agreements. Now he faces a new controversy involving N.D.A.s, after closing up shop on his campaign and laying off much of its staff. Some former employees, speaking on the condition of anonymity, told our reporter [*Rebecca Ruiz*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) that they had been promised jobs through the general election, even if Bloomberg dropped out. Now they say they are   [*being told their salaries will stop arriving*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) at the end of March. And technically, they’re not allowed to speak out about it.

Photo of the day

Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey appeared with Biden at Berston Field House in Flint, Mich., on Monday afternoon after endorsing the former vice president that morning.

Could Biden hold onto Sanders’s ***working-class*** base in November?

If Biden coasts to the nomination, he will have a broad base of support to thank. He currently leads in national polls among both black and white voters, women as well as men.

But the party will still have to contend with a stubborn problem: A big portion of the ***working class*** feels as if the Democratic Party has abandoned it.

That feeling has led many to support Sanders for president, though it has been simmering since well before he entered the national spotlight in 2016. As [*Jennifer Medina*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) and   [*Sydney Ember*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) illustrate in a new article,   [*many of Sanders’s supporters are drawn to his policies because they say they directly need them*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline): things like student-loan forgiveness, “Medicare for all” and a $15 minimum wage.

“The Sanders campaign has exposed a class divide within the Democratic Party: His promises of a leg up are most alluring to those who need it, and most confounding to those who do not,” Jennifer and Sydney write.

The latest Monmouth poll of Michigan has evidence that some of Sanders’s voters feel unrepresented by mainstream Democrats: Just 63 percent voted for Clinton in the 2016 general election. That’s compared with roughly four-fifths of Biden’s voters who did.

Should Biden win the nomination, the difference in November may depend upon whether he can recover some of the ***working-class*** voters that Clinton lost to Donald Trump, especially [*in key Midwestern states like Michigan*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline).

Polls suggest Biden has the potential to do relatively well among ***working-class*** white voters against Trump. But in the past, Sanders’s base has also proved stubbornly loyal, to both its candidate and his ideas.

Trump’s takeover of the Republican apparatus

The president’s allies now control much of the apparatus that handles Republican Party voter data and fund-raising, according to a new report from [*Danny Hakim*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) and   [*Glenn Thrush*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline).

And those Trump allies are [*using their new power to make money*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) in ways that were never possible in a more transparent, analog era.

The upshot is that it has become harder for Republican candidates to run sophisticated digital campaigns without the support of Trump’s associates.

One of their biggest achievements has been founding WinRed, a fund-raising platform to compete with ActBlue, which supports Democratic campaigns.

“It is completely, thoroughly ironic that Trump, who ran against anything to do with the R.N.C. and the establishment, is the guy who is breathing new life into the party,” WinRed’s chairman, Henry Barbour, told Danny and Glenn.

How to watch the results tonight

We’ll have up-to-the-minute results and reporter analysis as the returns come in tonight from six Democratic primaries and caucuses. You can follow along at [*nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline). (There are Republican primaries too, but there is rather less suspense for them.)

Here is what’s at stake in each Democratic contest and when polls close — meaning, when final results will start to come in.

* Idaho primary (20 delegates): 10 p.m. Eastern time, except in northern counties closing at 11 p.m.

1. Michigan primary (125 delegates): 8 p.m., except in four counties closing at 9 p.m.
2. Mississippi primary (36 delegates): 8 p.m.
3. Missouri primary (68 delegate): 8 p.m.
4. North Dakota caucuses (14 delegates): 10 p.m.
5. Washington primary (89 delegates): 11 p.m.

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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/newsletters/politics?module=inline).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Sanders's Trouble With Black Voters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YD0-RG91-JBG3-630B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 17; ON POLITICS WITH LISA LERER

**Length:** 1324 words

**Byline:** By Lisa Lerer

**Body**

On a swing through Michigan, I could see that the candidate wasn't connecting with black voters.

Hi. Welcome to On Politics, your guide to the day in national politics. I'm Lisa Lerer, your host.

Sign up here to get On Politics in your inbox every weekday.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. -- Senator Bernie Sanders has a problem winning over black voters.

It was clear in 2016, when he stumbled on issues of race and faced protests from Black Lives Matter activists.

It was clear after the Super Tuesday contests last week, when Joe Biden cruised to victory on the strength of his decisive margins among black voters in Virginia, North Carolina and other states.

And as the race moves to Michigan, Florida, Illinois and other delegate-rich, diverse states, it's becoming even clearer that Mr. Sanders's failure to win significant support with black voters could end up dooming his second primary bid.

As I traveled with the Sanders campaign across Michigan this past weekend, he drew huge crowds, as he often does. But they were overwhelmingly white.

Those demographics were stark in a state where black voters are expected to make up nearly a quarter of the Democratic primary electorate on Tuesday.

Clearly, the Sanders campaign wants to expand beyond its base. At seven rallies over three days, it showcased a diverse array of supporters, including Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and the celebrity academic Cornel West.

In Grand Rapids, Mr. Sanders accepted the endorsement of a man he called ''one of the true heroes of modern America,'' the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Like Mr. Sanders hopes to do, Mr. Jackson used a surprise victory in Michigan to buoy his 1988 presidential bid.

(Fun deep cut: In the Vermont caucuses that year, Mr. Sanders, then the mayor of Burlington, was ''slapped by an irate citizen after casting his vote'' for Mr. Jackson.)

Yet, at a town-hall meeting in Flint, billed as an opportunity for Mr. Sanders to make a case directly to black voters, the Vermont senator refused to discuss issues of particular concern to black Americans. Instead, before yet another overwhelmingly white audience, he ceded the stage to African-American surrogates who delivered a series of searing attacks on Mr. Biden's record.

His campaign said Mr. Sanders had scrapped his speech in order to ''lift up'' the voices of the black panelists.

''Bernie does not have those experiences,'' a campaign spokesman said. ''He's a white Jewish man.''

Presidents, of course, have to talk about all kinds of issues affecting all kinds of people -- whether they have direct experience with them or not. No president, for example, has ever given birth.

Mr. Sanders has shown little hesitation in expressing his opinions on issues impacting Latinos, women or L.G.B.T.Q. Americans. (And he has found success with Latino voters, who make up just a sliver of the Michigan electorate.) Yet, while Mr. Sanders rattles off policy positions on issues like criminal justice, housing and education, he seems less comfortable driving a message around racial justice and the lived experiences of African-Americans.

Part of the problem Mr. Sanders may face is fundamental: His campaign is deeply rooted in his democratic socialism, focused heavily on class as the root of all the country's ills. Racial discrimination is a byproduct of economic inequality, rather than the cause, in Mr. Sanders's telling.

From Flint to Ann Arbor, Mr. Sanders cast his campaign as a unifying cause for ***working-class*** Americans, focused heavily on economic issues like the cost of college, unions, health care and low wages. He talks far less and in far less explicit terms about racial injustice.

''Our campaign is the campaign of the ***working class***, by the ***working class*** and for the ***working class***,'' he told voters in Dearborn on Saturday morning.

Of course, race and economics are intertwined. But as two political scientists wrote in Politico Magazine last week, ''race is the principal identity that resonates with the black community.'' When it comes to voting, racial identity has traditionally been a far more reliable predictor of political behavior among black voters.

In Flint, Mr. Sanders left discussion of those topics largely to his supporters. The next morning, Mr. Jackson delivered a message focused on racial injustice, even calling for Mr. Sanders to put a black woman on the ticket.

As I watched Mr. Jackson address thousands gathered in downtown Grand Rapids, I couldn't help but think about what a fascinating political moment this must be for him. His dream of a ''rainbow coalition'' has been realized in today's Democratic Party. As the Republican base grows ever whiter, Democrats have turned their diversity into their calling card.

But with that more diverse base comes a desire not to be taken for granted. And those voters want to hear from their candidate, not just his rainbow coalition of supporters.

Drop us a line!

We want to hear from our readers. Have a question? We'll try to answer it. Have a comment? We're all ears. Email us at [*onpolitics@nytimes.com*](mailto:onpolitics@nytimes.com)

Monday mailbag: Where do those Warren delegates go?

Eamonn Lawlor writes from Ireland to ask:

Come convention time, if there are only two men standing, and it's a close race, what happens to the votes of the delegates that other candidates won in the various primaries?

Over the past week or so, the Democratic presidential race has shrunk. Drastically.

A field that once ballooned to two dozen candidates is now down to a two-man race between Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders. (Yes, we know Representative Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii is still technically running. But she lacks a serious path to the nomination.)

By the current count, Mr. Biden leads the delegate race, with 664 delegates out of the 1,991 needed to win the nomination. Mr. Sanders is second, with 573 delegates. And then, there are 158 delegates that were picked up in early contests by Senators Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar and former Mayors Michael Bloomberg and Pete Buttigieg.

What happens to those delegates?

OK, bear with me, things are about to get technical.

The first thing to understand about the delegates is that they are actual humans who will attend the party convention in July and cast a vote. In the majority of states, those people have not yet been elected by the party. That's a process that typically happens at state party conventions well after the initial primaries or caucuses.

When that happens, the delegates that are allocated based on statewide results -- about 25 percent of the total -- will just be reallocated to candidates still remaining in the race.

The remaining 75 percent, which are allocated based on congressional district results, are technically still the property of the candidate who won them. But the actual delegates -- meaning the humans -- are not legally bound, so they're likely to just vote for someone still in the race, probably the person whom their original candidate endorsed. That process typically happens with some behind-the-scenes coordination between the two campaigns (the one still operating and the one that ended).

This reshuffling is a standard process in Democratic presidential politics and is part of the reason Democrats haven't had a contested convention in decades. In 2016, some states unanimously announced that they backed Hillary Clinton at the party convention, even though she didn't win all the delegates from those states. Then, like now, the delegates coalesced behind the winner.

... Seriously

Sign of the times, sure. But this chart is really useful.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/us/politics/bernie-sanders-black-voters.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/us/politics/bernie-sanders-black-voters.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID DEGNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***From Yale to Newsmax, Usha Vance Has Helped J.D. Vance Chart His Path***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66S2-GR81-JBG3-60TF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 2735 words

**Byline:** Joseph Bernstein and Katherine Rosman

**Highlight:** The Ohio Senate candidate’s wife, an accomplished lawyer, remains ensconced in the milieu he now rails against.

**Body**

The Ohio Senate candidate’s wife, an accomplished lawyer, remains ensconced in the milieu he now rails against.

In 2013, two students at Yale Law School decided to organize a discussion group on the subject of “social decline in white America.”

One of them was J.D. Vance, currently the Republican candidate in Ohio for a U.S. Senate seat.

For him, the subject matter was intensely personal: He had grown up in an economically depressed area of Ohio, and was raised in large part by his grandparents as his mother struggled with addiction.

He had lived the material.

The other student behind the project was Usha Chilukuri, the child of Indian immigrants, from an ethnically diverse San Diego suburb. For her, white social decline may have been an intellectual interest — but it was one with special significance. She was then Mr. Vance’s girlfriend, now his wife, known as Usha Vance.

The reading list for the group, according to emails reviewed by The New York Times, included scholarly papers like “Urban Appalachian Children: An ‘Invisible’ Minority in City Schools.” The syllabus would become something like the theoretical spine for Mr. Vance’s hit 2016 memoir “Hillbilly Elegy,” which is set against the social ills of the white ***working class*** in the postindustrial Midwest.

On paper, the gregarious Mr. Vance and the reserved Ms. Chilukuri may not have looked like a fit. But, according to contemporaries at Yale Law School, they were matched in their determination to conquer the prestigious worlds before them.

Ms. Vance, 36, who only selectively comes into the spotlight on her husband’s campaign, helped shape — and actualize — Mr. Vance’s ambitions, he has said. Her husband had outgoing charm in a room, but she knew, from a lifetime of experience, how to succeed.

“Usha was like my Yale spirit guide,” he wrote in “Hillbilly Elegy” of his wife, who was played by the glamorous actress Freida Pinto in the Netflix adaptation of the book. “She instinctively understood the questions I didn’t even know to ask and she always encouraged me to seek opportunities that I didn’t know existed.”

Her counsel to him, he has said, continues. “I’m one of those guys who really benefits from having sort of a powerful female voice over his left shoulder saying, “Don’t do that, do that,” Mr. Vance told [*Megyn Kelly*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/j-d-vance-on-trump-addiction-and-family-ep-29/id1532976305?i=1000534581240) in a 2020 interview on her podcast, “The Megyn Kelly Show.” For a long time, the powerful female voice in Mr. Vance’s life was his grandmother, whom he called Mamaw and wrote about in “Hillbilly Elegy.”

“Now,” he said on the podcast, “it’s Usha.”

And yet, in recent years, Mr. Vance, 38, has created a public image that is remarkably at odds with the world in which he and his wife built their reputations.

Once a Never Trumper who made his name deciphering ***working-class*** white resentment for the liberal center, Mr. Vance has tacked to the right leading up to and during his Senate campaign. He has staked out a place as a leader of an ascendant wing of [*highly nationalistic Republicans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/21/opinion/republicans-national-conservatives-policy.html). This group supports significant restrictions on immigration and champions the traditional nuclear family. They blame universities and Silicon Valley for the rise of “woke capital,” which they define as the trend of multinational corporations taking progressive stances on social issues to distract from practices that hurt American workers.

Mr. Vance’s recent rhetoric, which resulted in a Donald Trump endorsement in April, has been piercing of the so-called establishment and its values. (Though, of course, there are few gigs more prestigious in American life than senator.)

In June, two days after the Supreme Court struck down Roe v. Wade, Mr. Vance [*tweeted*](https://twitter.com/JDVance1/status/1541113407650336768?s=20&amp;t=z_g7zQL385LLqfQ463AJtA), “If your worldview tells you that it’s bad for women to become mothers but liberating for them to work 90 hours a week in a cubicle at the New York Times or Goldman Sachs, you’ve been had.”

Ms. Vance was, according to an online database that includes voter registration records, a registered Democrat until at least 2014. She has clerked for Supreme Court Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and works at Munger, Tolles &amp; Olson, a California law firm whose website describes its corporate culture as “radically progressive.”

In other words, though Ms. Vance has supported Mr. Vance’s rightward turn, she remains ensconced in the milieu that Mr. Vance, in his current campaign persona, rails against.

Through a spokeswoman, Ms. and Mr. Vance declined to be interviewed for this article.

From Yale to Newsmax

Press attention in Ohio to Ms. Vance has been scant, but sometimes racially insensitive. An Oct. 10 [*editorial cartoon*](https://www.cleveland.com/darcy/2022/10/ryan-vance-debate-darcy-cartoon.html) in The Plain Dealer, a Cleveland newspaper, attempted to satirize Mr. Vance’s criticism of the decision by Cleveland’s Major League Baseball team last year to change its name from the Indians to the Guardians. The cartoon showed Mr. Vance dressed in a San Francisco Giants uniform and speaking into a microphone. The caption read: “Only Indians name change I support is my wife’s to ‘Senator J.D. Vance’s spouse.’”

At a campaign stop in Middletown, Ohio, Mr. Vance addressed the cartoon and his criticism of the media. “You’re making a racist joke about my wife, and no one is calling them out for it,” he said. “It’s disgusting and despicable, and it’s why nobody trusts the media.” A spokeswoman for The Plain Dealer declined to comment.

In August, the Vances [*appeared*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFu5fFaUQUc) together on Newsmax, the cable channel to the right of Fox News, which refused to call the 2020 presidential race for Joe Biden for more than a month after the election. Ms. Vance sat to her husband’s left, her hand on his arm. They were in front of a bookshelf that included book club favorites like “[*The Growing Season*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/05/books/review/farm-girl-beuna-coburn-carlson-rural-memoirs.html)” by Sarah Frey and “[*Crying in H Mart,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/17/books/michelle-zauner-japanese-breakfast-crying-in-h-mart.html)” the 2021 memoir by the Japanese Breakfast musician Michelle Zauner, alongside the libertarian classic “[*The Road to Serfdom*](https://archive.nytimes.com/6thfloor.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/08/24/the-road-to-serfdom-the-graphic-version/?searchResultPosition=1).”

“The J.D. that I met back when we were in law school is the J.D. that I’m sitting next to right now,” Ms. Vance told the anchor, a sound bite that seemed designed to meet the criticism that her husband was a Johnny-come-lately to the populist wing of the Republican Party.

(The couple’s top-drawer education may not be a positive thing to highlight for some of the channel’s viewers; Newsmax earlier this year published a [*piece*](https://www.newsmax.com/michaeldorstewitz/alito-ford-orwell/2022/05/16/id/1070029/) with the headline “Whatever They’re Teaching at Yale Law School, It’s Frightening.”)

The Newsmax appearance wasn’t the only indication that Ms. Vance was supportive of her husband’s political metamorphosis. In December 2021, Federal Election Commission records show, she gave money to Blake Masters, an Arizona Senate candidate, a fellow national conservative who, like Mr. Vance, has received millions in donations from the tech billionaire Peter Thiel. (Both Mr. Vance and Mr. Masters have worked for Mr. Thiel.) It is the only political contribution the F.E.C. has on record for her.

‘She Was the Boss’

Ms. Vance has been preparing to succeed her whole life. She was raised in Rancho Peñasquitos, an upwardly mobile suburb of San Diego, by a mechanical engineer and a biologist. The family was part of a small, close-knit community of Indian American academics and professionals, and their children.

“By age 5 or 6, she had assumed a leadership role,” said Vikram Rao, a close family friend of Ms. Vance’s who works in Silicon Valley. “She decided which board games we were going to play and what the rules were going to be. She was never mean or unkind, but she was the boss.”

Ms. Vance was “a bookworm” in high school, according to[*Lizzie Le*](https://www.instagram.com/lizzielerealestate/?hl=en), a classmate who is a real estate agent in Rancho Peñasquitos. Ms. Vance played the flute in the school marching band. She was competitive. When The San Diego Union-Tribune interviewed high school students taking part in a trivia competition, Usha, 17 at the time, told the newspaper, “It’s not enough to know the answers, you have to do it fast.”

At Yale, her résumé continued to be well rounded. She majored in history, volunteered to help the homeless, tutored public school students and edited a public school advocacy magazine called Our Education. She learned cultural dances associated with ballet folklorico.

After Yale, she studied at the University of Cambridge on a Gates Cambridge Scholarship, to research the origins of copyright law.

According to Gabriel Winant, a friend of Ms. Vance’s at Cambridge who is now a historian at the University of Chicago, their broader friend group was left of center, with Marxists well represented. Mr. Winant described Ms. Vance as smart, reserved and occasionally acerbic.

“She could notice something funny or hypocritical or ironic in what others were saying or doing,” he said.

Ms. Vance was keenly aware of the importance of brand-name credentials, Mr. Winant said. When he was deciding where to go to graduate school, “I remember her saying Yale is the best place,” Mr. Winant said. “It will turn your career into what you want it to be.”

At Yale Law School, she and Mr. Vance were in the same first year “small group” of about 15 students who take all their classes together. Mr. Vance was instantly smitten.

“She seemed some sort of genetic anomaly, a combination of every positive quality a human being should have: bright, hardworking, tall, and beautiful,” he wrote in his memoir. “I joked with a buddy that if she had possessed a terrible personality, she would have made an excellent heroine in an Ayn Rand novel, but she had a great sense of humor and an extraordinarily direct way of speaking.”

Both Mr. and Ms. Vance took contract law from Amy Chua, the[*popular but divisive professor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/07/us/amy-chua-yale-law.html), who became a mentor to each. Ms. Chua encouraged Mr. Vance to write “Hillbilly Elegy,” and to focus on his relationship with Ms. Vance, [*according to a 2017 interview with The Atlantic*](https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/06/hillbilly-elegy-mentor/529443/).

They married in Kentucky in 2014, with wooden benches for guests set outside in the grass. In a separate ceremony, they were blessed by a Hindu pundit.

A Political Cipher

As Mr. Vance worked on “Hillbilly Elegy,” his wife pursued federal clerkships, first in the Eastern District of Kentucky, and then in the prestigious U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, where she clerked for Judge Brett M. Kavanaugh. In Washington, Mr. Vance practiced law at Sidley Austin.

“Usha definitely brings me back to earth,” Mr. Vance [*told Ms. Kelly in 2020 on her podcast*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/j-d-vance-on-trump-addiction-and-family-ep-29/id1532976305?i=1000534581240). “If I get a little too cocky or a little too proud, I just remind myself that she’s way more accomplished than I.”

In 2015, the Vances moved to San Francisco, where Ms. Vance started as an associate at Munger, Tolles &amp; Olson, and Mr. Vance went to work at Mithril Capital, an investment firm co-founded by Peter Thiel.

A 2019 American Lawyer [*article*](https://www.mto.com/Templates/media/files/Reprints/AmLaw/Munger%20Tolles%20Did%20It%20Why%20Cant%20You.pdf) about Munger, Tolles &amp; Olson’s diverse hiring practices put it in the “cool, woke category.” Though she had clerked for conservative judges, Ms. Vance was perceived by her colleagues as a liberal or a moderate, according to two people who worked with her at the firm, and asked for anonymity because they did not want to face professional consequences for discussing a colleague.

In 2017, Ms. Vance clerked for Chief Justice Roberts on the Supreme Court. Her colleagues were as impressed by her intelligence — she had “intimidating smarts,” as Nick Harper, a fellow Supreme Court clerk, said — as they were by her dedication to caring for her and Mr. Vance’s newborn first child alongside the demanding job. (The Vances now have three children under the age of 6.)

“It was clear that her family was immensely important to her,” said Sean Mirski, another clerk at the time. Mr. Vance, riding high on the success of “Hillbilly Elegy,” was a frequent guest at clerk happy hours. Neither Mr. Harper nor Mr. Mirski recalled Ms. Vance ever discussing politics.

Indeed, Ms. Vance is something of a political enigma even to people who know her extremely well.

“Political football has never been a central part of her identity,” said Mr. Rao, who, before the pandemic, had been a guest at the Vance home in Cincinnati. “This is not someone who wakes up every day and thinks, ‘Did my team win or lose?’”

But Mr. Vance plays the game. As he has chased far-right voters, he has castigated the world his wife comes from, the one that shaped him as a young adult.

In November 2021, Mr. Vance gave a [*speech*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FR65Cifnhw) at the National Conservatism Conference entitled “The Universities are the Enemy.”

“We have to honestly and aggressively attack the universities in this country,” said Mr. Vance, whose mother-in-law is a college provost at the University of California San Diego. “The universities do not pursue knowledge and truth,” he added. “They pursue deceit and lies.”

That world has, in turn, started to reject Mr. Vance. Ahead of the September 2021 [*wedding*](https://twitter.com/amychua/status/1448665814480166913?s=20&amp;t=HTVleIvCX0h8hvzuQx6RDA) of Sophia Chua-Rubenfeld — a daughter of Ms. Chua — multiple guests requested not to be seated next to the Vances, according to two people who attended the wedding. (The couple did not attend, in the end, because their children had the flu and Ms. Vance was soon to deliver their third child, according to two people close to the Vance family.)

Ms. Vance returned to Munger, Tolles &amp; Olson in 2019. Her work has included helping to defend the University of California against claims that it violated Title IX, and the Walt Disney Company, against claims of copyright infringement.

According to one former and one current lawyer at the firm, some employees at Munger, Tolles &amp; Olson are confused and disappointed by Ms. Vance’s support of her husband’s Trumpian turn, and his rhetoric on gender and immigration.

A New Life in Ohio

In 2018 the couple bought a 5,000 square-foot Victorian Gothic house on several acres in an upscale, liberal-leaning neighborhood on the east side of Cincinnati. The house, which cost $1.4 million, dates back to 1858 and is considered an [*important*](https://www.cincinnatihistory.org/post/samuel-hannaford-the-man-who-built-cincinnati) home by local historians. It has a sweeping staircase, verdant grounds for their dogs, Pippin and Casper, and separate structures including a two-story building by a swimming pool.

Ms. Vance — who works remotely for her firm’s San Francisco and D.C. offices — is not widely known among the city’s establishment, though in 2020 she joined the board of directors of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. ([*Dianne Rosenberg*](https://www.bizjournals.com/cincinnati/search/results?q=Dianne%20Rosenberg), the board chair and a civic leader and patron of the arts in Cincinnati, declined to comment about Ms. Vance joining the board.)

Mr. Vance’s[*first ad to air on television after he won the Republican primary last spring featured Ms. Vance*](https://twitter.com/JDVance1/status/1554941566720118785?s=20&amp;t=WRlZidUQYsHaVksVUgMwxw), sitting at a table in a blue dress with polka dots, making her husband’s pitch. “​​Our family’s story is an Ohio story,” she said.

After that, Ms. Vance faded back into the background of the campaign’s narrative for months.

“She has not been appearing alongside J.D. the way Fran DeWine appears alongside Mike DeWine,” said [*Mark R. Weaver*](https://twitter.com/markrweaver), a veteran Republican strategist in Ohio, referring to the state’s governor and his wife. “That is the ultimate 100 percent deployment of a political spouse. It’s just very difficult to deploy your wife in your campaign aggressively when you have three young children and she has a platinum level legal career.”

Mr. Weaver noted that Ms. Vance’s coastal credentials may have been more of an issue for Republican primary voters last spring than they are in the general contest this fall.

And as the race has moved into its final stages, Ms. Vance has become more publicly involved. On Oct. 20, she [*joined Ms. DeWine*](https://twitter.com/jdvancepress/status/1583215573223497730?s=21&amp;t=fF47JF7biJpnJV-1roWwew), at an event in support of an agricultural interest group called “[*Our Ohio*](https://ofbf.org/category/our-ohio/),” held at Phillips Tube Group, a [*woman-led*](https://phillipstube.com/who-we-are/our-team/) steel tube manufacturer. (Mr. DeWine is running for re-election, and, like Mr. Vance, he has been [*endorsed*](https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/3634091-trump-endorses-ohio-gov-mike-dewine-for-reelection/) by Mr. Trump.)

Once the campaign is behind them, perhaps Ms. Vance will have more time for one of her passions — reading. Between 2007 and 2010, Ms. Vance posted 65 “read” books to her Goodreads account, including novels by Zadie Smith, Jonathan Safran Foer and Vladimir Nabokov, as well as nonfiction by Nina Burleigh and Nicholas Kristof. Then her account went dormant for six years.

In 2016, Ms. Vance briefly returned to Goodreads to share her enthusiasm for a new book: “Hillbilly Elegy.” She gave it a 5-star rating.

Kitty Bennett and Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

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PHOTO: J.D. and Usha Vance celebrating his victory in the Republican primary in May as he runs for a Senate seat from Ohio. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GAELEN MORSE/REUTERS) This article appeared in print on page ST12.

**Load-Date:** November 6, 2022

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[***A Dysfunctional Congress***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:678P-T9W1-JBG3-613F-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1745 words

**Byline:** German Lopez

**Highlight:** Congressional gridlock brought on by far-right Republicans now seems more likely to lead to government shutdowns.

**Body**

Congressional gridlock brought on by far-right Republicans now seems more likely to lead to government shutdowns.

The House speaker elections last week turned a typically routine government procedure into a dramatic affair. They also exposed a major vulnerability in Congress: A small segment of lawmakers can stop the process of basic governance to obtain what it wants, with potentially big ramifications for the country.

In the speaker fight, the immediate consequences were relatively small. A Republican speaker, Kevin McCarthy, is leading a majority-Republican House.

More critical is how Republicans got there. McCarthy made concessions that will weaken his power, make it easier for lawmakers to oust him and give the right-wing rank-and-file greater input in legislation and in lawmakers’ assignments to committees, where Congress does much of its work.

The graver consequences will unfold months from now if the ultraconservatives who prolonged the speaker selection again withhold their votes until they have their way on [*looming spending bills*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/07/us/politics/speaker-election-debt-limit-republicans.html). Congress must pass such legislation to keep the government open and avoid economic calamity. If deadlines for these bills come and go without a resolution, the government could be forced to shut down or, worse, default on its debt obligations, likely triggering a financial crisis. (More on that later.)

The right flank has already connected its opposition to McCarthy to such spending bills. In speeches during the four-day speaker battle, far-right Republicans cited a $1.7 trillion spending bill Congress passed last month to argue that establishment figures, including McCarthy, have failed to reduce government spending. Among the concessions that ultraconservatives drew from McCarthy was a promise that any increase on the country’s debt limit, a congressionally set cap on the federal debt, will be paired with spending cuts.

Some hard-liners have been clear that they would take drastic action again to have their way on spending. “Is he willing to shut the government down rather than raise the debt ceiling? That’s a nonnegotiable item,” said Representative Ralph Norman, a Republican critic of McCarthy who ultimately voted for him.

Deliberate gridlock

The ultraconservatives have said that one of their main goals is to shrink the size of government. “If you don’t stop spending money that we don’t have to fund the bureaucracy that is undermining the American people, we cannot win,” [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/04/us/politics/mccarthy-republicans-rebellion.html) Representative Chip Roy, a Republican who voted against McCarthy in 11 ballots.

One way to achieve this goal is by pushing Congress toward inaction. Consider some of the assurances the holdout Republicans received from McCarthy: more time to read and debate legislation, as well as to propose unlimited changes to it.

In theory, these changes might sound like common sense, since legislators should, ideally, be taking time to understand and finalize bills. But in practice, these kinds of allowances have slowed Congress’s work, if not halted it altogether, by giving lawmakers more chances to stand in the way of any kind of legislation.

This roadblock is especially likely in a closely divided Congress. Since House Republicans have a slim majority of 222 votes out of 435, they must rely on their right-wing faction to reach a majority in any vote (absent unlikely support from Democrats). Last week, that faction showed it will wield its leverage.

“It’s all about the ability — empowering us to stop the machine in this town from doing what it does,” Roy said.

Coming deadlines

If the ultraconservatives use these tactics in future legislative debates, Congress could miss deadlines to keep the government open and avoid a financial crisis.

Among the looming fights is one over the debt limit. If the government ever reaches this limit, it can no longer borrow money to pay off its debts, potentially forcing a default. That could cause serious damage to the global financial system, which relies on U.S. Treasuries as a safe investment.

The government is expected to hit the current debt limit in late summer. Republicans have already suggested that they will try to use negotiations over raising it to draw spending concessions from Senate Democrats and the Biden administration, a tactic that conservatives used during Barack Obama’s presidency. But Democrats [*have said*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/us-policy/2023/01/07/gop-budget-debt-limit-kevin-mccarthy/) that they will not negotiate over the debt limit this time.

If both sides stick to their word, the government could be on track for the most treacherous debt-limit debate since 2011, [*my colleague Jim Tankersley reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/07/us/politics/speaker-election-debt-limit-republicans.html). That year, Obama and a new Republican House majority nearly defaulted on the nation’s debt before reaching a deal.

Similarly, the government will have to pass a spending bill in September to remain open. Republicans have, again, suggested that they will use their control of the House to reduce government spending. Democrats have said that they will push back. If both sides fall short of an agreement, the government will shut down, halting or slowing functions like the payment of military salaries, environmental or food inspections and the management of national parks.

The battle over the speaker, then, is potentially a preview of what’s to come: a Congress unable to perform even its basic duties because a small segment of lawmakers are willing to say no.

More Congress news

* History suggests that House Republicans’ plans are likely to bring more gridlock and instability, [*Carl Hulse writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/us/politics/house-republicans-rules.html).

1. House Republicans [*are preparing to investigate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/us/politics/house-republicans-fbi-investigation.html) law enforcement and national security agencies.

THE LATEST NEWS

Brazil Riots

* Thousands of supporters of Brazil’s former president, Jair Bolsonaro, [*stormed the country’s Congress*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/world/americas/brazil-election-protests-bolsonaro.html) and presidential offices over false claims of a rigged election.

1. Brazilian authorities cleared the government offices and arrested at least 200 people, an official said.
2. [*These videos show*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/world/americas/brazil-protests-videos.html)how rioters stormed government buildings in protests that resemble the Jan 6., 2021, attack in the U.S.
3. Bolsonaro is [*believed to be in Florida*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/world/americas/bolsonaro-florida-brazil-protests.html) after spending months [*promoting the myth of a stolen election*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/10/25/world/americas/brazil-bolsonaro-misinformation.html).

International

* [*Two buses collided in Senegal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/world/africa/senegal-bus-crash.html), killing at least 40 people.

1. Ultra-Orthodox politicians in Israel are [*pushing to cement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/09/world/middleeast/israel-ultra-orthodox-parties.html) their community’s special status under Benjamin Netanyahu’s new government.
2. Noma, the Copenhagen restaurant rated the world’s best, [*will close next year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/09/dining/noma-closing-rene-redzepi.html). Its chef says its style of dining is unsustainable.

Other Big Stories

* President Biden [*made his first visit to the southern border*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/us/politics/biden-southern-border-immigration.html) since taking office.

1. Winds knocked out power for hundreds of thousands of people in Sacramento. More [*storms are coming to California*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/09/us/california-central-coast-santa-cruz-storm.html) this week.

* A new Korean War memorial has many names of American service members [*misspelled or missing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/09/us/korean-war-memorial-wall-names.html).

1. An avalanche [*buried and killed two snowmobilers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/us/colorado-avalanche-deaths.html) in Colorado, emergency responders said.
2. The Phoenix police are investigating their [*detention of a Black journalist*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/business/media/wall-street-journal-reporter-phoenix-police.html) for The Wall Street Journal who was reporting outside a Chase Bank.

Opinions

Noncompete clauses lower wages and decrease competitiveness [*across the economy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/09/opinion/linakhan-ftc-noncompete.html), says Lina Khan, the Federal Trade Commission chair.

Gail Collins and Bret Stephens discussed [*the speaker chaos*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/09/opinion/speaker-kevin-mccarthy-president-biden.html).

Our society is failing visual thinkers, [*to everyone’s detriment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/09/opinion/temple-grandin-visual-thinking-autism.html), Temple Grandin writes.

Damar Hamlin’s injury was serious but rare. Head trauma, heart disease and other more common conditions [*pose greater dangers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/09/opinion/football-health-injury-concussion.html) to football players, Chris Nowinski writes.

MORNING READS

Expensive, treacherous, beautiful: The battle over [*dirt roads*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/07/nyregion/dirt-roads-hudson-valley-chatham.html).

A $17,000 delay: A check-in agent’s mistake made her [*miss an Antarctic cruise*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/06/travel/tripped-up-missed-cruise.html).

Metropolitan Diary: Food never tasted as good [*as it did at 3 a.m.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/nyregion/metropolitan-diary.html)

Quiz time: Take [*our latest news quiz*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/01/06/briefing/news-quiz-house-speaker-vote-damar-hamlin.html) and share your score (the average was 8.7).

A morning listen: [*2022 was Bad Bunny’s year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/06/arts/music/popcast-bad-bunny.html).

Advice from Wirecutter: Stop killing houseplants. Try [*Lego flowers*](https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/lego-botanical-kits/).

Lives Lived: Russell Banks brought his blue-collar background to bear in novels that vividly portrayed ***working-class*** Americans. He [*died at 82*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/books/russell-banks-dead.html).

SPORTS NEWS FROM THE ATHLETIC

Bears’ conundrum: Chicago [*will pick first overall*](https://theathletic.com/4069273/2023/01/08/nfl-draft-order-full-list-2023/) in the 2023 N.F.L. Draft. Should they take an elite college quarterback or continue building around Justin Fields?

N.F.L.: The Bills, in their [*first game since Damar Hamlin’s collapse*](https://theathletic.com/live-blogs/bills-patriots-score/RtmSZUxABmcz/), beat New England. Detroit’s win over Green Bay sent the Seahawks to the playoffs and [*cemented postseason seeding*](https://theathletic.com/live-blogs/nfl-playoff-pictures-scenarios-odds-predictions-week-18/E3BMy6wDa0PU/).

An injury: Kevin Durant [*injured his right knee*](https://theathletic.com/4070318/2023/01/08/kevin-durants-injury-nets-heat/) in last night’s Nets win over the Heat.

ARTS AND IDEAS

The man behind the memoir

One name you won’t find on the cover of Prince Harry’s memoir, “Spare,” is J.R. Moehringer, the book’s ghostwriter. That’s because the job of ghostwriters — even the famous ones, like Moehringer — is to put ego aside and [*disappear into their subject’s voice*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/05/books/prince-harry-ghostwriter-moehringer.html).

Michelle Burford, who has written books for several celebrities, explains to her clients that they provide the materials to build a house and she puts it together. “You own the bricks,” she tells them. “But you — and there should be no shame in this — don’t have the skill set to actually erect the building.”

Moehringer, a Pulitzer Prize-winning former reporter, is known for his intense process. “He’s half psychiatrist,” said the Nike co-founder Phil Knight, who collaborated with Moehringer on his memoir. “He gets you to say things you really didn’t think you would.”

Related: Prince Harry appeared at ease and at times emotional [*in high-profile interviews*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/books/prince-harry-itv-60-minutes-interviews.html).

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

[*Broccoli and Cheddar soup*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1019106-broccoli-and-cheddar-soup) has a following on the internet.

What to Read

In “The Edge of the Plain,” the journalist James Crawford asks [*whether good fences really make good neighbors*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/books/review/the-edge-of-the-plain-james-crawford.html).

The Playlist

Seven [*songs we nearly missed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/06/arts/music/playlist-flo-becky-g-karol-g.html) last year, including tracks by Flo, Becky G and Karol G, Monster and Big Flock.

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was judicial. Here is [*today’s puzzle*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Vernon Dursley, to Harry Potter (five letters).

And here’s [*today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — German

P.S. Sapna Maheshwari, a Times business reporter, will cover [*TikTok and emerging media*](https://www.nytco.com/press/a-new-role-for-sapna-maheshwari/).

Here’s [*today’s front page*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/2023/01/09/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about Speaker McCarthy.

Matthew Cullen, Lauren Hard, Lauren Jackson, 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: Kevin McCarthy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Haiyun Jiang/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 9, 2023

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[***Fine Dining Served on a Skewer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66XN-JG51-JBG3-6082-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1386 words

**Byline:** By Julia Moskin

**Body**

A look at how the creators of the new satirical film took the already high-pressure world of elite restaurants to a thrilling and terrifying level.

Is the new thriller ''The Menu'' a parody of the state of fine dining? You'd think so: A small group of people pay astronomical sums to be isolated on an island, fed ingredients that wash up on the beach by employees who are trapped there, and subjected to the hospitality of a creative visionary who is secretly filled with rage.

Yet much of this is a reality in the top tier of modern restaurants, a world that has become a fascination of popular culture.

The movie is billed as ''black comedy horror,'' but the horror that stalks this Agatha Christie-style island is not gore; it's gastronomy. Anyone who has ever felt trapped in a ''chef's tasting,'' whether of four or 40 courses, will recognize the roller coaster of claustrophobia and euphoria, satiation and starvation that is ''The Menu.''

In interviews with the people who dreamed up the food in the film, the consensus was that the tropes of modern fine dining are so extreme that there's little need to exaggerate them.

''The more serious you are about something that seems silly, the funnier the work gets,'' said the film's co-writer, Will Tracy, who knows something about parody, having written for ''The Onion'' for many years with his creative partner Seth Reiss.

The film, which will debut in theaters on Friday, stars Ralph Fiennes as the chef Julian Slowik; Nicholas Hoult as Tyler, the pretentious sycophant who worships him; and Anya Taylor-Joy as his dinner date, Margot, the pragmatist who punctures the balloon.

''You're the customer, you're paying him to serve you,'' Margot says matter-of-factly to Tyler, who is in a panic about having offended the chef by taking forbidden photos of each course. ''It really doesn't matter whether he likes you or not.''

Hawthorn, the fictional restaurant, is a mash-up of haute-rustic destinations like Noma in Copenhagen; Blue Hill at Stone Barns, north of New York City; Mugaritz in the Basque Country; the Willows in the Pacific Northwest; and the chef Francis Mallman's private island off the coast of Patagonia. These restaurants, adored by critics and awards panels, and visited mainly by wealthy gastro-tourists, are places where -- according to their own literature -- chefs are not cooks but ''storytellers'' about ''time and place,'' who are not merely feeding people but ''weaving a tale of senses, gestures and emotions.''

Hawthorn is at the opposite end of the restaurant spectrum from the sandwich shop in last summer's lovable ''The Bear,'' about an ambitious young chef called home to run his family's chaotic business, where he introduces the phrase ''yes, chef'' to build respect and camaraderie in the kitchen. In ''The Menu,'' when ''yes, chef'' is demanded by the tyrannical Chef Slowik, it rings of subservience, intimidation and gaslighting.

On the night of the action, Hawthorn is filled with every kind of loathsome, privileged customer: know-nothing finance bros, wealthy regulars who love the access but hardly notice the food, investors with ''suggestions'' about the menu, celebrities who expect V.I.P. treatment and preening journalists who take credit for putting a restaurant ''on the map.'' (Ouch.)

Worst of all is Tyler, the needy, aggressive know-it-all who has watched every episode of ''Chef's Table'' on Netflix ''two or three times,'' and can't help showing off that he knows what a Pacojet is (an expensive countertop freezer that makes ice creams, sorbets and snows).

The director, Mark Mylod, said he knew little about this elite corner of the culinary world before working on the film, having grown up ***working-class*** in the southwest of England, then working primarily on remote sets for shows like ''Succession'' and ''Game of Thrones.'' On shoots in Europe, he said, he had tried restaurants like the one in ''The Menu,'' and generally felt out of place and underfed.

''As an outsider, there's a whole language you don't understand,'' he said. ''Like opera, your ear has to be trained for it.''

Most people lack the time, the curiosity and the funds to study this arcane art form, but it's fun to see it skewered.

In one meal, the script hits on countless fine-dining clichés. The restaurant has its own shellfish beds, where diners watch their dinner being harvested; it boasts a ''Nordic-style smokehouse'' and free-range goats; and the wines are ''hyperdecanted.'' The chef is male, but the director of the dining room is a woman (played by Hong Chau), severely dressed in black and white, who carries out his vision and enforces his rules. Dishes are delivered by a coordinated cadre of cooks in pristine white shirts and roughspun aprons.

The plot holds many outlandish twists, but the food -- like a ''breadless bread course'' of dips and emulsions -- is all too real.

Many details weren't written for laughs, but lifted from actual restaurants. The spice racks are replicated from the kitchen at the Spanish restaurant El Bulli (now closed), housemade granola in gift bags are a nod to Eleven Madison Park and the notion of the ''perfectly unripe'' strawberry is from the chef René Redzepi of Noma.

A course of a single raw scallop perched on a craggy rock and surrounded by carefully tweezed seaweed and algaes is virtually indistinguishable from an actual dish at Atelier Crenn, a San Francisco restaurant with three Michelin stars. This is not a coincidence: the chef, Dominique Crenn, was brought on to design the dishes in the 10-course meal and to make sure that other culinary details rang true.

She said she identified with Chef Slowik: with his intensity, his vulnerability, his frustration. ''We work 18 hours a day, every day, under pressure to feed thousands of people a perfect meal,'' she said. ''And one person can walk into the restaurant and put you down, or a writer can judge you for using too much salt.''

Mr. Mylod said that recreating a modern fine-dining kitchen was surprisingly disturbing. Long hours, sexual harassment and verbal abuse are among the horrors inflicted by Chef Slowik and the system he represents. ''We were reading the exposé as we were shooting,'' he said of the New York Times's reporting on the Willows, a restaurant on a remote island in Washington State.

''The people who work in that restaurant are expected to maintain this extraordinary level night after night,'' he said. ''I get to say 'wrap' at some point and go home, but they never seem to get that kind of break.''

It's an extreme version of going out to dinner that only the world's .01 percent has actually experienced. But the Disney-owned Searchlight Pictures is betting that there's now a wide audience familiar enough with these restaurants to enjoy the satire.

''This movie probably wouldn't have happened without 'Mind of a Chef' and 'Chef's Table,''' said Mr. Tracy, the filmmaking team's main food lover, referring to the behind-the-kitchen-door food shows that have been streaming successes for the last decade.

The ''Menu'' production hedged its bets by bringing on David Gelb, the creator of the ''Chef's Table'' series, as second-unit director. His team's job: to film Hawthorn in precisely the same style as the earlier shows, shooting lingering close-ups of blue flames, shining tweezers, herb gardens and perfectly arrayed dots of food.

''I am honored to have had a number of parodies of the work,'' he said, citing the brilliant ''Juan Likes Rice and Chicken,'' a 2016 episode of the mockumentary series ''Documentary Now!'' that parodied ''Chef's Table.''

Mr. Gelb's first film, ''Jiro Dreams of Sushi,'' held the seeds of the solemn respect accorded to modern chefs, by showing the extraordinary dedication that the Tokyo sushi chef Jiro Ono brings to each bite of nigiri: the octopus that must be massaged for at least 40 minutes, the rice that must be fanned by hand.

The possibility of controlling every detail of a meal feeds the genius, the worship and the madness of the chef, Mr. Gelb said. ''That's both the comedy -- and the horror -- of the film.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/17/dining/the-menu-movie.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/17/dining/the-menu-movie.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise, from top: Hawthorn, the film's restaurant, with Ralph Fiennes, center right, as the chef

Anya Taylor-Joy and Nicholas Hoult

''The Island,'' a rock with seaweed, algae and one scallop

an oyster with lemon caviar, a reference to a signature dish by Thomas Keller, a real chef

and, well, it's some kind of food. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES) This article appeared in print on page D4.

**Load-Date:** November 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Biden Tours Ohio and Pennsylvania, Aiming to Win Back Trump Voters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60YJ-J551-JBG3-61C1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 30, 2020 Wednesday 10:53 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

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**Byline:** Katie Glueck and Thomas Kaplan

**Highlight:** A day after a turbulent debate, Joe Biden embarked on an old-fashioned train tour to cities where the president won over ***working-class*** white voters four years ago.

**Body**

A day after a turbulent debate, Joe Biden embarked on an old-fashioned train tour to cities where the president won over ***working-class*** white voters four years ago.

ALLIANCE, Ohio — A day after a staggeringly contentious presidential debate, [*Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) sought again to put [*President Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) on the defensive on Wednesday by casting his opponent as a callous plutocrat who abandoned the working Americans who elected him.

In his most vigorous day of campaigning in months, Mr. Biden embarked on an old-fashioned train tour to directly appeal to the blue-collar white Americans who powered Mr. Trump’s victories in the industrial Midwest in 2016. The trip brought him to a host of cities in eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania, a region where Mr. Trump had previously won over ***working-class*** white voters who traditionally voted for Democrats, setting off a realignment of the political parties.

“What I saw last night was all about him,” Mr. Biden said of the debate in Cleveland, during which Mr. Trump [*constantly interrupted and taunted him*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html), and the Democratic nominee issued his own series of sharply personal criticisms. “He didn’t speak to you or your concerns or the American people even once.”

Mr. Biden, the former vice president, faces a steep challenge in seeking to win back many of the white longtime Democratic voters who supported Mr. Trump in 2016 and have only grown more intense in their commitment to him. In Alliance, Ohio, a sizable and organized pro-Trump contingent showed up on Wednesday morning to loudly protest Mr. Biden’s appearance, and the parts of the states Mr. Biden visited were often blanketed in Trump yard signs.

But in this city, and elsewhere in Ohio and Pennsylvania, there were also signs of the radically different environment Mr. Trump faces now — amid a pandemic, an economic collapse and four years of a controversial record — compared with 2016.

“He’s divided this country so bad,” said Steve Campbell, 67, who is retired from a tool and die company and lives in Alliance. He did not vote in the 2016 presidential election, he said, displeased by the choice between Mr. Trump and Hillary Clinton.

But on Wednesday morning, Mr. Campbell stood outside the Alliance train station holding a sign promoting the Democratic ticket and lamenting the “ridiculous” debate. He denounced Mr. Trump’s attacks on Hunter Biden, the former vice president’s son, as a “low point” and “just wrong,” and expressed horror at the president’s [*refusal to categorically condemn white supremacists*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html).

“I’m not a Democrat or Republican,” Mr. Campbell said. But this year, he will be affirmatively voting for Mr. Biden, he said, adding, “This country’s in such disarray.”

Mr. Biden is [*polling*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) [*neck-and-neck*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) with the president in Ohio, but many Democrats continue to view a victory there as a stretch. Mr. Trump carried the state by [*eight percentage points*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) in 2016, and it is not among the battlegrounds that Mr. Biden’s campaign has been most focused on.

In [*Pennsylvania*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html), Mrs. Clinton’s surprise defeat four years ago is a source of nightmares for many Democrats who are still wary of believing polls showing Mr. Biden with a stable lead there.

According to a recent [*New York Times/Siena College poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) of Pennsylvania that showed Mr. Biden with a nine-point edge, Mr. Trump has double-digit leads over Mr. Biden among white voters without four-year college degrees and among rural voters.

But the same poll showed an opportunity for the Biden team: Mr. Trump, who won Pennsylvania by less than a percentage point in 2016, is underperforming with those voters compared with how he fared four years ago, and Mr. Biden has a chance to cut further into his margins.

“Some we can win back,” Mr. Biden told reporters. “Others, it’s about cutting the margin. Even if we just cut the margin, it makes a gigantic difference.”

That was what Mr. Biden seemed intent on doing on Wednesday in Ohio and Pennsylvania — though often at a significant distance from many voters after months of maintaining a limited travel schedule amid the pandemic.

He met with a few Ohio voters aboard his chartered Amtrak train, but he did not engage the crowd that had gathered across the street from the Alliance train station — one that included pro-Biden and pro-Trump groups of people, many without masks. One woman in her 80s grilled members of law enforcement about why she could not see Mr. Biden, whom she supports.

Members of a sizable crowd in Latrobe, Pa., were disappointed when he did not engage them, though he did greet supporters at another stop in Greensburg, Pa., and capped the day with a drive-in rally in Johnstown, Pa.

“I’ll fight for you,” Mr. Biden said at the rally. “Not for the corporations, you. Your jobs, your families.”

Earlier, in Alliance, Mr. Biden said Mr. Trump “did what I expected him to do last night,” and he called the debate “a wake-up call for all Americans.” The way Mr. Trump conducted himself, Mr. Biden said, was “a national embarrassment.”

“For 90 minutes, he tried everything to distract — everything possible,” he said. “It just didn’t work.”

Mr. Biden began the train tour with a speech at Cleveland’s Amtrak station, where he was introduced by a teacher whose husband worked at the General Motors plant in Lordstown, Ohio, [*that closed last year*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html).

The former vice president said the debate on Tuesday was supposed to be “about you and all the people I grew up with in Scranton,” his Pennsylvania hometown. Mr. Biden has been open in his ambition to win over voters who supported President Barack Obama and himself before flipping to Mr. Trump, honing a populist economic message that casts the contest as a choice between Scranton and Park Avenue.

“Does your president understand at all what you’re going through, what so many other people are going through?” Mr. Biden asked. “The question is: Does he see you where you are and where you want to be? Does he care? Has he tried to walk in your shoes, to understand what’s going on in your life?”

Also on Wednesday, Mr. Biden was endorsed by the International Union of Operating Engineers and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. The operating engineers’ endorsement is especially meaningful in western Pennsylvania; over the summer, the business manager of the powerful Pittsburgh local had [*expressed skepticism*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) about both candidates. One of Mr. Biden’s stops on Wednesday was a visit to an operating engineers’ training facility in New Alexandria, Pa.

Polls show that few undecided voters remain. In the hours before the debate, voters milling in and out of a grocery store in Parma, Ohio — a city outside Cleveland [*that flipped*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) from backing Mr. Obama to supporting Mr. Trump — often said in interviews that their minds were firmly made up.

But Patricia Kiser, 78, had changed her mind, at least since 2016, when she voted for Mr. Trump. She will not do so this year, she said.

“He’s a jerk,” Ms. Kiser said. “He doesn’t [*pay his taxes*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html). Why should he be different?”

Katie Glueck reported from Alliance, and Thomas Kaplan from Washington.

PHOTO: Joseph R. Biden Jr. met with a few Ohio voters aboard his chartered Amtrak train, but kept his distance from crowds that gathered. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GABRIELA BHASKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 7, 2020

**End of Document**



[***‘The Dig’ Review: Carey Mulligan and Ralph Fiennes on a Treasure Hunt***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61W3-K4W1-JBG3-618C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 28, 2021 Thursday 00:57 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 336 words

**Byline:** Glenn Kenny

**Highlight:** A small team makes a groundbreaking discovery in this fictionalized account of an actual archaeological expedition close to home.

**Body**

A small team makes a groundbreaking discovery in this fictionalized account of an actual archaeological expedition close to home.

Carey Mulligan’s range is a thing of wonder. If you’ve already seen her as an avenging American in “Promising Young Woman,” watching her in “The Dig” may induce something like whiplash. Here she portrays, with unimpeachable credibility, Edith, an upper-class English widow and mother in the late 1930s who is fulfilling a dream too long deferred.

The dream is to dig up her backyard. It’s a big one, mind you, on her estate in Suffolk, dotted by what appear to be ancient burial mounds. To this end, Edith, whose youthful interest in archaeology was squelched on account of her sex, hires Basil Brown, a determined freelance archaeologist played with stoic mien and ***working-class***-tinged accent, by Ralph Fiennes.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/JZQz0rkNajo)]

Once the work begins, it becomes clear that something big is underground — this movie by Simon Stone, and the novel upon which it’s based, is a fictionalized account of the discovery of the treasure-filled [*Sutton Hoo*](http://youtube.com/embed/JZQz0rkNajo), one of the biggest archaeological finds of the 20th century.

Brown’s crew increases, taking in a dashing cousin of Edith’s (Johnny Flynn, bouncing back from the grievous “Stardust”) and a discontented married couple (Ben Chaplin and Lily James). Big Archaeology tries to horn its way in. Much drama ensues.

Weighty themes are considered here: the question of who “owns” history; the corrosive effects of class inequality; the potentially tragic intertwining of sexual repression and loneliness. To its credit, this consistently interesting and at times engrossing picture declines to strike any of its notes with a hammer. Trading on the great British art of understatement, it’s scrupulous, sober, and tasteful throughout.

The Dig

Rated PG-13 for themes and language. Running time: 1 hour 52 minutes. Watch on Netflix.

PHOTO: From top, Carey Mulligan, Archie Barnes and Ralph Fiennes in “The Dig.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY HORRICKS/NETFLIX)

**Load-Date:** January 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Dig***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61W9-7HG1-JBG3-621H-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. 6

**Length:** 320 words

**Byline:** By Glenn Kenny

**Body**

A small team makes a groundbreaking discovery in this fictionalized account of an actual archaeological expedition close to home.

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The DigRated PG-13 for themes and language. Running time: 1 hour 52 minutes. Watch on Netflix.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/28/movies/the-dig-review.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/28/movies/the-dig-review.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: From top, Carey Mulligan, Archie Barnes and Ralph Fiennes in ''The Dig.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY HORRICKS/NETFLIX)

**Load-Date:** January 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Where Sanders Is Falling Short; On Politics With Lisa Lerer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YCV-TJK1-JBG3-61VF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 9, 2020 Monday 01:03 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1319 words

**Byline:** Lisa Lerer

**Highlight:** On a swing through Michigan, I could see that the candidate wasn’t connecting with black voters.

**Body**

On a swing through Michigan, I could see that the candidate wasn’t connecting with black voters.

Hi. Welcome to [*On Politics*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), your guide to the day in national politics. I’m Lisa Lerer, your host.

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GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Senator Bernie Sanders has a problem winning over black voters.

It was clear in 2016, when he stumbled [*on issues of race*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) and   [*faced protests*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) from Black Lives Matter activists.

It was clear after the Super Tuesday contests last week, when Joe Biden cruised to victory on the strength of his decisive margins among black voters in Virginia, North Carolina and other states.

And as the race moves to Michigan, Florida, Illinois and other delegate-rich, diverse states, it’s becoming even clearer that Mr. Sanders’s failure to win significant support with black voters could end up dooming his second primary bid.

As I traveled with the Sanders campaign across Michigan this past weekend, he drew huge crowds, as he often does. But they were overwhelmingly white.

Those demographics were stark in a state where black voters are expected to make up nearly a quarter of the Democratic primary electorate on Tuesday.

Clearly, the Sanders campaign wants to expand beyond its base. At seven rallies over three days, it showcased a diverse array of supporters, including Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and the celebrity academic Cornel West.

In Grand Rapids, Mr. Sanders accepted the endorsement of a man he called “one of the true heroes of modern America,” the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Like Mr. Sanders hopes to do, Mr. Jackson used a surprise victory in Michigan to buoy his 1988 presidential bid.

(Fun deep cut: In the Vermont caucuses that year, Mr. Sanders, then the mayor of Burlington, was “[*slapped by an irate citizen after casting his vote*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics)” for Mr. Jackson.)

Yet, at a town-hall meeting in Flint, billed as an opportunity for Mr. Sanders to make a case directly to black voters, the Vermont senator refused to discuss issues of particular concern to black Americans. Instead, before yet another overwhelmingly white audience, he ceded the stage to African-American surrogates who delivered a series of searing attacks on Mr. Biden’s record.

[*His campaign said Mr. Sanders had scrapped his speech*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) in order to “lift up” the voices of the black panelists.

“Bernie does not have those experiences,” a campaign spokesman said. “He’s a white Jewish man.”

Presidents, of course, have to talk about all kinds of issues affecting all kinds of people — whether they have direct experience with them or not. No president, for example, has ever given birth.

Mr. Sanders has shown little hesitation in expressing his opinions on issues impacting Latinos, women or L.G.B.T.Q. Americans. (And he has found success with Latino voters, who make up just a sliver of the Michigan electorate.) Yet, while Mr. Sanders rattles off policy positions on issues like criminal justice, housing and education, he seems less comfortable driving a message around racial justice and the lived experiences of African-Americans.

Part of the problem Mr. Sanders may face is fundamental: His campaign is deeply rooted in his democratic socialism, focused heavily on class as the root of all the country’s ills. Racial discrimination is a byproduct of economic inequality, rather than the cause, in Mr. Sanders’s telling.

From Flint to Ann Arbor, Mr. Sanders cast his campaign as a unifying cause for ***working-class*** Americans, focused heavily on economic issues like the cost of college, unions, health care and low wages. He talks far less and in far less explicit terms about racial injustice.

“Our campaign is the campaign of the ***working class***, by the ***working class*** and for the ***working class***,” he told voters in Dearborn on Saturday morning.

Of course, race and economics are intertwined. But as two political scientists [*wrote in Politico Magazine*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) last week, “race is the principal identity that resonates with the black community.” When it comes to voting, racial identity has traditionally been a far   [*more reliable*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) predictor of political behavior among black voters.

In Flint, Mr. Sanders left discussion of those topics largely to his supporters. The next morning, Mr. Jackson delivered a message focused on racial injustice, even calling for Mr. Sanders to put a black woman on the ticket.

As I watched Mr. Jackson address thousands gathered in downtown Grand Rapids, I couldn’t help but think about what a fascinating political moment this must be for him. His dream of a “rainbow coalition” has been realized in today’s Democratic Party. As the Republican base grows ever whiter, Democrats have turned their diversity into their calling card.

But with that more diverse base comes a desire not to be taken for granted. And those voters want to hear from their candidate, not just his rainbow coalition of supporters.

Drop us a line!

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Monday mailbag: Where do those Warren delegates go?

Eamonn Lawlor writes from Ireland to ask:

Come convention time, if there are only two men standing, and it’s a close race, what happens to the votes of the delegates that other candidates won in the various primaries?

Over the past week or so, the Democratic presidential race has shrunk. Drastically.

[*A field that once ballooned to two dozen candidates*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) is now down to a two-man race between Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders. (Yes, we know Representative Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii is still technically running. But she lacks a serious path to the nomination.)

By the current count, Mr. Biden [*leads the delegate race*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), with 664 delegates out of the 1,991 needed to win the nomination. Mr. Sanders is second, with 573 delegates. And then, there are 158 delegates that were picked up in early contests by Senators Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar and former Mayors Michael Bloomberg and Pete Buttigieg.

What happens to those delegates?

OK, bear with me, things are about to get technical.

The first thing to understand about the delegates is that they are actual humans who will attend the party convention in July and cast a vote. In the majority of states, those people have not yet been elected by the party. That’s a process that typically happens at state party conventions well after the initial primaries or caucuses.

When that happens, the delegates that are allocated based on statewide results — about 25 percent of the total — will just be reallocated to candidates still remaining in the race.

The remaining 75 percent, which are allocated based on congressional district results, are technically still the property of the candidate who won them. But the actual delegates — meaning the humans — are not legally bound, so they’re likely to just vote for someone still in the race, probably the person whom their original candidate endorsed. That process typically happens with some behind-the-scenes coordination between the two campaigns (the one still operating and the one that ended).

This reshuffling is a standard process in Democratic presidential politics and is part of the reason Democrats haven’t had a contested convention in decades. In 2016, some states unanimously announced that they backed Hillary Clinton at the party convention, even though she didn’t win all the delegates from those states. Then, like now, the delegates coalesced behind the winner.

… Seriously

Sign of the times, sure. But [*this chart*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) is really useful.

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID DEGNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2020

**End of Document**



[***When the Neighbors Don’t Share Your Vision (and That Vision Involves ‘Transformers’ Statues)***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68C7-B4M1-JBG3-64FR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 1, 2023 Thursday 06:58 EST

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**Byline:** Noreen Malone

**Highlight:** A professor decorated a sidewalk in Georgetown with 10-foot sculptures of Bumblebee and Optimus Prime. The well-heeled locals were not pleased.

**Body**

A professor decorated a sidewalk in Georgetown with 10-foot sculptures of Bumblebee and Optimus Prime. The well-heeled locals were not pleased.

The thing about putting a pair of 10-foot metal Transformers statues outside your townhouse in the most picturesque district of the nation’s capital is that the neighbors are going to have opinions.

And on Prospect Street in Georgetown, they were not pleased.

The statues — Bumblebee and Optimus Prime, two of the good guys from the long-running “Transformers” movie franchise — appeared in January 2021 outside the white-brick home of Newton Howard, a cognitive scientist and machine-learning expert with ties to the intelligence community.

He had ordered them from a factory in Taiwan to the tune of more than $25,000 each. Where large brick planters had once blended in with the local aesthetic, there was now something akin to outsider art by way of an anonymous welder and Hollywood’s reinterpretation of 1980s toys.

Plenty of people love the statues, which resemble invaders from the future, in a neighborhood that does its best to hang on to its cobblestone past. Students at nearby Georgetown University can’t get enough. Neither can tourists: The Transformers statues have their own entry on Google Maps as a place of interest, with 4.9 stars. “The best part of visiting Georgetown,” one reviewer declared.

“People are at my door every day,” Dr. Howard, 53, said at his home on a recent afternoon. “It doesn’t bother me. I find it to be beautiful that actually people are appreciating things.”

But some of his neighbors are less enthusiastic, and the critics of his notion of a Georgetown-appropriate sidewalk display have been trying to get rid of Bumblebee and Optimus Prime for more than two years.

Dr. Howard, a bald man with an unplaceable accent, wears dark round eyeglasses that come equipped with a camera and a microprocessor that allows him to translate languages on the spot, he said.

He paid $3.75 million for the townhouse and moved in during the pandemic. In 2021, he snapped up the one next door for $4.8 million. The homes lie close to his job at Georgetown University School of Medicine, where he is a research professor in the department of biochemistry and molecular and cellular biology. (He added to his real estate holdings in 2022, when [*he bought a $3.6 million home*](https://www.washingtonian.com/2022/06/23/the-7-most-notable-homes-in-the-washington-area-this-month-and-who-bought-and-sold-them-june-2022/) in Potomac, Md. It has 14 bathrooms and a bocce court.)

Putting up the Transformers wasn’t the only thing Dr. Howard did to irritate his Georgetown neighbors, who learned shortly after his arrival that he wasn’t some sort of shabby, retiring professor. He had flashy taste and he liked to show it off, parking a number of expensive cars on Prospect Street: a yellow McClaren 720S (new ones start at $310,000), [*a 2005 Porsche Carrera GT*](http://www.exoticspotter.com/porsche-carrera-gt-washington-dc-united-states-273801) (which goes [*for $1.4 million and up*](https://www.cars.com/shopping/porsche-carrera_gt-2005/)), a Porsche 918 ([*fewer than 1000 were made, and they go for well over $1 million*](https://www.porsche.com/stories/innovation/how-much-is-a-porsche-918-spyder)). Not to mention an [*MRAP*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/23/world/europe/mrap-armored-vehicles-russia-ukraine.html) truck and a [*small airplane*](https://www.iconaircraft.com/a5/) from his collection that he once parked in front of his home. The car show came to a stop only after he received complaints.

A rich guy with loud cars is one thing, a known story. The Transformers were something else altogether. They quickly became a flashpoint in Georgetown, and on the internet, after the local news site [*DCist reported*](https://dcist.com/story/21/03/03/transformer-statues-georgetown-debate/) on the efforts of Dr. Howard’s neighbors to get the statues removed.

Sally Quinn, the author and longtime Georgetown resident, said she was firmly in the anti-Transformers camp. “I think they’re really ugly,” she said. “Some people may like them. You know, everybody’s taste in art is different. But that’s not the point.”

The point, she continued, was historical preservation: “People come to Georgetown because it’s Georgetown. It’s a beautiful, quaint village.”

But the author Kitty Kelley, who said she has lived in the neighborhood for “two husbands,” or since 1977, sent Dr. Howard a handwritten card in support of his sidewalk flair.

“All you have to do is take a walk through Georgetown, and you’re going to see gnomes and wrought-iron benches,” said Ms. Kelley, who is known for her dishy biographies of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis (“Jackie Oh!”), Oprah and Nancy Reagan. “You’ll see cement lions of all sizes. So why should this man be deprived of using the space right outside his front door?”

“Maybe it isn’t Picasso,” she continued. “It isn’t a sculpture by Degas, but I think he’s entitled.”

Ms. Kelley noted that her own outdoor decorations have included topiary monkeys, a seven-foot bird feeder and “an angel who’s shooting something across the yard.”

So: Was Dr. Howard a champion of free expression who found himself on a crusade against exclusionary zoning and “[*snooty neighbors,”*](https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2021/03/transformers-statues-georgetown-are-good.html) as Slate cast him? Or was he an attention-seeking scofflaw with questionable taste?

Or maybe this was simply a case of an eccentric and mysteriously rich guy being eccentric and mysteriously rich.

Neighbors Weigh In

Georgetown is not the most futuristic place. Some of the streets still have cobblestone and the remains of streetcar tracks. The neighborhood is filled with pastel rowhouses from the 18th and 19th centuries and with newer homes meant to recall the older structures.

The area also has its share of stately brick mansions that make you wonder who lives there, or used to. Often, it’s someone well-off, but occasionally it’s a someone someone. Power players in media, politics and entertainment — like Madeleine Albright, Ben Bradlee, Katherine Graham, John Kerry, Joe Lieberman and Elizabeth Taylor — have called Georgetown home. But it wasn’t always Washington’s glamour spot.

“Georgetown was kind of a dump in the early 20th century,” said George Derek Musgrove, the co-author of the 2017 study “Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation’s Capital.”

The old houses had largely fallen into disrepair, and the neighborhood was home to ***working-class*** Irish and African Americans. Then, with the explosion of government hiring during the New Deal, Ivy League graduates moved in. They fixed up their homes in an array of styles until the national craze for historical preservation took hold. In 1950, “Old Georgetown” was designated a federal historic district, with all the restrictions on home modification that entailed.

“By the time you get to 1960, and John Kennedy leaves his Georgetown mansion on N Street for the White House, you just couldn’t afford to get in if you wanted to,” Mr. Musgrove said.

A lot of the residents support efforts to keep things more or less the same. Catherine Emmerson, whose family lives close to Dr. Howard, helped start the Prospect Street Citizens’ Association a few years ago to stop a condo conversion that would have blocked local residents’ views of the Potomac River.

When the Transformers arrived, the group had a new target.

It’s not that the association was against celebrating film history. In fact, its members argued that the condo conversion would have threatened something that ought to be a landmark [*(and now is):*](https://dcist.com/story/19/01/30/the-exorcist-steps-are-now-a-historical-landmark-but-not-because-of-the-exorcist/) a set of steep steps on Prospect Street, built in 1895, that appeared in “The Exorcist.” (Think: tumbling priest.)

But that was “The Exorcist.” A film. (Maybe?) An old movie, at least. The “Transformers” franchise, which has grossed more than $5 billion across six films, was more like … I.P. (Michael Bay, the “Transformers” producer, declined to comment on Dr. Howard’s decorating choices or the neighbors’ reaction.)

And the Citizens’ Association had clear recourse. Before putting up the statues, Dr. Howard did not apply for any kind of permit, despite Georgetown’s historic status and the fact that the sidewalk is public space.

There is a process, a local official emphasized when he appeared in front of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission via video in March 2021, three months after Bumblebee and Optimus Prime had become part of the neighborhood. And he had bypassed it entirely.

The commission went on to inform him that, before gaining approval, he would have to apply to something else: the Old Georgetown Board, a federal body of three architects that ruled on any changes to the exteriors of properties.

Ms. Emmerson and another neighbor, the author and former television journalist Luke Russert, also weighed in. Ms. Emmerson argued that the statues represented a safety hazard and drew crowds of disruptive gawkers. (Dr. Howard later had his Transformers bolted in place.)

Mr. Russert was more blunt. “What’s to stop someone from putting up a statue of Joseph Stalin and saying, well, this is provocative, it’s art, it speaks to me?” [*he argued*](https://dcist.com/story/21/03/03/transformer-statues-georgetown-debate/). “They are a nuisance, they are an eyesore, and they detract from the spirit of the neighborhood.”

As tensions continued, Dr. Howard said he started hearing two terms that he had never heard before — NIMBY and YIMBY. (“Not in my backyard” vs. “Yes in my backyard.”) The pro-development crowd wanted to claim him as a hero. He declined to ally himself, exactly. Instead, Dr. Howard argued, his statues were all about “the American idea,” because they welcomed visitors to a cloistered part of the city.

“You don’t want to just come up with ways to shut down your neighborhood so nobody comes into it,” he said.

His critics disputed the notion that he was motivated by an idea of civic good. “His repeated disregard for the law and procedure tells a story of someone who is not operating in good faith for the collective community,” Ms. Emmerson wrote in an email to The New York Times.

‘The Real Tony Stark’

There was no horde outside Dr. Howard’s townhouse on a recent Sunday afternoon. A young man paused to snap a photo of his 2-year-old son standing with the statues. The toddler’s blue and yellow shoes matched Optimus Prime’s color scheme.

From the rooftop, a six-foot Optimus Prime statue peeked down at the street. It had once stood at the front door, but after the initial controversy Dr. Howard commissioned a taller version for the sidewalk. (The colors on the new one aren’t quite true to the franchise’s rendering of Optimus Prime, but Dr. Howard insists it’s him.) Then he moved the original, perched as if part of some SWAT team on the lookout for any Decepticons.

The interior of Dr. Howard’s home, which he said he decorated himself, resembled a lair. The glassy back of the townhouse overlooks the Potomac, where the buzz of jets headed into and out of Reagan National Airport adds to the techno-paradise vibe. Motorcycles were parked in the living areas as objets, and five more Transformer statues stood guard. There was also a giant model of Iron Man, a Marvel superhero dear to Dr. Howard.

“A lot of people used to call me the real Tony Stark,” he said, referring to Iron Man’s alter ego.

The memorabilia on display included his concealed carry permit, as well as framed photographs of him with Bill Clinton and Tim Tebow, the former N.F.L. quarterback who became known for kneeling in prayer on the field. Dr. Howard, who said he is a follower of Messianic Judaism, a religion sometimes referred to colloquially as Jews for Jesus, said that he and Mr. Tebow belong to the same fellowship group. (Mr. Tebow couldn’t be reached for comment.)

His home was fastidious, except for a half-built child’s toy in the living room. Dr. Howard has four children, ranging in age from 5 to 26, he said. (The older children are from a previous marriage.) He and his wife, Rebecca, are also fostering five Afghan refugees, he added.

Senator Markwayne Mullin, Republican of Oklahoma, became friends with Dr. Howard through a shared interest in Afghanistan.“I call him Tony Stark," he said. “I would have called him that without the statue.” (Senator Mullin made a splash in 2021 for [*personally trying to escort Americans out of Afghanistan*](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/sep/04/republican-congressman-markwayne-mullin-afghanistan) after Kabul fell to the Taliban, [*against the explicit wishes of the State and Defense Departments*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/mullin-afghanistan-trip/2021/08/31/62f63bb0-0a90-11ec-a256-709238a1404d_story.htmlaa). Dr. Howard was “very involved” in similar efforts, Senator Mullin said.)

The professor — who is, duh, a fan of the “Transformers” movies — said the sculptures had a deeper meaning for him. Not only did they represent machines and humans coexisting in harmony, he said, but the word “transform” had a great deal of personal significance.

“I like changing things when you’re in a status quo and they’re wrong,” he said. “When one looks at themselves and feels self-pity and falls into dwellings of darkness, you should transform.”

Dr. Howard has gone through several transformations himself. He was born in the Sinai Peninsula when Israel controlled it. His family — Egyptian Jews who ended up living in France, he said — moved to the United States when he was 11.

He said he joined the Army at 18, then worked as a linguist in Michigan “across various agencies,” specializing in Arabic, Farsi and Dari. He changed his name around that time because, he said, “it was offered by an agency.” He declined to provide more detail.

“There’s a lot of things during that phase of my career that should be kept secret,” he said.

Dr. Howard — whose doctorates include concentrations in mathematics and neuroscience, and [*who holds an appointment*](https://www.nds.ox.ac.uk/team/newton-howard) at the University of Oxford alongside the one at Georgetown — is a curious mix of limelight-seeking and discreet. After college, he said, he worked in military intelligence. He later did work for InQTel, [*which is functionally the C.I.A.’s venture capital fund*](https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/njilb/vol33/iss3/4/).

What precisely he did to get rich is unclear. He said his wealth resulted from selling various businesses, some of which he could not talk about. The walls of his townhouse are filled with commemorative plaques of [*his patents*](https://patents.justia.com/inventor/newton-howard), many of which have defense industry applications, including “Wireless Network for Routing a Signal Without Using a Tower” and “System and Method for Automated Detection of Situational Awareness.”

He said he suffered a traumatic brain injury in 2000 while delivering medical supplies, though he declined to offer more detail. After his recovery, he decided to focus on applying the principles of machine learning to the human brain, and turned to neuroscience. “I figured instead of sitting and getting my brain worked on, I would work on it myself by studying it,” he said.

His ventures include Aiberry, a start-up that tries to [*use A.I. analysis to improve on mental health screening*](https://aiberry.io/). He said he hoped to help solve the problem of degenerative diseases like Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s with a [*cloud-connected device*](https://ni2o.com/kiwi/) implanted in the brain, using A.I. to optimize the levels of deep brain stimulation.

In other words, he would like to help human beings preserve their humanity by becoming a little more machine.

The Ruling

The Old Georgetown Board seems to rule with an iron fist — [*just try putting up a neon sign in the neighborhood*](https://thewash.org/2021/10/26/neon-lights-and-signs-face-strict-regulation-in-georgetowns-historic-district/) — but its power is advisory. The city of Washington, D.C., has the real authority to enforce decisions, but the influence of neighbors complaining in unison cannot be discounted.

[*Topher Mathews*](https://georgetownmetropolitan.com/about/), a commissioner for Georgetown’s Advisory Neighborhood Commission, said that the Transformers mess wouldn’t even make his top five neighborhood dramas of the past 10 years. Easily outstripping it, for instance, was the agita caused over the opening on O Street of Call Your Mother Deli, which attracts long lines.

And locals love to bring up the Tree Incident of 2018, which involved a new homeowner’s decision to prune and cut down magnolia trees on his property, which happened to be the former home of Ms. Onassis. In response, a neighbor created a Halloween display with a [*mock tombstone*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/tree-killer-lives-there-georgetown-halloween-display-targets-a-65-million-mansion/2018/11/01/59fa130a-dd26-11e8-8c8c-0ba13dcb935a_story.html) reading, “Beloved magnolia 1840-2018 destroyed R.I.P.,” and a grim reaper that announced “Tree Killer Lives There.”

Dr. Howard has argued that his statues constitute meaningful public art. The “Transformers” movies follow a classic good-versus-evil struggle in which the Autobots (the good guys) work to save humanity from the Decepticons (the bad guys). [*Reviewing the first installment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/02/movies/02tran.html) of the franchise in 2007, Manohla Dargis of The New York Times wrote that it was “part car commercial, part military recruitment ad, a bumper-to-bumper pileup of big cars, big guns and, as befits its recently weaned target demographic, big breasts.”

The Old Georgetown Board took up the matter of Dr. Howard’s statues in spring 2021, and the city gave him a six-month permit to keep them up. But well after the six months was up, Bumblebee and Optimus Prime were still in place.

By the time the board met again, in April 2023, Dr. Howard claimed that he had spent tens of thousands of dollars fighting to keep his statues up, an amount that included legal and architect advisory fees and city fines.

This time, the board ordered him to take the statues down. Instead of complying, Dr. Howard appealed to the D.C. Public Space Committee. He also rebuffed offers from the Advisory Neighborhood Commission to help him find another place in the neighborhood to display his statues.

Dr. Howard seems to enjoy the attention that has come with the ongoing case. He has talked extensively with the press about his crusade. He was flattered that Paramount, the studio behind the Transformers movie, had invited him to the Washington premiere of the next installment, “Transformers: Rise of the Beasts,” which comes out June 9.

As DCist and The Washington Post chronicled the twists and turns of the neighborhood drama, sentiment online seemed to swing his way. A student at Georgetown University started a [*Change.org petition*](https://www.change.org/p/keep-the-georgetown-transformers-sculptures), signed by more than 900 people, to keep the statues up. “This is so dumb,” Hayden Gise, an Advisory Neighborhood Commission vice chair who lives in a neighborhood close to Georgetown, wrote on Twitter. “Let him live oh my god. Everyone loves property rights until some guy does something cool.”

On May 25, the statues’ fate went before the Public Space Committee. Dr. Howard had hired Paul Strauss, D.C.’s shadow senator, to represent him. Or, as Mr. Strauss put it, he was acting as counsel for Optimus Prime, while a colleague represented Bumblebee.

“People have misunderstood the issue,” Mr. Strauss said. “You talk about compatibility with a historic district? Technically, these guys are millennia old. I mean, they’re prehistoric.”

Mr. Strauss and Dr. Howard also persuaded Peter Cullen and Dan Gilvezan, actors who voiced Optimus Prime and Bumblebee on the 1980s cartoon series based on the toys, to attest at the hearing about the history and significance of the nearly 40-year franchise.

The entreaties didn’t work. The D.C. Public Space Committee [*denied Dr. Howard a permit*](https://dcist.com/story/23/05/25/optimus-prime-defends-georgetown-transformers-sculptures/), meaning that he would have to take the statues down himself, or the city would. It wasn’t a question of art; it was a question of following the rules.

Dr. Howard didn’t seem inclined to stand down. Before the meeting, he suggested that he would appeal a ruling against him on First Amendment grounds. His lawyer clarified that they saw the issue as one of equal protection: Plenty of people fill their sidewalk planters in Georgetown and never get dinged for it. Why is his client required to seek a permit for what is in his planter?

After the meeting, Dr. Howard said he thought he would apply for a new permit. But he seemed deflated.

“I’m sad,” he said in a text to a reporter, adding,“What do you think I should do?”

The victory that Dr. Howard said he was seeking was a moral one.

“I know what these Transformers mean to me,” he said. “What does it mean to them?”

As of June 1, the statues were still standing.

Kitty Bennett contributed research.

PHOTOS: Bumblebee, left, and Optimus Prime in Washington’s Georgetown neighborhood. (ST1); Top, Newton Howard greeting tourists. Center row, the interior of his home includes more Transformers sculptures and motorcycles, left, while a smaller Optimus Prime watches over the neighborhood from the rooftop. Above is the Optimus Prime out front, with flowers in hand. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZAK ARCTANDER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST2) This article appeared in print on page ST1, ST11.

**Load-Date:** June 9, 2023

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[***Democrats’ Mystery: How to Brighten a Presidency and a National Mood***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65BY-PDR1-DXY4-X18J-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Crucial left-leaning voters have soured on President Biden, and Americans of all stripes are angry. Democratic leaders can’t agree on what to tell them.

**Body**

Crucial left-leaning voters have soured on President Biden, and Americans of all stripes are angry. Democratic leaders can’t agree on what to tell them.

[*Follow our live coverage of Tuesday’s primaries in Ohio and Indiana.*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/04/us/ohio-primary-election-midterms)

LAKEWOOD, Ohio — At a Whole Foods in one [*moderate Cleveland suburb*](https://www.cleveland.com/election/2020/11/cuyahoga-countys-blue-red-divide-turnout-underscores-shifting-political-allegiance-of-clevelands-suburbs.html), shoppers recently worried about war, inflation, a “scary” political climate — and a Democratic Party some saw as slow to address the nation’s burning problems.

At a house party for a left-wing congressional candidate across town, attendees fretted over the high cost of living and exorbitant student loan debt as they weighed their choices in [*Ohio’s primary elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/01/us/politics/josh-mandel-vance-ohio-senate.html) on Tuesday.

And at a campaign event for Representative Shontel Brown here in Lakewood, a [*liberal city*](https://www.cleveland.com/datacentral/2020/11/official-results-joe-biden-won-42-of-59-cuyahoga-county-communities-664-of-the-vote-see-details-by-precinct.html) near Cleveland, not everyone seemed impressed by President Biden.

“He’s OK,” allowed Yolanda Pace-Owens, 46, who works in security. She said that she had voted for Mr. Biden and still admired him, but that she was alarmed by a pandemic-era [*rise in violent crime*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/17/briefing/violent-crime-ukraine-war-week-ahead.html#:~:text=Murders%20have%20spiked%20nearly%2040,levels%20of%20violent%20crime%20persist.). “We just got to do better,” she said.

Nearly six months before the midterm elections, Mr. Biden and the Democrats face staggering challenges and [*signs of dampened enthusiasm*](https://www.npr.org/2022/04/29/1095366671/npr-pbs-newshour-marist-survey-republicans-biden-democrats-midterms) among nearly every constituency that powered their 2020 presidential and 2018 midterm victories, according to polls and more than two dozen interviews with voters, elected officials and party strategists [*across the country*](https://www.getrevue.co/profile/fandmpoll/issues/franklin-marshall-poll-release-april-2022-1133315).

Yet Democrats are still struggling with how to even discuss the nation’s greatest challenges — much less reach a consensus on how to right the ship.

The party’s problems run deep, as Mr. Biden’s lead pollster [*has privately warned the White House*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/01/us/politics/biden-approval-inflation-immigration.html) for months. Independent voters [*backed Mr. Biden in 2020*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2020/exit-polls/president/national-results), but his approval rating with independents now [*hovers*](https://news.gallup.com/interactives/185273/presidential-job-approval-center.aspx) in the 30s. He has [*underperformed*](https://maristpoll.marist.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/NPR_PBS-NewsHour_Marist-Poll_USA-NOS-and-Tables_202204271123.pdf) with voters of color in [*some*](https://poll.qu.edu/poll-release?releaseid=3843) [*surveys*](https://poll.qu.edu/poll-release?releaseid=3842). Warning signs have emerged [*among suburban voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/republican-election-results-new-york.html). And Mr. Biden’s approval rating [*has deteriorated*](https://iop.harvard.edu/youth-poll/spring-2022-harvard-youth-poll) with young people even though he won them overwhelmingly in 2020.

In a midterm environment heavily shaped by the president’s approval rating, all of those numbers are gravely worrying for Democratic candidates, who are left with tough questions about how to engage unsettled voters and reinvigorate their base.

How much time should they spend trying to show voters they grasp the pain of inflation, compared with efforts to [*remind them*](https://navigatorresearch.org/news/new-focus-groups-six-months-out-from-midterms-economic-pessimism-remains-high-among-independents-soft-partisans/) of [*low unemployment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/05/business/economy/recession-economy.html)? Should they pursue [*ambitious policies*](https://twitter.com/BernieSanders/status/1511469725506752525) that show Democrats are fighters, or is it enough to hope for more modest victories while emphasizing all that the party has passed already?

And even when candidates try to tell that story, [*is anyone listening*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/21/us/politics/biden-pandemic-relief-democrats.html)

“Voters hear us, but I don’t know that we have convinced voters as to how these things will affect them on a personal level,” Representative James E. Clyburn of South Carolina, the third-ranking House Democrat, said in a recent interview. “We’re not connecting with the voters on the level that they can connect with.”

As Mr. Biden confronts the lingering pandemic, war in Ukraine and historical headwinds — the president’s party [*typically loses seats*](https://www.vox.com/22899204/midterm-elections-president-biden-thermostatic-opinion) in midterm elections — he has acknowledged his party’s messaging challenges, [*worrying recently*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/us/politics/biden-domestic-agenda.html) that amid crises, “we haven’t sold the American people what we’ve actually done.”

The president, a consummate retail politician who some Democrats had hoped would be more visible, is now pursuing a more [*robust*](https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/politics/2022/04/11/president-joe-biden-menlo-iowa-visit-talk-rural-issues-ethanol-poet/7277815001/) [*travel*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/04/19/biden-new-hampshire-infrastructure/) [*schedule*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/us/politics/biden-domestic-agenda.html) to sell his party’s agenda and accomplishments, and he [*is*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/us/politics/biden-domestic-agenda.html) [*highlighting*](https://twitter.com/JoeBiden/status/1520467577050439682?s=20&amp;t=a2O4am-hkfpxCYEYp1ClqA) some contrasts with Republicans.

Allies and some voters note that polling is partially driven by anger over extraordinary events, including the [*war’s impact*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/business/russia-ukraine-war-gas-prices.html) on gas prices, that the White House could not fully control. But Mr. Biden’s advisers say that the president is working to demonstrate that Democrats understand voters’ struggles and are moving to fix them, as the party’s lawmakers make [*a fresh push*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/27/briefing/biden-agenda-joe-manchin-kyrsten-sinema.html) for a range of [*legislative priorities*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/us-policy/2022/04/27/congress-gas-prices-inflation/), especially concerning prices. On Thursday, Mr. Biden [*also said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/28/us/politics/biden-student-loan-relief.html) that he was considering wiping out some student loan debt.

A new [*Washington Post-ABC poll*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/05/01/poll-biden-post-abc/) also showed some positive signs for Mr. Biden and the Democrats, though Republicans retained significant advantages on issues including inflation, the economy and crime.

“While President Biden and Democrats work to lower costs and continue the historic economic recovery made possible by the American Rescue Plan, Republicans have done everything they can to try to stand in the way,” Jaime Harrison, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, said in a statement.

Yet months of national polls show that Americans have a vastly different perception of the party in power. Even in overwhelmingly liberal Los Angeles, private Democratic polling in April found Mr. Biden’s favorability rating at only 58 percent, according to a person with direct knowledge of the data.

Democratic tensions over messaging have been on display in [*Ohio*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/05/03/us/elections/results-ohio.html), where candidates in this week’s primaries reflect the full spectrum of competing views.

Ms. Brown, who faces a contested primary in a safely Democratic seat and [*was endorsed by Mr. Biden*](https://www.cleveland.com/news/2022/04/president-joe-biden-endorses-us-rep-shontel-browns-re-election-bid.html), is running hard on [*the bipartisan infrastructure law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/15/us/politics/biden-signs-infrastructure-bill.html).

She echoed other House Democrats in promoting the message that “Democrats have been delivering.”

But Biden advisers have [*privately indicated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/us/politics/biden-pelosi-democrats-midterm-elections.html) that pitch tests poorly as a party slogan. And at another Ohio event in late April, Nina Turner, a former state senator who is challenging Ms. Brown from the left [*in a rematch*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/20/us/politics/nina-turner-shontel-brown.html), suggested that Democrats had not delivered nearly enough.

She urged, among other priorities, universal cancellation of student debt — or, at a minimum, canceling [*$10,000 in federal student debt per borrower*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/10/us/politics/biden-student-loans.html) (Ms. Brown [*also*](https://shontelbrown.com/priorities/) supports some student debt forgiveness measures). Mr. Biden, who endorsed [*the $10,000 goal*](https://twitter.com/JoeBiden/status/1241869418981920769?s=20&amp;t=__8YSMsxWqVG7a36NGxC-A) in 2020, has [*postponed payments*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/05/business/student-loan-pause-pandemic.html), and significant student debt has [*been erased*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/10/business/student-loan-forgiveness-biden.html) during his tenure, but some have called on him to do much more. He [*may take further action*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/28/us/politics/biden-student-loan-relief.html), and there is still time to make more progress on the Democratic agenda.

But for now, many on the left are disappointed that Democrats, despite controlling Washington, have run aground in the divided Senate on priorities like the [*climate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/19/climate/manchin-climate-build-back-better-bill.html) and [*voting rights*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/20/us/politics/democrats-voting-rights.html).

“People can forgive you, even if you can’t get something done,” Ms. Turner said. “What they don’t like is when you’re not fighting. And we need to see more of a fighting spirit among the Democratic Party.”

On the other end of the party’s ideological spectrum is Representative Tim Ryan, [*a moderate Ohio Democrat running for Senate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/us/politics/tim-ryan-ohio-voters.html) in a state that has veered rightward. He is casting himself as a fighter for the ***working class*** and highlighting measures like the infrastructure law, while seeking some cultural and political distance from many others in his party.

In an interview, Mr. Ryan cheered a ruling to [*eliminate mask mandates on airlines and public transportation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/23/health/mask-mandate-transportation-response.html), which is now [*being challenged*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/20/us/politics/cdc-transportation-mask-mandate.html). “Masks suck,” he said. “I think we’re all tired of it.”

Asked which national Democratic surrogates he would welcome, he cited Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio, Senator Jon Tester of Montana and Senator Gary Peters of Michigan — but asked specifically about Mr. Biden or Vice President Kamala Harris, Mr. Ryan said: “This is my race. I’m going to be the face of this.” (Biden advisers noted that the president has recently appeared with Democrats in competitive races.)

And as of Friday, Mr. Ryan was one of seven Democratic candidates who have run ads this year that mentioned inflation, according to the media tracking firm AdImpact. By contrast, dozens of Republican candidates and allied groups have done the same. In polls, Americans [*have*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/1675/most-important-problem.aspx) [*cited*](https://harvardharrispoll.com/key-results-april/) inflation as a top issue.

“Burying your head in the sand,” Mr. Ryan said, “is not the way to approach it.” Asked about the biggest challenges facing his party, he replied, “A response to the inflation piece is a big hurdle.”

He also cited “a national brand that is not seen as connected to the ***working-class*** people, whether they’re white or Black or brown.”

Lou McMahon, a registered Democrat who said he did not vote in the last two presidential elections because he did not like his choices, sounded open to Mr. Ryan in an interview at Ms. Brown’s event. But asked to assess Democrats in Washington generally, he replied, “Promise, but not delivered,” citing both stalled legislative ambitions and Mr. Biden’s pledge to help heal partisan divisions.

“The targets and the aspirations were maybe beyond the reach,” said Mr. McMahon, 58, an environmental lawyer. “The reuniting that was so much of the promise hasn’t played out in reality quite that way.”

Celinda Lake, a veteran Democratic strategist and a pollster on Mr. Biden’s 2020 campaign, said that “there’s nobody in America more deeply disappointed in how divided America is than Joe Biden.”

“He does communicate it, but I think it helps a lot when he’s on the road,” she said.

Republicans face their own midterm difficulties. [*Many candidates have adopted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/18/us/politics/trump-allies-election-decertify.html) former President Donald J. Trump’s relentless focus on the false notion of a stolen 2020 election, a stance that swing voters may dismiss as extreme. In some primaries, the party [*runs the risk*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/24/us/politics/senate-races-missouri-alabama.html) of nominating [*seriously flawed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/15/us/politics/republicans-accusations-women.html) general-election candidates.

Democratic officials hope their prospects will brighten as primary contests are settled and candidates draw sharper direct contrasts with their opponents — and they are already trying to define that choice.

On one side, they say, are bomb-throwing Republicans who are caught up in [*cultural battles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/us/politics/transgender-laws-us.html), [*fealty to Trumpism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/17/us/politics/trump-mar-a-lago.html) and a [*controversial tax and social safety net proposal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/us/politics/rick-scott.html). On the other, Democrats argue, is a party that passed major [*infrastructure*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/us/politics/infrastructure-bill-passes.html) and [*pandemic relief*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/06/us/politics/biden-stimulus-plan.html) measures, and [*spearheaded the confirmation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/us/politics/ketanji-brown-jackson-supreme-court.html) of the first Black woman to the Supreme Court. Mr. Biden has also [*moved to combat gun violence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/03/nyregion/adams-biden-crime.html), confronting Republican efforts to portray Democrats as weak on crime.

Many [*Democratic candidates*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/04/20/politics/senate-democrats-fundraising-advantage/index.html) are also raising vast sums of money, a sign of voter engagement.

“Our members have a great record of results, and the other side is offering nothing except anger and fear,” said Representative Sean Patrick Maloney of New York, the chair of the House Democratic campaign arm. “My message is: We’re getting good things done. We’re part of the solution. Give us a little more time.”

Time indeed remains, and Democrats could reverse their fortunes in an [*unpredictable*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/04/26/dems-roe-wade-future-00027932) [*environment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/13/business/dealbook/us-inflation-peak.html) — but it is also possible that in the fall, the outlook will be largely unchanged.

“The problem with midterm elections is, they’re not really a choice,” said David Axelrod, who served as a senior adviser to former President Barack Obama. “They tend to be a referendum on the party that controls the White House.”

PHOTOS: Representative Shontel Brown of Ohio embraces the message “Democrats have been delivering.”; Nina Turner, who is challenging Ms. Brown, suggested that Democrats had not delivered enough.; Representative Tim Ryan, center right, is running for Senate in an Ohio that has veered rightward. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DUSTIN FRANZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 4, 2022

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[***He Helps the RealReal Keep It Real***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66X8-0GK1-JBG3-634C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1436 words

**Byline:** Marisa Meltzer

**Highlight:** Dominik Halás, 29, is entrusted by the company to authenticate vintage clothes — many of which are older than he.

**Body**

The trash bags seemingly contained a treasure trove. Comme des Garçons, Maison Margiela, Helmut Lang and Jean Paul Gaultier were all names on the tags of the clothes stuffed inside.

The 10 black plastic bags had arrived in September at a 500,000-square-foot building in Perth Amboy, N.J., where the RealReal, the luxury resale marketplace, operates one of four authentication centers. They had been sent by a seller who said the clothes came from a vintage store that her aunt ran in Florida. After poring over the bags’ contents, about 100 garments in total, it was determined that the clothes were real — and that they could sell secondhand for as much as $100,000.

“These are some of the best Gaultier pieces we have ever come across,” said Dominik Halás, a master authenticator at the RealReal who specializes in vintage clothing, which the company defines as pieces that are at least 20 years old.

Mr. Halás, 29, is one of youngest people entrusted by the RealReal to authenticate garments, jewelry and other accessories. Previously a men’s wear merchandising manager and archival expert at the company, where he started working in 2017, he was asked to join the authentication team soon after it started reselling vintage clothing in 2019, the same year the RealReal [*became a publicly traded company*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/27/business/realreal-ipo-secondhand-fashion.html). (Its stock debuted on Nasdaq at $20 a share;[*it currently trades*](https://www.nasdaq.com/market-activity/stocks/real) for less than $2.)

“We needed the right experts,” said Rachel Vaisman, its vice president of merchandising operations. Although the RealReal has carried vintage handbags since it started in 2011, vintage clothing required “a specialized expert with the extensive knowledge and passion,” she added.

A Passion for (Vintage) Fashion

At the authentication center in Perth Amboy, clothing racks are arranged in rows that appear longer than city blocks. One Monday earlier this month, Mr. Halás was working his way through pieces from the shipment of 10 trash bags that had arrived weeks before. The clothes, most of which were from the late 1980s to early 2000s, included a double-breasted black-and-white Jean Paul Gaultier jacket lined in fabric featuring a male torso. The jacket was from the designer’s fall 1992 collection, which debuted before Mr. Halás was born.

Another piece plucked out of the trash bags: “the iconic Margiela tattoo top” from the spring 1994 collection, which Mr. Halás noted paid homage to an earlier [*piece introduced in 1989*](https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/781940). “It’s sheer and tight and the tattoo print resonates with the audience,” he said. “They look so relevant to fashion now, which is why they retain their value.” Mr. Halás added that the top probably sold for “a few hundred dollars” when it debuted; the RealReal listed it at $7,000.

Many factors determine the RealReal’s pricing. Condition is considered, as well as whether a piece was ever was worn by a [*celebrity*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/06/style/vintage-fashion-red-carpet-awards.html) or featured in a museum exhibition. [*Commissions*](https://www.therealreal.com/seller/commissions) paid to sellers vary based on factors including sale price and type of item.

Mr. Halás said that there has been interest lately in clothes from [*Romeo Gigli*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/12/fashion/12ROW.html); specifically pieces from the early 1990s, when a young Alexander McQueen worked at the brand before starting his own line. “It’s great work and people are really paying attention to the McQueen seasons,” he said. Other brands that have become more covetable in recent years are the French label [*Marithe and Francois Girbaud*](https://www.nytimes.com/1990/12/11/news/from-paris-clothes-with-a-future-look.html) and the Japanese line [*Matsuda*](https://www.nytimes.com/1982/06/19/style/from-japan-designs-for-the-tailored-woman.html), he added.

Born in Slovakia, Mr. Halás moved with his family to Montclair, N.J., in 1997, when he was 4. “We were ***working class*** and against spending money on nonnecessities,” he said, adding that his interest in fashion was in part stoked by [*a 2007 article on the designer Helmut Lang*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/16/style/tmagazine/09remix-turnpage-t.html) in T: The New York Times Style Magazine.

As a student at Montclair High School, he started a fashion club and became more familiar with the vintage fashion business from working at Speakeasy Vintage, a boutique in Montclair that is now closed.

Mr. Halás started buying and reselling secondhand clothes online as a teenager. “If I had $100 to invest, I would buy something on Japanese eBay and sell it on the U.S. site for $300,” he said. After graduating from Brown University, where he studied art history and architecture, he worked at showrooms including Goods and Services in New York, and then consulted for Helmut Lang before joining the RealReal.

Along the way, Mr. Halás amassed his own fashion archive, which now contains some 500 pieces stored at his home in Jersey City, N.J., his parents’ home in Montclair and his brother’s dorm room at Bard College. “A significant part of my net worth is in clothing so I hope it pays off,” he said of his collection, which includes men’s and women’s wear from such designers as Yohji Yamamoto and Helmut Lang. Hedi Slimane is another favorite, particularly his pieces for Dior Homme’s fall 2003 collection.

In addition to clothes, Mr. Halás also collects old look books, which he and other RealReal authenticators use for research.

Weeding Out Fakes

When asked how often he sees a fake item, Mr. Halás looked visibly uncomfortable and glanced at Ms. Vaisman, his boss, before responding. “Several times a day I see pieces that have failed to be authenticated,” he said. “I’ve come across counterfeits that are made now to resemble clothes from the ’80s or ’90s.”

All items sent to the company are ranked one to five for how likely a piece is to be counterfeit. At the lower end of the scale, Mr. Halás said, would be a pair of contemporary designer jeans, because the resale value wouldn’t be more than the cost of producing a fake pair. At the higher end: bags with labels that say Chanel, Gucci or Louis Vuitton, which are often counterfeited. With bags, authenticators receive help from a proprietary patent-pending software called Vision, which catalogs photos of authentic styles that can be used for reference.

“This is how we scale the Dominiks of the world,” Ms. Vaisman said.

The hardest to judge items are reserved for master authenticators like Mr. Halás. While looking at a black Yohji Yamamoto coat, he paid particular attention to the tags, which noted the coat’s size with a number, a detail that meant the piece was introduced after the spring 2000 collection (before that, he explained, sizes were noted with letters). The tags also used a serif font, a detail that Mr. Halás said indicated the coat was from a collection before 2010. The coat’s YKK zipper with two pulls was a common element in pieces from the label, he added.

“I know this fits in with the collection,” said Mr. Halás, who ultimately determined the coat was from the fall 2002 collection.

More suspicious was a sweater with a Louis Vuitton tag. Like other pieces from the brand’s fall 2018 collection, it had a graphic that read “peace and love.” But a closer inspection revealed that the garment’s stitching was not neatly aligned, and that its tag felt thicker than those of other Vuitton pieces. The tag also noted it contained wool from vicuñas, which is very fine. Mr. Halás said he could tell by touching the sweater that it was too coarse to contain the material, so he ruled the garment a fake.

Most sellers are notified when the RealReal cannot authenticate an item. Suspicious pieces sent in unknowingly are returned. “We have a three-strike policy,” Ms. Vaisman said. “We’ll inform the consignor as to why we cannot accept the item.” When authenticators suspect an “obvious intent to defraud, we sequester the item and destroy the item, and work with law enforcement,” she added.

If customers think something they buy from the company is inauthentic, Ms. Vaisman said, “we’ll always take it back and have an expert look at it.”

Watching Mr. Halás in action suggested that his job is not exactly a science. Determining the authenticity of certain garments — the Louis Vuitton sweater, say, or a light blue nylon jacket with a Prada logo on it — can sometimes be more of an art.

“The quality of the material is throwing me off,” he said while handling the nylon jacket. “I feel authentic Prada ready-to-wear every day and the best way I can say it is this doesn’t feel expensive enough.”

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: Dominik Halás, who started working at the RealReal in 2017; a Jean Paul Gaultier gloved leather set; one of the items that the RealReal recently received in a consignment of particularly rare items mostly from the 1990s and early 2000s; Rick Owens jeans; a Gaultier suit; jewelry; verifying the authenticity of certain items; and the RealReal authentication center in Perth Amboy, N.J. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER GREGORY-RIVERA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page D5.

**Load-Date:** November 23, 2022

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[***Back to the Couch With Freud***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67VX-PHM1-DXY4-X0PX-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Joseph Bernstein

**Body**

In the fall of 2020, Ilan Zechory stepped down as president of Genius, the annotation site he founded with two friends from Yale. After more than a decade at the start-up, he could have been forgiven for taking a break.

Now Mr. Zechory is hard at work again, though not running another zeitgeisty digital media site. Instead, the 39-year-old is training to be a psychoanalyst.

Five days a week from an office on the Upper West Side, Mr. Zechory helps his 20 or so patients -- some of them supine, in the classic style -- plumb the depths of their unconscious minds. Having gained an appreciation for the method during his own multiyear analysis, Mr. Zechory loves his new role.

''For the first time in my life I feel at peace with work, and have stopped dreaming about what else I should be doing with my days,'' he said.

Mr. Zechory is part of what may be a larger psychoanalytic moment. Around the country, on divans and in training institutes, on Instagram meme accounts and in small magazines, young (or at least young-ish) people are rediscovering the talking cure, along with the ideas of the Viennese doctor who developed it at the turn of the 20th century.

After several decades at the margins of American healthcare -- and 100 years after he published his last major theoretical work -- Sigmund Freud is enjoying something of a comeback.

Look and listen carefully these days, and you'll find Herr Doktor. For instance, the Instagram account freud.intensifies has more than a million followers and posts memes like a portrait of Freud overlaid with the text ''Every time you call your boyfriend 'Daddy,' Sigmund Freud's ghost becomes a little stronger.'' In an April 2022 TikTok, which has been watched nearly five million times, a young man extols Freud: ''Fast forward a hundred years, and he ain't miss yet!''

The magazine Parapraxis, which was started last year to ''inquire into and uncover the psychosocial dimension of our lives,'' has attracted a progressive ''new psychoanalysis crowd.'' The forthcoming film ''Freud's Last Session,'' starring Anthony Hopkins, is currently filming in a reconstruction of Freud's famous Hampstead study, complete with antiquities. The Showtime series ''Couples Therapy'' documents several patients who see Orna Guralnik, a New York psychoanalyst and psychologist. ''Know Your Enemy,'' an au courant lefty podcast, has devoted multiple episodes to discussions of Freud, who has become a frequent topic of conversation among the show's hosts.

And Opulent Tips, an influential fashion newsletter, referred in January to a ''Freudian-core'' aesthetic inspired by ''the freaky underbelly of the 1950s,'' psychoanalysis' so-called golden age in the United States: ''Looking the part. A crisp and correct surface with strange feelings boiling just beneath.''

Plus, any culture that has just produced ''MILF Manor'' is going through something Freudian.

'You're Working With People's Fantasies'

In her 1981 book about psychoanalysis, ''The Impossible Profession,'' Janet Malcolm interviews a pseudonymous analyst. ''The insights of psychoanalysis are never taken for granted from one generation to the next,'' he says. ''Each generation has to make the original discoveries afresh!''

Like anything formative from long in the past, Freud never totally disappeared. Some of his concepts, like denial and libido, are so deeply embedded in popular culture that we no longer even think of them as Freudian. And no young century that has canonized ''The Sopranos,'' which featured many sessions of Tony's psychotherapy with Dr. Melfi, as well as episode-long dream sequences, could be completely devoid of ''golden Siggie,'' as Freud's mother reportedly called him.

But today, the interest is more literal.

According to a spokesperson, the American Psychoanalytic Association, the country's main professional organization for psychoanalysts, doesn't keep data on the number of new analysts -- though its 3000 members, in comparison to the 106,000 licensed psychologists in the United States, give a sense of the field's niche status. But several prominent training institutes say applications are on the rise. And the Institute for Psychoanalytic Training and Research (IPTAR) says the number of sessions performed by its in-house clinic has roughly doubled since 2017, a sign that more people are seeking analytic treatment.

Violet Lucca, 37, the vice president of digital at Harper's Magazine, started analysis recently for two reasons. First, she is working on a book about the director David Cronenberg, whose interest in psychoanalysis yielded the 2011 film ''A Dangerous Method,'' which dramatizes the relationship between Freud and his most famous follower, Carl Jung. Ms. Lucca thought going through analysis herself would be creatively useful. Second, in the last five years Ms. Lucca has dealt with the death of her mother, who she said was schizophrenic, as well as the end of a long relationship.

''I'm overdue,'' she said. (Ms. Lucca's analyst is Griffin Hansbury, who writes the widely read blog Jeremiah's Vanishing New York under the pseudonym Jeremiah Moss.)

Ms. Lucca said she hopes to become a little happier.

That could take a while. According to a 2022 paper in The International Journal of Psychoanalysis, a typical analysis lasts three to seven years.

But it's the length and depth of that conversation that drew Yelena Akhtiorskaya to analytic training. An acclaimed novelist (The New York Times called her debut, ''Panic in a Suitcase,'' ''brilliant and often funny''), Ms. Akhtiorskaya, 37, found her financial prospects as a full-time writer dim. (According to Tessa Peteete Ivers, chief operating officer of IPTAR, a first-year analyst could expect to make between $75,000 and $120,000 a year.)

So, inspired by an uncle who was a poet and an analyst, she decided in 2017 to get her license in psychoanalysis.

''As a literary person, what could be better than discussing dreams and symbols and delving as deep as possible four days a week?'' she said. ''I don't see why everyone isn't doing it. You are your own boss. You make your own hours. And you're working with people's fantasies.''

Ms. Akhtiorskaya is part of a new cohort of people from creative backgrounds embarking on psychoanalytic training, a career change that would have been unthinkable in the heyday of the practice. The European émigrés who helped popularize analysis in the United States tethered themselves to the American medical establishment as a way of lending their method institutional legitimacy. For years, only psychiatrists -- medical doctors -- could receive analytic training.

Much of the field came to resemble, as Ms. Malcolm wrote, ''a hidden, almost secret byway traveled by few (the analysts and their patients), edged by decrepit mansions with drawn shades.'' In this atmosphere, some wildly sexist, homophobic, and racist ideas, such as the notion that racial minorities were unanalyzable, flourished.

''Our politics of exclusivity have done us a disservice,'' said Kerry Sulkowicz, president of the American Psychoanalytic Association.

In 1988, a lawsuit opened up analytic training to social workers and psychologists. (In 2010, New York state began allowing people without mental-health training to pursue licenses in psychoanalysis.) But by then the field was already in a period of steep decline. The advent of modern psychopharmacology and the rise of short-term cognitive behavioral therapy made Freud's clinical legacy seem to many fuzzy, or worse, quaint.

(C.B.T., pioneered in the 1960s by an erstwhile Freudian psychiatrist named Aaron Beck, is considered the gold standard in treating anxiety and depression by many mental health professionals, with the strongest empirical support.)

Analysis is also notoriously expensive and time-consuming; a senior analyst in Manhattan might charge $400 an hour, which, on the suggested four-to-five day a week schedule, could easily work out to an $80,000 yearly expense that is only partly reimbursed by insurance. But many analysts work on a sliding scale, and some of the training institutes offer therapy for rates as low as $10 an hour.

The goals of analysis are in one sense modest -- Freud wrote, ''much will be gained if we succeed in transforming your neurotic misery into ordinary unhappiness'' -- but its claims about the operations of the mind are vast, and have drawn enormous skepticism. Karl Popper, the philosopher of science, famously criticized psychoanalysis as non-falsifiable, and therefore unscientific; Frederick Crews, an emeritus professor of literature at the University of California, Berkeley, made it the mission of much of his career to argue that Freudianism was so unempirical that it wasn't even a suitable basis for literary criticism.

''Freud's writings are full of ambiguities, so anyone who wants to find either positive or despairing implication in them can do so,'' Professor Crews said. ''When propositions contradict each other, I regard that as a fatal problem. If you're just a casual reader and you come across sentences that you like, perhaps that suffices for you.''

But some high-profile research has raised doubts about the science behind selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, a class of medications frequently prescribed to treat depression and anxiety. And a younger generation has grown at least a bit skeptical about the way insurance companies and venture-backed mental health startups seem to favor cognitive-behavioral therapy, perhaps paving the way for this renewed interest in less symptom-focused forms of treatment.

Indeed, the idea that there are no magic bullets for mental health is part of what drew Mr. Zechory -- the ex-start-up boss -- to analytic training.

''I always had a sense that there is no free lunch, psychologically,'' he said.

'There's an Inward Turn Now'

Analysis, which is focused on excavating highly personal narratives of meaning over long periods of time, may seem like an odd fit in a culture that often embraces broad structural explanations for social traumas.

But Freud's ideas, according to a group of social-justice-oriented analysts, offer a way of understanding the unarticulated forces that create the social world and shape one's place within it.

''C.B.T. may help you with your panic attack today,'' said Dr. Beverly Stoute, a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst in Atlanta, referring to cognitive behavioral therapy. ''But after you recover from your panic attack, you realize, 'Damn, this world is crazy.'''

Dr. Stoute, who is Black, is a co-chairwoman of the Holmes Commission, convened in 2020 by the American Psychoanalytic Association to investigate systemic racism within institutional analysis in the United States. (Dr. Stoute estimates there are somewhere between 40 and 50 Black psychoanalysts in the United States.) The commission, along with work by the group Black Psychoanalysts Speak, and an influential 2016 documentary called Psychoanalysis in El Barrio, have argued that analysis is a powerful tool for addressing buried racial and class trauma.

''Psychoanalysis is the study of how we maintain not knowing what we know,'' said Matthew Steinfeld, a professor of psychiatry at the Yale School of Medicine. ''And America is organized around not remembering what happened here.''

Sam Adler-Bell, 32, a writer and the co-host of the ''Know Your Enemy'' podcast, started reading Freud during the pandemic, as Bernie Sanders's 2020 campaign foundered. He thinks that the left looks for Freudian explanations during times of defeat.

''There's an inward turn now,'' Mr. Adler-Bell said. ''Maybe this purely materialist analysis of people's motivations doesn't give us what we need to make sense of the moment.''

Nico Fuentes, a 32-year-old student at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, came to analysis three years ago, feeling emotionally stuck. She said she was turned off by the C.B.T. workbooks friends recommended, with their narrow focus on treating symptoms and quick diagnostics.

Ms. Fuentes was drawn instead to the intensity of traditional psychoanalysis. Her experience has left her convinced that the treatment has universal value.

''I am not bourgeois,'' she said. ''I'm a ***working class***, trans woman of color who began in analysis with very little understanding of analysis.'' ''But,'' Ms. Fuentes argued, despite the longstanding perception to the contrary, ''there is nothing fancy about psychoanalysis,'' just two people in a room, talking.

Then there's the matter of how we remember Freud himself. After decades of lacerating criticism over the sexism of concepts like penis envy and the theory that homosexuality resulted from abnormal Oedipal development, Freud came to symbolize for many the white, domineering, and pseudoscientific legacy of analysis.

''I originally read Freud as a teenager and thought, this is amazing,'' said Dr. Guralnik, of ''Couples Therapy.'' ''Then I came into all sorts of deep feminist critiques of Freud and started thinking, this is a whole bunch of patriarchal garbage. But having read a lot more and having come to realize that you have to see Freud in the context of his time, I came out on the other side. There are all kinds of Freuds. And you kind of pick and choose what Freud you want to have.''

That people see what they want in Freud is fitting: The first psychoanalyst is still, more than 80 years after his death, a transference figure. As Sophie Kemp pointed out earlier this year in a piece for Dirt, the appeal of the Freudaissance for certain ''downtown gamines obsessed with daddy'' may be precisely that he has a retrograde and sexist image.

But some of the new vogue for Freud emphasizes his status as a racial minority in his native Austria, whose views on, for example, homosexuality, were nuanced and ahead of their time. A TikTok user recently discovered the famous 1935 letter in which Freud reassures the concerned American mother of a gay son that ''homosexuality is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation.''

''I don't know how the idea that Freud hated gay people got started,'' the fresh-faced TikTok user concluded, ''But he did not. He absolutely did not.'' (''the more you know #freud #psychology #lgbt,'' he added in a caption.)

''When I actually read him, the things he was writing in the late 19th century are so much more progressive than most of America is now,'' said Ms. Akhtiorskaya. ''To say that we're all polymorphously perverse, that we all have bisexual fantasies. It's modern.''

And as for the charge that psychoanalysis isn't results-oriented, try explaining that to the moneymakers, who seem to see a return on the investment. One of the treatments Mr. Zechory offers is a hybrid therapy-coaching practice. His clientele: Start-up founders.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/22/style/freud-psychoanalysis.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/22/style/freud-psychoanalysis.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Below, the psychoanalyst Orna Guralnik in ''Couples Therapy,'' and Viggo Mortensen, left, as Sigmund Freud and Michael Fassbender as Carl Jung in the 2011 film ''A Dangerous Method.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SHOWTIME

SHOWTIME SONY PICTURES CLASSICS) This article appeared in print on page ST10.

**Load-Date:** March 26, 2023

**End of Document**



[***‘Before the Dying of the Light’ Review: Moroccan Cinema’s Attempted Revolution; Critic’s Pick***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627J-0BJ1-JBG3-625J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 18, 2021 Thursday 00:50 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 360 words

**Byline:** Glenn Kenny

**Highlight:** This Ali Essafi documentary presents an inspiring view of the roiling visual-arts scene in 1970s Morocco.

**Body**

This Ali Essafi documentary presents an inspiring view of the roiling visual-arts scene in 1970s Morocco.

In 1968, the first substantive [*film festival was hosted in Tangier*](https://www.amazon.com/Francophone-film-struggle-Lieve-Spaas/dp/0719058619), Morocco, an event not mentioned in this impressionistic documentary directed by Ali Essafi. For the most part, “Before the Dying of the Light” is an immersive creation — its on-screen texts mostly philosophical rather than explanatory.

The date of that festival is significant, though, because it can be seen as an indicator of emergent Moroccan cinema, which in the 1970s aligned itself with other visual arts and briefly, under the oppressive regime of King Hassan II, tried to forge an authentic politically pertinent body of work.

Essafi assembles and presents staggering images. He juxtaposes on-the-street archival interviews; multiple covers of literary magazines, both in Arabic and French (France claimed the country as a “protectorate” from the 1910s until the mid-1950s); newsreel clips; scenes from European films shot in Morocco; and Morocco-produced mainstream films (including 1973’s “A Thousand and One Hands,” directed by Souheil Ben-Barka and starring the American actress Mimsy Farmer).

These are interspersed with behind-the-scenes footage from the making of the 1974 film “About Some Meaningless Events.” Its filmmakers, led by the director Mostafa Derkaoui, are very self-interrogating, as was the custom in leftist aesthetics around the world at the time. Contemplating how to best use ***working-class*** people in the picture, a team member says, “We could write a script”; another immediately counters, “No.” Their obsessing about how to best capture the spirit of their times resulted in a picture that was suppressed soon after it was completed.

Even for viewers with little grounding in Moroccan history, Essafi’s film offers an inspiring view of a roiling period of artistic exploration.

Before the Dying of the Light

Not rated. In Arabic and French, with subtitles. Running time: 1 hour 8 minutes. [*Watch through MoMA’s Virtual Cinema.*](https://www.amazon.com/Francophone-film-struggle-Lieve-Spaas/dp/0719058619)

PHOTO: A still from “Before the Dying of the Light,” a documentary from Ali Essafi. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Taskovski Films FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A New York Sweet Shop Out of Childhood Dreams; The 212***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64D9-V9T1-JBG3-62BY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 28, 2021 Tuesday 07:00 EST

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**Section:** T-MAGAZINE

**Length:** 1348 words

**Byline:** Reggie Nadelson

**Highlight:** Economy Candy, on the Lower East Side, has been satisfying the city’s sugar cravings for over 80 years.

**Body**

Economy Candy, on the Lower East Side, has been satisfying the city’s sugar cravings for over 80 years.

In [*this series*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/the-212?module=inline) for T, the author Reggie Nadelson revisits New York institutions that have defined cool for decades, from time-honored restaurants to unsung dives.

It is sometimes said that the oldest extant shop of its kind in New York City is [*Economy Candy*](https://economycandy.com/) on Rivington Street. Dating to 1937, it sells not only a vast array of sweets — as many as 2,000 different kinds, according to its proprietors, from licorice to chocolate, root beer barrels to jelly beans — but also the nostalgia that comes with finding your favorite childhood treat. The last time I stopped by, on a cold December day, was by this measure a triumph: The owners, Mitchell Cohen, 36, and Skye Greenfield Cohen, 32, had saved me some Bonomo Turkish Taffy. Because this is a shop that stocks so much vintage candy, Cohen and Greenfield Cohen are always under siege by sentimental regulars. “Somebody came in asking for Turkish Taffy just yesterday,” Cohen told me. “But we only had three bars left so we said we were sorry but they were for someone else.” I thanked him as if he had set aside the last tins of a rare caviar.

As a child, I loved Turkish Taffy, and the commercials, too: “Give it a smack! Give it a crack!” went the jingle. Made of baked egg whites and corn syrup, it was invented, according to current company lore, by Herman Herer, an Austrian immigrant, in New York in 1912. Unable to wait until I got home, I popped outside the store and slammed the bar against the wall, just as we did when we were kids. I unpeeled the slick yellow and white plastic wrapper and inside, the shards still had a slightly peculiar orangey-yellow color, and a nougatlike texture: hard and just a little tacky. I didn’t let the pieces melt in my mouth, as children were often advised to, but chewed. They stuck to my teeth, intensely sweet and sublime.

Almost every variety of vintage candy has its own story, fans and even addicts and among Economy Candy’s regulars are a fair number of celebrities. During her 21st birthday concert at New York’s Roseland Ballroom in 2009, Adele handed out sweets to the audience after declaring her affection for the store.

And no wonder. Economy Candy is a pleasure palace for shoppers of any age: 2,000 square feet packed with sweet things — Jelly Belly and Hershey’s Kisses, gummy worms and Jordan almonds in pastel purple, pink, blue and yellow. On the highest shelves are collectibles, including vintage gumball machines, and in the center of the space are tables that strain almost beneath the weight of innumerable stacked cartons of chocolate bars and licorice, hard candies and Pop Rocks.

Cohen, whose parents, Jerry and Ilene Cohen, ran the shop before him, grew up here. As a child, he loved standing on a milk crate behind the counter and making change for customers. (He said it’s how he got good at math.) After a detour into the finance world following college, he came back to the store. As is true of so many New York food institutions piloted by third- and even fourth-generation shopkeepers — among them the appetizing emporium [*Russ &amp; Daughters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/03/t-magazine/russ-and-daughters-new-york-history.html), the Italian specialty store [*Di Palo’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/17/t-magazine/di-palos-nyc-store.html) and the German butcher shop [*Schaller &amp; Weber*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/26/t-magazine/schaller-weber.html) — Economy Candy has largely been kept up and running, its traditions maintained, because of the passion and energy of its young proprietors.

Greenfield Cohen, who is married to Cohen, is also one of the keepers of the family history. Before the shop moved to its current location at 108 Rivington Street in the early ’80s, she said, it was half a block away at the corner of Rivington and Essex Streets. And before it was a candy store, it was a shoe and hat repair business. “Depending on who you ask, it was either King’s Shoes or Economy Shoes,” she said. “The story goes that it was at the urging of Mitchell’s great-aunt Jenny, who was a kid at the time, that the family opened a pushcart selling candy outside.” It became a full-fledged candy shop in the late 1930s because, in the depths of the Great Depression, sweets were a better bet than shoe repairs.

When Cohen’s grandfather Morris “Moishe” Cohen returned from fighting in World War II, he and his brother-in-law, also a veteran, ran the store. In 1981, before Mitchell Cohen was born, Jerry and Ilene took over, and in 2013 Cohen left his position at Morgan Stanley to return to work alongside his parents. “I left my job, in advertising, four years later to join Mitchell,” said Greenfield Cohen. Cohen had taken her to the shop on their first date. (“I didn’t know my parents were in,” he said with a laugh.)

During the pandemic lockdown, when they were forced to close the store temporarily, the couple used the time to spruce up the space, putting in a new floor, reorganizing the candy assortments on the various tables. I miss the randomness a bit, the opportunity for chance discoveries, but in these careful times it makes sense. They also expanded their online business. “People would send neighbors — sometimes in the same town or even next door — a candy package just to say they were thinking of them when they couldn’t visit,” said Cohen.

But nothing compares to losing yourself at Economy Candy in person. Whenever I walk in, it’s as though the surrounding sugar gives me a contact high. There are the American classics, including my own favorites: the Clark Bar, invented in Pittsburgh in 1917, with a crunchy peanutty toffeelike center covered in milk chocolate, and the Chunky, a heavy little square of chocolate-encased raisins and peanuts created in New York in the 1930s. There are whole sections devoted to imported pleasures: Crunchies from Britain, Violet Crumble from Australia, real German Haribo. And then there are the fancy chocolates, dried fruits and nuts, the Joyva halvah sold by the piece or by the loaf. Greenfield Cohen herself can’t resist the chocolate-covered graham crackers and pretzels. But it’s the penny candies that, for me, hold the greatest allure, because these miniature treats are how New York’s obsession with sweets was first satisfied on an industrial scale.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, confectioners made delicacies such as marzipan vegetables, sugar-coated rose petals and even elaborate landscapes made from sweetmeats (many followed recipes from the tea shops and ballrooms of Paris and London), which were intended almost entirely for the rich. More affordable mass-produced treats — such as Necco Wafers, Tootsie Rolls and Hershey’s Kisses — arrived later, in the mid and late 19th century. Long before residents of the Lower East Side sipped $20 cocktails, the neighborhood was a ***working-class*** area and candy, then, became a ***working-class*** pleasure. It took hold in the city as millions of immigrants arrived and found jobs on building sites or doing piecework — a penny for a few minutes of pleasure was often as much as Lower East Siders could afford and shops and pushcarts selling candy appeared on seemingly every street. By the early 20th century, according to Greenfield Cohen, popular penny candies included Mary Janes, Bit-O-Honeys, Chick-O-Sticks, Bullseyes and Sour Balls. “Sadly,” she said, “nothing costs a penny anymore. It now works out to about five cents apiece.”

Still, the joy of those modest, momentary delights has never faded. When I visited, it was almost holiday time. Passing beneath the chubby kid (belly showing, arms outstretched with glee) that, since the 1990s, has been Economy Candy’s logo, adorning the flag above its door, I entered and allowed myself to sink back into the pleasures of childhood. Here were chocolate menorahs and Santa-shaped Pez dispensers. There were candy cane-flavored Hershey’s Kisses and peppermint bark. Dancing sugar plums might be some people’s idea of Christmas, but this year, as always, all I wanted was a sleigh full of good old-fashioned candy.

PHOTO: Penny sweets, including Atkinson’s Peanut Butter Bars, Gobstoppers and Sour Balls, in the window of Manhattan’s Economy Candy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Nathan Bajar FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Before the Dying of the Light***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627R-WXX1-JBG3-63T1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 19, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 6; CRITIC'S PICK

**Length:** 341 words

**Byline:** By Glenn Kenny

**Body**

This Ali Essafi documentary presents an inspiring view of the roiling visual-arts scene in 1970s Morocco.

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These are interspersed with behind-the-scenes footage from the making of the 1974 film ''About Some Meaningless Events.'' Its filmmakers, led by the director Mostafa Derkaoui, are very self-interrogating, as was the custom in leftist aesthetics around the world at the time. Contemplating how to best use ***working-class*** people in the picture, a team member says, ''We could write a script''; another immediately counters, ''No.'' Their obsessing about how to best capture the spirit of their times resulted in a picture that was suppressed soon after it was completed.

Even for viewers with little grounding in Moroccan history, Essafi's film offers an inspiring view of a roiling period of artistic exploration.

Before the Dying of the LightNot rated. In Arabic and French, with subtitles. Running time: 1 hour 8 minutes. Watch through MoMA's Virtual Cinema.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/movies/before-the-dying-of-the-light-review.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/movies/before-the-dying-of-the-light-review.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A still from ''Before the Dying of the Light,'' a documentary from Ali Essafi. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Taskovski Films FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Nearly a year after Hurricane Laura, one Louisiana city is still struggling to recover.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:637G-7N51-DXY4-X1RS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 27, 2021 Tuesday 13:23 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 454 words

**Byline:** Rick Rojas

**Highlight:** “We’re in the middle of a humanitarian crisis right here on American soil,” the mayor of Lake Charles said.

**Body**

“We’re in the middle of a humanitarian crisis right here on American soil,” the mayor of Lake Charles said.

LAKE CHARLES, La. — It has been nearly a year since Hurricane Laura devastated the southwest corner of Louisiana. Laura was followed by Hurricane Delta, which was followed by a debilitating winter storm and then spring flooding.

As the nation copes with a new season of weather crises, [*the city of Lake Charles remains desperate for federal assistance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/26/us/hurricanes-lake-charles-louisiana.html).

“I still grasp onto a shred of hope that there are enough people who might hear this message and might act,” Nic Hunter, the mayor of Lake Charles, said during a news conference on Tuesday in which he and other local government and business leaders renewed their pleas for support.

Millions of dollars in federal emergency funds poured into the city to help with immediate needs after the storms, but the mayor says it has been nowhere near enough. “We’re in the middle of a humanitarian crisis right here on American soil,” he said.

Residents of Louisiana received $250 million in federal emergency funds for housing and other needs after the hurricanes, and the federal Small Business Administration approved $627 million in low-interest loans. But Gov. John Bel Edwards said that the state has $3 billion in unmet recovery needs, much of it coming from homeowners and renters.

The Biden administration has vowed to take a more proactive approach to the dangers that looming disasters pose to local governments, particularly as forecasters have warned of another active hurricane season this year. In May, the administration announced that $1 billion would go toward disaster preparation and bolstering infrastructure to withstand extreme weather.

But that effort still does not address the challenges confronting Lake Charles after its series of disasters.

Since the devastation from Hurricane Laura became clear almost a year ago, Mr. Hunter has been trying to bring as much attention as possible to Lake Charles, a ***working-class*** city that had nearly 78,000 residents before the disasters.

President Donald J. Trump visited in the days after Laura, and President Biden traveled to the city as part of his campaign to highlight weaknesses in the nation’s infrastructure. Both offered words of support. But Mr. Hunter has struggled to convert those encouraging messages into something more substantial.

“It is time for the words of encouragement, prayers and support to turn into a tangible effort,” Mr. Hunter said on Tuesday.

PHOTO: A destroyed home in Lake Charles, La., on Saturday. The city has struggled to rebuild after it has been hit by one natural disaster after another in the past year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Emily Kask for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 27, 2021

**End of Document**



[***This Artist Has a Mission to Call White Americans to Truth; Tish Harrison Warren***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67J0-73V1-JBG3-60P1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 12, 2023 Sunday 22:30 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1935 words

**Byline:** Tish Harrison Warren

**Highlight:** Gregory Thompson left his role as a pastor to work toward reparations.

**Body**

This week and next, in acknowledgment of Black History Month, I’m profiling individuals who advocate in religious spaces for reparations to Black Americans.

In the early 1980s, Gregory Thompson was a fourth grader in Greenville, S.C. He and a friend, also named Gregory, palled around so much that they became known as “the two Gregs.” Thompson soon learned that though the two Gregs shared a name, their experience of the world was profoundly different. Thompson was from a white ***working-class*** family. His friend was Black. One day the two boys were acting up in school. In front of the whole class, their teacher grabbed Thompson’s friend by the shirt, pushed him against the blackboard and called him the N-word. Shame shadowed his friend’s face.

Later at recess, Thompson said, he saw his friend sitting alone and knelt beside him. He recalls seeing his friend’s tears hitting the dirt. He felt like a gulf had somehow opened between them. When he tells me the story, he brings up W.E.B. Du Bois’s famous line: “The problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line.”

“I was on the other side of that color line,” he realized that day. “I just knew I was separate from him in some way.”

Thompson has been grappling with that color line ever since, and this has led him to face hard truths about the history of his family, of our country and of the church. It led him out of the pulpit as a pastor and into a vocation in which he calls white Americans to truth, to responsibility and to the task of repair. Today, Thompson is a scholar, writer, artist and professional cook, whose work centers on race, religion, public memory and hospitality. We met eight years ago at an event for civic leaders in Boston. I spoke with him recently to learn more about his advocacy of reparations and the story of transformation that led him to it.

Growing up, Thompson’s family didn’t talk much about race. But he says he sensed an “impermeable but also unintelligible barrier” between races that “is just really a part of Southern life.” In high school, he became a Christian. His youth group began to talk about serving the economically disadvantaged in “urban ministry.” Looking back now, he sees that this approach characterized the Black community primarily “in terms of their lack.”

He wasn’t aware of systemic inequality or injustice. Instead, he said, the focus was on “racial reconciliation.” He didn’t want to be a racist in his heart, but he says, “I had no notion of the social or historical content of that or the various temptations to white saviorism or paternalism.”

Over the next couple of decades, his growing awareness about race was, in his words, “incoherent.” His first year of college at the University of South Carolina, his roommate was Black. They became close friends and Thompson realized how little he understood about the Black experience. Still, when a family member bought him a Confederate flag that had flown over the South Carolina State House, Thompson treasured it. The first home he and his wife rented together was on a former plantation. They had a portrait of Robert E. Lee on the wall. He was still affected by what he called the South’s “low-grade commitment to the Lost Cause.”

There was an “utterly dissociative nature to what I was experiencing,” he recalled. He wanted to follow God and love his neighbor. He cared about his Black friends, but he valued his Southern identity and had little grasp of history. “I could not have told you anything meaningful about enslavement,” he said. “I would have said the tropes everyone says, about ‘That was a long time ago’ or whatever.”

Thompson went to seminary, then moved to Charlottesville, Va., to be a campus minister and eventually became a pastor of a predominantly white Presbyterian church. Around the same time, he enrolled at the University of Virginia to pursue a doctorate in religion. There, he intended to write on Augustine and European intellectual history.

Then, in 2006, while on vacation, he went into a bookstore and, on a whim, bought a collection of essays written during the civil rights movement. As he read essays by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., he found language to articulate the gulf that had opened between him and his friend Greg in the fourth grade. Dr. King and the broader civil rights movement resonated with Thompson’s Christian faith and also named what he was beginning to intuit about injustice involving systems and structures. After his vacation, he contacted his adviser and told him he wanted to switch focus and do his dissertation on Dr. King.

Over the next decade, Thompson immersed himself in Black intellectual history, reading Dr. King, Howard Thurman, Du Bois, Frederick Douglass, bell hooks and African American poetry. “My narrative about America was changing,” Thompson explained. “I was being taught by African American activists, intellectuals, pastors, poets to see the truth about America that had been utterly invisible to me.” He discovered, on a trip back home during this time, that a grandfather and a great-grandfather of his had been members of the Ku Klux Klan.

When I ask how this made him feel, Thompson said that what struck him most at the time was how the family had kept this secret for so long. It was clearly a source of shame for people he loved. At the same time, it seemed strangely matter-of-fact. A relative told him that in his grandfather’s town, “the Klan was everywhere,” and a part of civic life for most white men. Thompson began to preach about racial justice in his church. Some congregants balked. One approached him asking, “Why do you always talk about Martin Luther King and how he was victimized and not talk about how Sarah Palin is victimized?”

Others wanted to learn more. Three hundred people came to a class at his church on African American church history. In 2014, he went on a writing retreat at a river house on a former plantation to work on his dissertation. At 1 a.m., reading about the horrors of rape and abuse endured by African Americans, he said, he slid his chair back from his desk and spoke out loud to the empty room, “I am a pastor in the longest standing white supremacist social order in history.”

He had thought, as an evangelical pastor, that his primary challenges were rising secularization or late-stage capitalism. But he realized that “the real missionary challenge to Christianity in America is the way we have materially instantiated a white supremacist social order.” He adds: “It was as clear as it could have been to me. And I knew that my life was going to change.”

It did. After the massacre in June 2015 at Mother Emanuel Church in Charleston, S.C., Thompson began to form deeper connections with Black religious and civic leaders and decided that he needed to leave white-dominant institutions.

In May 2016, he left the pastorate; he resigned his ordination in 2021, though he still deeply identifies as a Christian and attends a local church. He loved his work as a pastor, but he came to a point where he said: “I can either spend the next 20 years of my life trying to convince wealthy white people that they are not victims and white supremacy really exists or I can go do what I think needs to be done.” After two decades in ministry, he felt as if he were completely starting over. He moved with his family to Memphis and became part of a team restoring [*Clayborn Temple*](https://clayborn.org/), the site of the sanitation workers strike that brought Dr. King to Memphis in his final days.

During this time, Thompson joined with the hip-hop artist Sho Baraka to produce a musical called “Union,” based on the story of Dr. King’s last march. It was performed in 2018 in Memphis, Nashville and Winston-Salem, N.C. He said he saw this work as an attempt to renew “America’s racial imagination.”

“The color line functions as a cataract on white people,” Thompson said, but music and art allow defenses to come down so that people can see what they subconsciously avoid confronting.

In 2018, Thompson founded [*Voices Underground*](https://www.vuproject.org/aboutus), a nonprofit creative firm that helps communities recover, interpret and honor their African American histories. The group is creating a memorial to the Underground Railroad in Chester County, Pa. It also helped start the Center for Public History at Lincoln University and headed up Pennsylvania’s Juneteenth initiative. He also began to notice that while the topic of reparations was mostly absent among white people, Black leaders around him were talking about the need for them.

Thompson began to study reparations in depth. He and Duke Kwon, a Presbyterian pastor in Washington D.C., together wrote [*“Reparations: A Christian Call for Repentance and Repair,”*](http://www.bakerpublishinggroup.com/books/reparations/402210) which was published in 2021. The book is aimed specifically at white faith communities.

Thompson became convinced that reparations were necessary, and “that there are historical, moral and theological reasons for the American church, especially in the evangelical and white space, to take responsibility for this.” I find Kwon and Thompson’s book unique because it frames reparations not primarily as a response to enslavement, but as a way of more broadly repairing a longstanding white supremacist regime.

It also argues that injustice is best understood as theft — specifically, the theft of wealth, of power, and of truth — and that reparations must address all three through economic redress, Black empowerment and truthful public history. While Kwon and Thompson believe that the federal government has reparative responsibility, the book focuses on local efforts and particularly the role of churches. Thompson is currently working on a documentary about reparations that is to be released in the fall of 2024.

His work focuses on all three forms of reparations, but with an emphasis on the “reparation of truth.” His family’s secret shame about his ancestors’ Klan membership is a metaphor for how white people more generally approach the shameful parts of American history.

As a culture, we deny, hide and minimize racial violence and Black pain. We want to move forward and not look back. By making a musical, a memorial to Dr. King and the Underground Railroad, by putting on dinner gatherings for Juneteenth and restoring Clayborn Temple, Thompson is trying to bring buried wrongs to light — to repair, he says, “what white supremacy had stolen narratively.”

Naming past wrongs, he insists, is the “precondition of any meaningful healing.” At one point in our conversation Thompson’s voice flushed with emotion. He sounded like a fiery preacher with an urgent message, “White folks need to see that we are not going to be destroyed by disclosing historical reality.” He brought up recent attempts to whitewash history, like Florida’s “Stop WOKE” Act, championed by Gov. Ron DeSantis.

He rose to a shout: “We continue to diminish the moral capacity of citizens of this country by telling them that if they tell the truth, something bad is going happen. And that is so imprisoning. We need to change the imagination, open American people up to the truth and show them it can actually do what Jesus said, which is heal us and free us.” He went on: “I’m saying this as a white guy who once had a Confederate flag and a Robert E. Lee print and is descended from Klan members,” he said quietly. “But I’m telling you this is the way to life.”

Tish Harrison Warren ([*@Tish\_H\_Warren*](https://twitter.com/tish_h_warren?lang=en)) is a priest in the Anglican Church in North America and the author of “[*Prayer in the Night:*](https://www.amazon.com/Prayer-Night-Those-Work-Watch/dp/0830846794) For Those Who Work or Watch or Weep.”

Have feedback? Send me a note at [*HarrisonWarren-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:HarrisonWarren-newsletter@nytimes.com).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Matija Medved FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Sanders Counts on Michigan's Blue-Collar Voters as His Firewall***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YD0-RG91-JBG3-630D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 10, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1609 words

**Byline:** By Trip Gabriel

**Body**

White ***working-class*** voters lifted Bernie Sanders to victory over Hillary Clinton in Michigan four years ago, but Joe Biden won that demographic on Super Tuesday, as well as African-Americans.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. -- Dave Burdick has supported Vermont's democratic socialist in Congress since 2005, a full decade before Bernie Sanders's first presidential race.

''I've been very fortunate, I've been the beneficiary of white male privilege my whole life,'' said Mr. Burdick, 65, who owns a small business in Western Michigan. ''It's not fair. We've got to change the dynamics.''

He and his wife, Mary Lukens, are anxious about putting a daughter through college, saving for retirement and shouldering up to $30,000 a year in health costs. ''All these economic issues that Sanders brings up are something that we experience daily,'' Ms. Lukens said.

At a Sanders rally here on Sunday, the couple skewed older than most others by about a generation, though they shared the disdain of the Sanders youth brigade for moderate Democrats like Joseph R. Biden Jr. ''Growing up during Nam, you look around and just want a choice for a change,'' Mr. Burdick said. ''You know what -- we were right back then and we're right now.''

With Mr. Biden the beneficiary of a surge after carrying 10 states on Super Tuesday last week, Sanders supporters in Michigan, which votes Tuesday, know they are his firewall in the first of several Midwest states going to the polls in the next two weeks, likely writing his fate.

Even as Mr. Biden is heading a bandwagon with former 2020 rivals and moderate Democratic voters clambering aboard, Mr. Sanders has a loyal base that is emotionally bound to him, an attachment rooted in their own economic struggles and lived experiences, rather than triangulating the most electable candidate.

Tuesday's primary contests, in six states including Missouri and Washington, are unfolding against a backdrop of high anxiety over the economic and health consequences of the coronavirus outbreak. For most Sanders voters, plummeting stock prices matter less than the broader injustices he champions around wage inequality, health care and student loan debt.

If Mr. Sanders defies expectations in Michigan, a state he won in the 2016 primary, it will be because his all-out efforts here over the last four days succeeded in broadening his support, reversing the demographic trends that broke against him on Super Tuesday.

While doubling his organizing staff in the state to 25, he is running TV ads that attack Mr. Biden on trade and Social Security, expanding his outreach to voters and holding a multitude of events.

Meanwhile, a confident Mr. Biden scheduled only one visit to the state in recent days, on Monday, when he planned a rally in Detroit with Senators Kamala Harris and Cory Booker. Mr. Booker endorsed the former vice president on Monday. Earlier he sent Senator Amy Klobuchar for a couple of low-key events.

''If you look at what Joe's running here versus what we're running here,'' Bill Neidhardt, a Sanders spokesman, said over the weekend, ''they'll send a surrogate or two out here, but we're going to have Bernie talk to as many people as possible, and then we're going to have door knockers talk to as many people as possible.''

On Sunday, according to campaign counts, Mr. Sanders drew crowds of more than 7,000 in Grand Rapids, where the Rev. Jesse Jackson, the two-time presidential candidate, endorsed him, and over 10,000 in Ann Arbor, where he was introduced by America's second most popular democratic socialist, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York.

''In order for us to win we have to grow, we must be inclusive, we must bring more people into this movement,'' Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said.

One possible sign of progress in widening his coalition is that former supporters of Senator Elizabeth Warren, who dropped out of the Democratic presidential race last week but has yet to make an endorsement, were not hard to find in the Sanders multitudes. One of them, Tom Sapkowski, said, ''I don't think Biden's a hard enough left turn.''

Mr. Sapkowski, who worked 35 years ''turning wrenches'' as an auto mechanic, has lived the contradictions of the American economy, where unemployment is low but incomes for those who aren't rich feel like they've flatlined. ''Things have not changed for the middle class for the past 50 years,'' he said. He remembered ''during the Clinton administration where I made like 80, 90 grand, but apparently that was too much.''

His wife, Kim, who lost her job as an education administrator in January, said: ''I was just thinking this morning, my dad, he was 58 when he retired from the telephone company. He had a very nice retirement. Belonged to the union. And here I am 55 and nowhere near to retiring.''

Younger voters often brought up the huge burden of college debt for their generation, which Mr. Sanders proposes to cancel.

At a rally on Saturday in Flint, as well as one on Friday in Detroit -- both cities with majority black populations -- the Sanders supporters were largely a sea of white faces. They revealed that Mr. Sanders has not overcome his weakness with black voters. Despite years of outreach to African-Americans since his loss to Hillary Clinton in the 2016 Democratic race, Mr. Sanders saw black voters choosing his rival in Southern states on Super Tuesday.

He won Michigan that year -- the high-water mark of his campaign -- by carrying white voters, especially whites without a college degree, who represented more than one in three voters. Winning those voters again not just in Michigan but in Ohio and Illinois, which vote on March 17, undergirds Mr. Sanders's hope for a comeback.

His TV ads and his speeches hammer Mr. Biden for supporting trade deals including the North American Free Trade Agreement, reviled by many factory workers, and for past statements suggesting an openness to cutting Social Security.

''This city got destroyed by NAFTA,'' said Glenn Chatters, a Sanders supporter in Flint, who works as a heating and air conditioning installer. In 1992, he voted for the third-party candidate Ross Perot because of his warnings about trade deals.

He is hopeful, if not entirely optimistic, that Mr. Sanders can again win ***working-class*** white voters in Michigan, many of whom in 2016 may have been voting against Mrs. Clinton and have since been lost to President Trump.

''I hope that people actually stop and listen to what he actually has to say, instead of the party lines,'' Mr. Chatters said. ''Sometimes people are so swayed by the term 'socialism' when they're driving on their free roads, they're taking their kids to the free school.''

In the Super Tuesday primaries, it was Mr. Biden who won ***working-class*** white voters, helping him to carry Northern states including Maine and Minnesota, an ominous sign for Mr. Sanders. Stanley Greenberg, a Democratic pollster, said he was skeptical of Mr. Sanders's ability to repeat his 2016 Michigan win, or his chances elsewhere in the Midwest, because Democrats this year, who singularly want to beat Mr. Trump, are less open to revisiting arguments over trade or Social Security.

''Voters, astonishingly, have taken over the nominating process,'' he said. ''Biden did well among blacks, suburban whites and white ***working-class*** voters because they want him to take on Trump. That was so powerful on Super Tuesday.''

Most Sanders supporters said they would grieve his failure to win the nomination if it comes to that, but they would vote for Mr. Biden in November. But not all.

In Flint, the fiery Harvard professor Cornel West, a Sanders surrogate, wound up the crowd by accusing Mr. Biden of being ''a neoliberal,'' eliciting hearty boos. Afterward, an audience member, Bob Granville, echoed the critique. Neoliberalism, he said, ''means socialism for the rich and a rugged capitalism for everyone else.''

If Mr. Biden is the nominee, said Mr. Granville, a retired work-force trainer, he plans to vote for a third-party candidate in protest. ''People say, oh, you're going to be part of letting Trump in there. I say, if you're going to run Biden, we deserve Trump.''

Despite the avowed desire of the Sanders campaign to broaden his appeal, Mr. Sanders himself has a penchant for pushing away moderate voters he needs by frequently attacking the Democratic ''establishment.'' On Sunday, he accused party leaders of forcing Ms. Klobuchar and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., out of the race to help Mr. Biden ''and try to defeat me.''

David Betras, a former Democratic chairman of Mahoning County, Ohio, in an industrial region where Mr. Trump did well in 2016, said he feared that the more Mr. Sanders attacks ''the establishment,'' the more enraged his supporters will become, with many likely to sit out the general election. ''His supporters are fervent and will feel betrayed by Democrats.''

That is not an inevitability. Mr. Sanders explicitly tells supporters in nearly every speech that he will back Mr. Biden as the nominee.

And there are anecdotal signs that Mr. Sanders may be growing support.

Eric Mays, a city councilman in Flint, arrived as an undecided voter to his rally there on Saturday, which was billed as ''a town hall on racial and economic justice.''

''Bernie has got me fired up,'' he said. ''I might very well be voting Bernie on Tuesday.''

Mr. Mays said that despite the overwhelming support of black voters in Southern states for Mr. Biden, Michigan could break differently. ''We know Bernie Sanders will get black voters out of Flint,'' he said.

''I hope that we see him all the way through this year.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/us/politics/bernie-sanders-michigan-primary.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/us/politics/bernie-sanders-michigan-primary.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: White ***working-class*** voters lifted Bernie Sanders past Hillary Clinton in Michigan four years ago, but Joe Biden won that demographic on Super Tuesday.

Mr. Sanders at a rally Saturday in Grand Rapids, Mich. He has stepped up his efforts in the state in recent days. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Through Imprisonment and Exile, Sevgi Soysal Kept Writing; Roving Eye***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66WW-0G81-JBG3-62N8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 19, 2022 Saturday 13:35 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1405 words

**Byline:** Ayten Tartici

**Highlight:** Her final completed novel, “Dawn,” highlights voices of protest in Turkey amid political turmoil.

**Body**

Her final completed novel, “Dawn,” highlights voices of protest in Turkey amid political turmoil.

The poet and political exile Nazim Hikmet had this [*advice*](https://poets.org/poem/some-advice-those-who-will-serve-time-prison) for those behind bars: “You won’t say, ‘Better I had swung from the end of a rope like a flag’ — you’ll put your foot down and live. It may not be a pleasure exactly, but it’s your solemn duty to live one more day.” The rebellious Turkish novelist Sevgi Soysal (1936-76) did just that, her life stranger than fiction. After the [*military coup*](https://www.nytimes.com/1971/03/13/archives/turkish-regime-is-ousted-by-the-military-leaders-no-move-made-to.html) in Turkey on March 12, 1971, amid a period of labor unrest and street battles between leftists and ultranationalists, Soysal spent a portion of her final years in detention, writing at a furious pace.

When she fell for a constitutional law professor, they exchanged wedding vows at Mamak military prison, where the bridegroom, Soysal’s third husband, was serving time on charges of spreading communist propaganda. Three weeks later, the bride was also locked up. Her crime: not yet having an ID reflecting her new husband’s surname. Her first imprisonment lasted 27 days. Her second, on trumped-up charges of insulting the military, eight months. She also served out a sentence of internal exile in southern Turkey. “I am like a cat caught in a mouse trap,” she fumed in her prison memoirs. Shaped by those experiences, Soysal’s short stories and novels — written in the 1960s and ’70s at the height of social tumult in Turkey, and no doubt colored by the Cold War — are fonts of political insight and meticulous studies of emotion.

DAWN (Archipelago, 302 pp., paperback, $20), translated for the first time into English by Maureen Freely, is Soysal’s last completed novel and crowning literary achievement. It was published in 1975 — four years after the March 12 coup and one year before Soysal’s death from breast cancer. The novel unfolds in three parts over the course of a single night. Its frame narrative is deceptively simple: Word gets around that a group of anarchists is gathering at a textile worker’s home in Adana, and the police stage a clumsy raid and arrest almost everyone. The dinner is just a dinner and the evidence is flimsy — even the martial-law commander orders the release of the suspects — but to save face, the police pummel the bewildered host, Ali, before releasing everyone in the morning. “Who’d informed on whom?” the narrator asks. “Everyone had informed on everyone. Now that was a humiliation worth sharing.”

The ingenuity of “Dawn” lies in its chorus of wounded, weary, angry voices from all corners of Turkish society. Attending the dinner are Mustafa, a provincial math teacher with revolutionary leanings, who has just been released from prison; Huseyin, a young lawyer and a former member of the socialist Workers Party; and Oya, an educated young bourgeois woman in internal exile, clearly modeled after Soysal herself. The book skips back and forth between the private thoughts and memories of the attendees, divulged in the first person, and those of an omniscient narrator, who brutally appraises characters both major and minor. No one is spared the narrator’s roving curiosity, and everyone, even the police officers who browbeat and torture their detainees, turns out to be vulnerable and complex.

Soysal was born to a Turkish father and German mother, neither of whom was politically active. She was raised in Ankara amid the idealism of the early Turkish Republic, flitting between dance and piano lessons. At university, she studied archaeology and briefly lived in Germany, where she sat in on theater courses at Göttingen University. After her return to Turkey, Soysal began writing fiction in earnest as well as voraciously translating plays from the German. In the mid-60s, she took a job at Turkish Radio and Television, Turkey’s version of the BBC. Reflecting her background in broadcast journalism and theater, her prose, fiction and nonfiction alike, is lined with vivid dialogue.

Even as Soysal maps out the range of voices in the political landscape, many of her characters exhibit a marked ideological ambivalence. Zekeriya, who sports a [*Grey Wolves*](https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2020/11/24/france-has-banned-the-grey-wolves-but-who-are-they) badge signaling his membership in a far-right religious and nationalist group that helped raise him, chooses to marry a minority [*Alevi*](https://rpl.hds.harvard.edu/faq/alevism) girl from a liberal secularist family, a taboo choice. Denied a religious ceremony by her family, he instead places “one hand on the Koran and the other on his gun before saying yes.” He sees no contradictions in his alliances.

That ambivalence pervades even the leftist characters with whom we are meant to sympathize and who have already paid the price for their beliefs. Mustafa, who was stripped naked, waterboarded and given electric shocks in prison, at first speaks of his incarceration almost in nostalgic terms, as a curative experience: “He felt like a patient who’d discharged himself from hospital too soon.” Prison is a space where he can just read and be at peace with himself; in the real world, he is lost. He still believes in revolutionary causes, but when he is brought back in for interrogation, all he can think of is avoiding further trouble and reuniting with his wife and daughter. He pessimistically reconciles himself to the fact that his efforts have been futile, that he is hardly the Marxist champion he once imagined himself to be.

Oya, too, castigates herself but for different reasons. Her guilt as a writer comes from not really being a member of the ***working class*** she admires. At the police station, Oya reflects on the kaleidoscope of women she encountered in prison, many from proletarian backgrounds. After her release early the next morning, she is stung by her remoteness from these women and from the cotton-field laborers in Adana who get up every day at dawn, a word repeated in the novel like a tessellation. Although married with children, she catches herself daydreaming about where to go next. “What am I trying to do,” she reproaches herself, “turn my life into a Godard film? Whenever a woman in a Nouvelle Vague film gets angry at home, she hops on a plane and flies off to another continent.”

That Soysal’s work is often categorized as Turkish coup literature sometimes detracts from the breadth of her literary creativity and unapologetic feminism. Her story collection “Tante Rosa” (1968) uses German characters, including a girl who gets pregnant out of wedlock, to talk about sexuality to a Turkish audience. In “Walking” (1970), which was banned for obscenity after the coup, the protagonist has no qualms about abandoning her husband in pursuit of a new life.

“Dawn,” too, is daringly explicit about the tribulations of the female body, from accounts of sexual assault in prison to the shame women feel about menstruation. Their learned humiliation is likened to the suppression of thoughts and political beliefs, linking censorship of the body to censorship of the mind.

Freely’s translation is clean, colloquial and confident. I like how she sometimes preserves the flavor of the Turkish original by translating idioms literally. “They’d like me to turn my hair into a broom,” a housewife complains about her in-laws’ domestic expectations. Freely does elide the local dialects that function in the novel as shibboleths of regional and ethnic difference, from an Arab boy, Husrev, to the Roma women at a run-down circus.

“There is no more wretched prison,” Rilke once wrote, “than the fear of hurting someone who loves you.” Soysal, a devotee of Rilke, would no doubt have agreed. In “Dawn,” she lays bare the burden of prisons, both physical and emotional. “We all have someone we fear for,” Mustafa concludes, racked with guilt over the beating his uncle receives at the hands of a police lieutenant. Besides exposing the disillusionment and exhaustion of the Turkish left, “Dawn” articulates the difficulty of a fresh start, or, as Mustafa puts it, “how we did our best to pick up the pieces of our despised selves and mend them as best we could.”

Healing is possible, not by jettisoning one’s character or ideals, but by allowing oneself at least a partial forgetting. As he is leaving prison, Mustafa makes a plaintive request: “Are you ever going to forget these things? A question, and a hope. A belief, and a doubt.”

Ayten Tartici is a lecturer in English and comparative literature at Columbia University.

PHOTO: Sevgi Soysal, the author of “Dawn,” in 1973. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Mithat Yenen/The Estate of Sevgi Soysal FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 22, 2022

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[***The Fight for (and Against) a $15 Minimum Wage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6279-VJH1-JBG3-602R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 17, 2021 Wednesday 06:00 EST

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**Section:** PODCASTS; the-daily

**Length:** 367 words

**Highlight:** After an increase failed to make it into the stimulus package, we look at the shifting political and economic arguments surrounding the issue.

**Body**

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The passage of the stimulus package last week ushered in an expansion of the social safety net that has been widely celebrated by Democrats. But one key policy was not included: a doubling of the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour.

The wage last went up in 2009, when the country was in the grips of the Great Recession. Through years of remarkable economic growth, the national wage floor has remained at $7.25.

When progressives began campaigning for $15, in 2012, it seemed like a political impossibility. They have since made gains locally and on the state level, even bringing around the mainstream of the Democratic Party.

Today, we look at the history of the demand, and the shifting political and economic arguments for and against it.

On today’s episode

Background reading

* Earlier this month, a group of senators from both sides of the aisle [*declined to advance a federal minimum wage increase*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-daily/id1200361736?mt=2) to $15 an hour.

1. The politics of a minimum wage rise are increasingly muddled, but some [*Republicans are gravitating toward the idea*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-daily/id1200361736?mt=2), citing the economic needs of ***working-class*** Americans.

There are a lot of ways to listen to The Daily. [*Here’s how.*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-daily/id1200361736?mt=2)

Transcripts of each episode are available by the next workday. You can find them at the top of the page.

Ben Casselman contributed reporting.

The Daily is made by Theo Balcomb, 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, 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, Rachelle Bonja, Alix Spiegel, Diana Nguyen, Marion Lozano and Soraya Shockley.

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, Desiree Ibekwe, Laura Kim, Erica Futterman and Shreeya Sinha.

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2021

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[***New Novels in Translation (to Read on an Island, Perhaps?); The Shortlist***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66CY-SNJ1-DXY4-X1J5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 15, 2022 Thursday 12:24 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1121 words

**Byline:** Anderson Tepper

**Highlight:** New international fiction from Guadeloupe, the Canary Islands, Tahiti and Basque Country.

**Body**

The title of Estelle-Sarah Bulle’s novel, WHERE DOGS BARK WITH THEIR TAILS (Farrar, Straus &amp; Giroux, 288 pp., $27), refers to a Créole saying about Morne-Galant, a small village on the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, where the journey of the contentious Ezechiel clan begins. The mixed-race children of Hilaire, who is Black, and Eulalie, a descendant of poor white settlers, will each have their chance to speak: There are the sisters Antoine and Lucinde and their younger brother, “Petite-Frère.”

But it is Antoine’s telling that truly animates Bulle’s novel, faithfully translated by Julia Grawemeyer, which moves from late-1940s Morne-Galant to Pointe-à-Pitre, the country’s capital, and the banlieues of Paris. “She was the link from the past to present, from Guadeloupe to Paris, like an underground root, full of life,” thinks Antoine’s French-born niece, who is seeking to make sense of her own identity “between two worlds.”

Antoine’s tale doesn’t disappoint: Her life reflects the changes that have gripped Guadeloupe and, especially, Pointe-à-Pitre over the past decades. She remembers her years as a young businesswoman, “brimming,” like the city itself, “with energy and quiet optimism for a new era.” And yet as the 1960s wear on, violent protests against French control engulf the streets in chaos, prompting Antoine and her siblings to seek opportunities abroad.

But what will be left of their Caribbeanness when they emigrate to France? Antoine, naturally, has the last word on her roots: “More than anything, I considered myself a woman, and also a Guadeloupean, that is to say, someone of mixed-blood, like all of us here on the island, this tiny piece of confetti in the vast ocean.”

The stray dogs wandering around the ***working-class*** neighborhood of northern Tenerife, Canary Islands, bear some resemblance to the townsfolk: They’re itchy, horny and prone to trouble. Or at least that’s how it seems to the potty-mouthed, 10-year-old narrator of Andrea Abreu’s firecracker of a debut, DOGS OF SUMMER (Astra House, 180 pp. $23). The narrator’s colorful, unprintable nickname, we soon learn, was given to her by her best friend, Isora — a sign, she believes, of Isora’s “small, shy, quiet affection.”

Actually, their friendship is something much more combustible, a mix of worshipful emulation and simmering desire. Isora is “pure guts and grit,” and she’s bursting into puberty as summer vacations begin. There’s nothing the narrator wouldn’t do for her: “I’d have followed her to the toilet or to the mouth of a volcano.”

The volcano, in fact, looms over their “vertical” neighborhood, its low-hanging clouds filling the girls with bouts of melancholy. It’s a drab, oppressive existence, but the two are determined to make it out and down to the tourist beaches at the bottom of the hill. Meanwhile, they idle away their days playing with their “Gamebois,” watching sultry telenovelas, and trying to avoid the menacing teenage boys.

“When we were sad, we ate unripe berries and hot pears until they gave us” the runs, the narrator explains. “We pulled spider webs off our faces with the tips of our tongues. … We grinded.” The whole neighborhood, it seems, is in heat. Abreu’s novel, in Julia Sanches’s sparkling translation, is a revelation, perfectly capturing a festering summer of meltdowns and shrinking horizons.

“Every story begins with a family story,” observes the Tahitian writer Titaua Peu. “Some families, though, their fates go every which way. … Which means mishaps, missed chances, misunderstandings.”

Peu’s newly translated novel, PINA (Restless Books, 313 pp., paper, $18), like “Where Dogs Bark With Their Tails,” is the story of a nation told in the guise of family tales. Yet “mishaps” is an understatement of the tragedy in this novel. Pina, the 9-year-old protagonist, is doomed from the start: She’s the next-to-last child of nine and her mother’s least favorite; her father is an abusive boozer. They live in a “hovel” in the rundown quarter of Tenaho, near Papeete, the capital of French Polynesia.

Pina, like the girls of “Dogs of Summer,” is desperate to escape her surroundings: “So Pina dreamed up a world she’d survive in, dreamed up voices she could listen to, so as not to have to think about the world she was in.” But things only get darker when her father has a drunk-driving accident, setting off a chain of events that draws the whole family into a vortex of violence.

Clearly, Pina’s Tahiti is not the paradise of brochures. It’s a land still haunted by colonization and crippled by poverty and crime. But even as things bottom out, a groundswell of Tahitian self-awareness builds toward the 2016 referendum on independence from France. The question is: Can the country, and Pina, ever truly break free? This is a clamorous, at times unwieldy take on modern Tahiti, yet Peu’s “rough-hewn, oral, humane prose” (in the words of the translator, Jeffrey Zuckerman) rings fiercely true.

Bernardo Atxaga’s rich, immersive novel WATER OVER STONES (381 pp., Graywolf, paper, $18), begins in the early 1970s: It’s summertime in the small Basque village of Ugarte. A cast of characters gradually emerges, related by blood or tightly bonded by friendship. Elías, on the brink of adolescence, is visiting his uncle, the owner of a local bakery. Ever since an incident at his French boarding school, Elías has refused to speak.

Nevertheless, a sense of calm permeates the land. “This was summer: children out in the open air, swifts hunting for mosquitoes, the serene murmur of the men outside the bars, and the southerly wind, the stars, the half-moon,” Atxaga writes. “Life seemed easier, less fraught with danger, as though the year had come into equilibrium and a thin piece of cloth rested over the village like the blanket with which a mother covers her baby.”

Of course, things aren’t as peaceful as they appear. There is talk of an upcoming hunting trip in the area by Franco; a wounded boar is trapped in the canal; marriages are unraveling. And as Atxaga “zigzags” through the coming decades, following different strands and characters, death is a constant, “always on the prowl.”

Atxaga, like Bulle, has an expansive view of his material. His voice, fluidly translated by Margaret Jull Costa and Thomas Bunstead, runs like a river, meandering across lives. As he writes in an epilogue, his focus includes “animals, family life … empty landscapes, mines, engineers, political struggles, torture by police, mental labyrinths.” The result is a portrait of an entire Basque universe, in flux yet eternal.

Anderson Tepper is a chair of the international committee of the Brooklyn Book Festival.

Anderson Tepper is a chair of the international committee of the Brooklyn Book Festival.

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** September 26, 2022

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[***Emerging From G.O.P. Pack in a Governor's Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6630-MF51-DXY4-X2G1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 4, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1033 words

**Byline:** By Julie Bosman

**Body**

Now comes the hard part, expanding beyond her conservative base to defeat Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

STERLING HEIGHTS, Mich. -- Tudor Dixon, a former conservative media personality, just pulled off a feat that might have seemed impossible a few months ago, catapulting over her better known competitors in a crowded and chaotic primary to win the Republican nomination for governor in Michigan.

The more formidable challenge lies ahead: facing off in the general election against the relatively popular incumbent, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, who enjoys the support of an energized Democratic base.

On Wednesday, Ms. Dixon, who was previously an executive at her family's steel company, spoke of the late-breaking endorsement from former President Donald J. Trump that helped woo Republican primary voters -- and of the crucial task of winning over voters beyond her conservative base.

''We wanted to make sure that we could bring the party together,'' Ms. Dixon said in a radio interview. ''We wanted to make sure that we would be solid on the Republican side because we knew going into the general, we have to win independents and we have to win some Democrats.''

Ms. Dixon, who also had the backing of the wealthy DeVos family in Michigan, will now have to contend with broader political forces. The sweeping rejection by Kansas voters on Tuesday of a constitutional amendment that would have let state legislators ban or significantly restrict abortion has further elevated the politics of reproductive rights. The issue has mobilized voters who support abortion rights, who could be an especially potent force in Michigan in the general election.

Governor Whitmer is solidly in favor of protecting access to abortion. Ms. Dixon has said that abortion should be allowed only if necessary to save the life of a mother, and that she would not support exceptions for rape or incest.

''This is going to be an epic battle,'' Ms. Dixon told supporters in a victory speech on Tuesday evening.

Matt Grossmann, a professor of American politics at Michigan State University, said that Ms. Dixon was starting her race against Ms. Whitmer at a disadvantage, given her political inexperience and her relative obscurity for most voters.

Ms. Dixon emerged from a Republican primary that was unusually messy, as five candidates -- including two of the most recognizable names in the race -- were removed from the ballot after submitting nominating petitions that contained forged signatures.

''This should have been a good opportunity for Republicans,'' Mr. Grossmann said on Wednesday. ''There was a time when Whitmer was less popular. Tudor Dixon is starting from a much lower position than you would expect the Republican nominee to begin the general election from.''

In interviews across the state this week, Republican primary voters said they were fearful of Ms. Whitmer winning a second term but uncertain about Ms. Dixon's ability to unseat her.

Ms. Whitmer has drawn criticism from conservatives over rising inflation, her handling of the coronavirus pandemic and the perpetually run-down state of Michigan's roads. But the governor is entering the general election campaign with solid popularity in the state -- her approval rating was 55 percent in a July survey conducted for The Detroit News -- and a base of Democratic voters who have been outraged by a looming threat to abortion rights.

Abortion is legal in Michigan, but conservatives are pushing to enforce a 1931 law that bans the procedure in nearly all cases. Ms. Whitmer has made the issue a centerpiece of her campaign.

Dozens of voters interviewed in Michigan this week said that they were supporting Ms. Dixon largely because of Mr. Trump's endorsement, believing that Mr. Trump would have backed the candidate with the strongest conservative credentials.

They said they were still learning about what kind of candidate Ms. Dixon was: At an elementary school in Sterling Heights, Mich., on Tuesday, two Republican voters struggled to remember Ms. Dixon's name, though they intended to cast a ballot for her. One man said he was going to vote for the candidate Mr. Trump had endorsed -- ''the lady,'' he said, though he didn't know anything about her.

Fred Starcher, 61, a truck driver, said he had only recently heard of Ms. Dixon but was hopeful that she would ease the financial burdens of the ***working class***. He heard her talking during a recent interview, he said, and she impressed him with her promises to advocate for people like farmers.

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Many Republican voters said they were eager to support Ms. Dixon, seeing her as a reliable conservative who would push back against Ms. Whitmer. They are still angry over the governor's handling of the coronavirus pandemic, during which she imposed strict rules on business and schools.

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''I think she's done a decent job and she deserves more time,'' she said. ''She didn't get the best hand.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/03/us/tudor-dixon-whitmer-michigan-governor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/03/us/tudor-dixon-whitmer-michigan-governor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: ''This is going to be an epic battle,'' Tudor Dixon, center, told supporters of the challenge ahead.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan, center, has a base of voters who have been outraged by a looming threat to abortion rights. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY EMILY ELCONIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Adapting to Congress, and to Life After a Stroke***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67HR-79X1-JBG3-60PW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 11, 2023 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1875 words

**Byline:** By Annie Karni

**Body**

The first-term Democrat, who was released Friday after two days in the hospital, is coping with the lasting effects of a near-fatal stroke last year, and Congress is adapting to accommodate him.

WASHINGTON -- At Senator John Fetterman's desk in the Senate chamber, there is a newly installed monitor that rises or lowers, depending on whether he sits or stands, and provides closed captioning so he can follow the proceedings. At the center dais, a custom desk stand has been built to accommodate the same technology for when he takes his shifts presiding over the Senate.

The sergeant-at-arms has arranged for live audio-to-text transcription for the committees on which Mr. Fetterman serves, and plans to expand the service to all Senate hearings.

Mr. Fetterman, 53, the 6-foot-8, tattooed and goateed Democrat from Pennsylvania who suffered a near-fatal stroke last May and went on to win one of the most competitive seats in November's midterm elections, was never going to blend in seamlessly in the marbled corridors of Congress.

But his adjustment to serving in the Senate has been made vastly more difficult by the strains of his recovery, which left him with a physical impairment and serious mental health challenges that have rendered the transition extraordinarily challenging -- even with the accommodations that have been made to help him adapt.

''What you're supposed to do to recover from this is do as little as possible,'' said Adam Jentleson, his chief of staff. Instead, Mr. Fetterman ''was forced to do as much as possible -- he had to get back to the campaign trail. It's hard to claw that back.''

On Wednesday, Mr. Fetterman was hospitalized after feeling lightheaded while attending a daylong Senate Democratic retreat in Washington. Initial tests showed no sign of another stroke, but he spent two days in the hospital while doctors ran additional tests to confirm that finding and monitored him for seizures, according to a spokesman. He was released late Friday afternoon, the spokesman said, and planned to return to the Senate on Monday.

The latest health scare convinced his staff that Mr. Fetterman needs a better plan to take care of himself, both physically and emotionally.

Mr. Fetterman declined to be interviewed for this story. But aides and confidantes describe his introduction to the Senate as a difficult period, filled with unfamiliar duties that are taxing for someone still in recovery: meetings with constituents, attending caucus and committee meetings, appearing in public at White House events and at the State of the Union address, as well as making appearances in Pennsylvania.

The most evident disability is a neurological condition that impairs his hearing. Mr. Fetterman suffers from auditory processing issues, forcing him to rely primarily on a tablet to transcribe what is being said to him. The hearing issues are inconsistent; they often get worse when he is in a stressful or unfamiliar situation. When it's bad, Mr. Fetterman has described it as trying to make out the muffled voice of the teacher in the ''Peanuts'' cartoon, whose words could never be deciphered.

The stroke -- after which he had a pacemaker and defibrillator implanted -- also took a less apparent but very real psychological toll on Mr. Fetterman. It has been less than a year since the stroke transformed him from someone with a large stature that suggested machismo -- a central part of his political identity -- into a physically altered version of himself, and he is frustrated at times that he is not yet back to the man he once was. He has had to come to terms with the fact that he may have set himself back permanently by not taking the recommended amount of rest during the campaign. And he continues to push himself in ways that people close to him worry are detrimental.

''It is stressful, having to go through that experience in the context of the most high-profile Senate race in the country,'' said Mr. Jentleson.

As Mr. Fetterman adjusts to his new life, the Senate and his colleagues are also adjusting to his special needs.

''We're going to have to learn our own styles with it,'' said Senator Amy Klobuchar, Democrat of Minnesota, who said she experimented with the tablet at a recent Democratic caucus lunch. ''What I was saying was accurate even when I talked fast. I wanted to make sure it was accurate. It was kind of to imagine what it would be like to be him.''

''He answers like you would answer anyone,'' Ms. Klobuchar added. ''It's us that have to get used to it; he's used to it.''

The ongoing hearing issue means Mr. Fetterman cannot partake in the hallway scrums with journalists that are part of most lawmakers' daily existence in the Capitol. He typically walks around the building with many staffers, in part because he needs assistants to test his technological setup before he enters any room and in part because they're all still learning their way around the building.

These days, Mr. Fetterman, who as lieutenant governor had reporters' numbers in his cellphone and had near-constant running conversations with some of them, has stopped interacting with journalists, whose voices he often cannot hear in the echoing hallways.

''Before the stroke, he was the kind of person who loved the give-and-take with reporters,'' Mr. Jentleson said. ''The challenge is to be able to get back to that place, given the current limitations.''

For now, Mr. Fetterman is glad to have a little break from the media glare. Current and former staff members describe him as someone who has no desire to be at the center of every negotiation and who campaigned on a promise to be a solid 51st Democratic vote in the Senate supporting President Biden's agenda. He has often been befuddled by the attention he attracts, even from colleagues who stop him for selfies, and wants less of it.

The attacks during the campaign -- Fox News' Tucker Carlson called him ''unapologetically brain damaged'' and Republicans accused him of lying about his health -- also are never far out of mind. Some of those aspersions continue; the Republican National Committee blasted out a clip earlier this month of Mr. Fetterman tripping over the word ''water'' at an event announcing $340 million in federal funding for Philadelphia to modernize its water infrastructure. On Thursday night, Mr. Carlson was back to attacking Mr. Fetterman's health even as he recuperated in the hospital. ''Sad, but also, you wonder, what is going on?'' Mr. Carlson said.

Mr. Fetterman and his staff take it in stride, noting that they learned from the campaign that most people are reflexively compassionate about his condition, in part because they may have personal experiences with similar situations.

Senator Bob Casey, the other Democrat from Pennsylvania, noted that Mr. Fetterman had been widely criticized for his halting debate performance against his Republican opponent, Dr. Mehmet Oz, but was treated more kindly by voters, ultimately winning his race by five points.

''There are a lot of people out there who understand disability, and understand struggle, and he won big,'' Mr. Casey said.

At his first Agriculture Committee hearing earlier this month, Mr. Fetterman asked questions about trade and organic farming, stumbling slightly over his words. Despite the flubs, his office circulated video of his presentation to supporters.

Mr. Fetterman pushed hard to get seated on the agriculture panel, in part because he views the farm bill as one of the few major pieces of legislation that has a good chance of passage in a divided Congress, and an opportunity for a freshman senator to influence major policy without having to whip votes or create coalitions for the package itself.

Still, keeping one's head down and doing the work unnoticed is a tall order for someone whose national appeal was looking different and speaking differently to voters, even before his stroke.

Representative Marie Gluesenkamp Pérez, Democrat of Washington, said she approached Mr. Fetterman at a White House reception for new members because she was curious about a fellow lawmaker who could speak to ***working-class*** voters.

She was wearing boots, jeans and a Carhartt jacket. Mr. Fetterman, much to her chagrin, was dressed in a business suit instead of his signature hoodie.

''I thought I was going to have an ally here,'' she said. ''He said, 'Why does she get to wear jeans, and I don't?'''

Ms. Gluesenkamp Pérez said the tablet allowed for seamless small talk and dress code jokes.

''It's just a slight delay,'' she said. ''I didn't notice he was using it at first. Then I was like, 'Why are they holding it?' It took me a minute to figure out what was going on.''

His Democratic colleagues in the Senate said they view the changes being made to accommodate him as modernizations for the Senate, a workplace like any other.

''The right attitude has to be consistent with what we hope we learned in the last 30 years or so, that we can provide reasonable accommodations in the workplace,'' said Mr. Casey. ''If we're doing it right, it should not be him adapting to the workplace, it should be senators in both parties adapting and accommodating him. Just like we would anyone.''

He compared the accommodations being made for Mr. Fetterman with the Senate installing a ramp for Senator Tammy Duckworth, Democrat of Illinois, a former combat veteran who lost both of her legs in 2004 while serving as a helicopter pilot in the Iraq War.

Senator Ben Ray Luján, Democrat of New Mexico, who also suffered a stroke last year, said recovering mentally can be as difficult as recovering physically.

''I was very blessed there was a lot of love and humanity around me,'' he said. ''I can't imagine what my recovery would have been like if I had people saying horrible, disrespectful, uneducated, hateful things. It's tough.''

Mr. Luján has checked in with Mr. Fetterman regularly since his stroke.

''I would just say, 'Hey, just thinking about you, hope you're having a great day,''' Mr. Luján said.

Throughout the Senate's history, there have been physically impaired senators, from amputees to those who were blind. There has been one deaf senator: Samuel McEnery of Louisiana, who served in the Senate from 1897 to 1910. And there have been those who have suffered massive strokes that have left them impaired.

Former Senator Tim Johnson, Democrat of South Dakota, suffered a brain hemorrhage in 2006 that left his speech and mobility impaired. Former Senator Mark Kirk, Republican of Illinois, suffered a major stroke in 2012, two years into his first and only term, and underwent intense physical therapy to relearn how to walk.

But Mr. Fetterman is the only one who is dealing with recuperation as he enters the Senate for the first time. For now, that means living alone in a Washington apartment during the week, and driving four hours home to Braddock, Pa., most weekends to see his wife and three children.

Ms. Klobuchar said her sense is that Mr. Fetterman wants to be in the Senate, despite the additional challenges he faces.

''If you're not happy, you don't show up at all these things,'' she said. ''He seems very active and wants to be involved in what's going on. He seems glad to be there.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/10/us/politics/john-fetterman-senate-stroke.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/10/us/politics/john-fetterman-senate-stroke.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Senator John Fetterman left a hospital on Friday after a bout of lightheadedness. He had a near-fatal stroke last May. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1)

Senator John Fetterman with his wife, children and Vice President Kamala Harris. A stroke left him with multiple disabilities. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JON CHERRY/REUTERS) (A16) This article appeared in print on page A1, A16.

**Load-Date:** February 11, 2023

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[***Tudor Dixon Came From Back in the Pack to Become the G.O.P. Nominee for Michigan Governor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:662V-DV41-JBG3-62R5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 3, 2022 Wednesday 23:55 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1067 words

**Byline:** Julie Bosman

**Highlight:** Now comes the hard part, expanding beyond her conservative base to defeat Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

**Body**

Now comes the hard part, expanding beyond her conservative base to defeat Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

STERLING HEIGHTS, Mich. — Tudor Dixon, a former conservative media personality, just pulled off a feat that might have seemed impossible a few months ago, catapulting over her better known competitors in a crowded and chaotic primary to win the Republican nomination for governor in Michigan.

The more formidable challenge lies ahead: facing off in the general election against the relatively popular incumbent, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, who enjoys the support of an energized Democratic base.

On Wednesday, Ms. Dixon, who was previously an executive at her family’s steel company, spoke of the late-breaking endorsement from former President Donald J. Trump that helped woo Republican primary voters — and of the crucial task of winning over voters beyond her conservative base.

“We wanted to make sure that we could bring the party together,” Ms. Dixon said in a radio interview. “We wanted to make sure that we would be solid on the Republican side because we knew going into the general, we have to win independents and we have to win some Democrats.”

Ms. Dixon, who also had the backing of the wealthy DeVos family in Michigan, will now have to contend with broader political forces. The [*sweeping rejection by Kansas voters on Tuesday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/02/us/kansas-abortion-rights-vote.html) of a constitutional amendment that would have let state legislators ban or significantly restrict abortion has further elevated the politics of reproductive rights. The issue has mobilized voters who support abortion rights, who could be an especially potent force in Michigan in the general election.

Governor Whitmer is solidly in favor of protecting access to abortion. Ms. Dixon has said that abortion should be allowed only if necessary to save the life of a mother, and that she would not support exceptions for rape or incest.

“This is going to be an epic battle,” Ms. Dixon told supporters in a victory speech on Tuesday evening.

Matt Grossmann, a professor of American politics at Michigan State University, said that Ms. Dixon was starting her race against Ms. Whitmer at a disadvantage, given her political inexperience and her relative obscurity for most voters.

Ms. Dixon emerged from a Republican primary that was unusually messy, as five candidates — including two of the most recognizable names in the race — were [*removed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/26/us/politics/michigan-republicans-governor-signatures.html) from the ballot after submitting nominating petitions that contained forged signatures.

“This should have been a good opportunity for Republicans,” Mr. Grossmann said on Wednesday. “There was a time when Whitmer was less popular. Tudor Dixon is starting from a much lower position than you would expect the Republican nominee to begin the general election from.”

In interviews across the state this week, Republican primary voters said they were fearful of Ms. Whitmer winning a second term but uncertain about Ms. Dixon’s ability to unseat her.

Ms. Whitmer has drawn criticism from conservatives over rising inflation, her handling of the coronavirus pandemic and the perpetually run-down state of Michigan’s roads. But the governor is entering the general election campaign with solid popularity in the state — her approval rating was 55 percent in a [*July survey conducted for The Detroit News*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/politics/2022/07/13/whitmers-leads-over-michigan-gop-rivals-raising-doubts-red-wave-poll-finds/10035203002/) — and a base of Democratic voters who have been outraged by a looming threat to abortion rights.

Abortion is legal in Michigan, but conservatives are pushing to enforce a 1931 law that bans the procedure in nearly all cases. Ms. Whitmer has made the issue a centerpiece of her campaign.

Dozens of voters interviewed in Michigan this week said that they were supporting Ms. Dixon largely because of Mr. Trump’s endorsement, believing that Mr. Trump would have backed the candidate with the strongest conservative credentials.

They said they were still learning about what kind of candidate Ms. Dixon was: At an elementary school in Sterling Heights, Mich., on Tuesday, two Republican voters struggled to remember Ms. Dixon’s name, though they intended to cast a ballot for her. One man said he was going to vote for the candidate Mr. Trump had endorsed — “the lady,” he said, though he didn’t know anything about her.

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“Michigan needs help. We need to bring back our small businesses and infrastructure,” he said. “I don’t think she has the depth of managerial experience.”

Many Republican voters said they were eager to support Ms. Dixon, seeing her as a reliable conservative who would push back against Ms. Whitmer. They are still angry over the governor’s handling of the coronavirus pandemic, during which she imposed strict rules on business and schools.

“That’s what frosted me,” said T.J. Giraud, 65, a pastor, adding that he opposed masks and restrictions.

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“I think she’s done a decent job and she deserves more time,” she said. “She didn’t get the best hand.”

PHOTOS: “This is going to be an epic battle,” Tudor Dixon, center, told supporters of the challenge ahead.; Gov. Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan, center, has a base of voters who have been outraged by a looming threat to abortion rights. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY EMILY ELCONIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Christian Pop Star Bringing Latino Evangelicals to the Pews***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68JY-F3N1-JBG3-62MN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 28, 2023 Wednesday 13:48 EST

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 4433 words

**Byline:** Marcela Valdes

**Highlight:** How Marcos Witt is shaping faith in the United States.

**Body**

The sanctuary of Northside church in Charlotte, N.C., is built for joyous adoration. Enormous speakers hang from its domed ceiling, along with an elaborate system of colored lights. Its semicircular stage has wide, carpeted steps that lead down on all sides to rows and rows of wine red pews, which hold about 2,700 people. The evening I visited last February, they filled to capacity with Latino families who had come to see the evangelical superstar Marcos Witt.

While the crowd gathered, Pastor Witt addressed his team in a greenroom cluttered with filing cabinets. “Guys, this is night No. 30,” Witt said. Thirty meant they were halfway through his América Ora y Adora (America Prays and Adores) tour, which began in spring 2022. His sister, who is also a pastor, pulled out a little bottle of “anointing oil,” which she rolled onto the wrists of every member of the group: the musicians, the pastor-singers, the sound and video techs and Miriam Witt, his wife of 37 years. The blend of olive oil and fragrance served as a reminder of their purpose: not just to perform music and satisfy fans but to call upon the Holy Spirit and bring people closer to God.

A few minutes after 7, they stepped onstage and plunged into the first song, “Hemos Venido a Buscarte” (“We’ve Come to Seek You”), an unreleased song that sounds a little like early U2. “Jesus, I’ve come to seek you/Jesus, I’ve come to hear you,” Witt and the other pastors crooned in Spanish over a thrumming combination of synth sounds and drums.

Onstage, Witt dresses like a man dodging attention: dark pants and dark long-sleeve shirts, his only ornaments a bead bracelet, a wedding ring and tortoiseshell glasses. But his attitude is playful and confident. “You wanted to come hear Marcos Witt,” he said, after a few songs. “Relax. Yes, we’re going to sing from the oldies and from the new ones.” But they were also going to pray. “Jesus Christ is still on the throne,” he told them. “Tonight we’re going to focus on him.”

Most Americans have never heard of Marcos Witt, but he estimates that over the past 40 years he has sold roughly 27 million copies of his albums worldwide. (Most of these sales were through nontraditional venues, like churches, that do not report numbers to tracking agencies.) He has [*sold out arenas*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lznu1AQqhRg) in Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Santiago, São Paulo, San Salvador, Miami and Los Angeles. He has won six Latin Grammy Awards, including one last year for his 34th solo album, “Viviré” (“I Will Live”). For his fans, he is more than a singer-songwriter. He is a conduit to the divine. “My music carries the breath of God,” he told me. “Through our songs, God is hugging on people.”

In the 1980s, Witt revolutionized evangelical worship in Spanish by infusing praise songs with disco and new-wave stylings to appeal to a younger generation. In 1994, he founded the first of dozens of schools all over Latin America to train other musical worship leaders. In the 2000s, he built one of the largest Spanish-language evangelical congregations in the United States at Lakewood Church in Houston. At the same time, he inspired the next generation of Christian musical artists with his Latin Grammy wins. “He brought to the forefront that it was possible to do this overtly Christian music, música de alabanza, and still have it sound well produced and have it sound cool,” Leila Cobo, chief Latin content officer at Billboard magazine, explained. “He’s not making rinky-dink music on a little organ.”

His breakout album from 1988, “Adoremos!” (“Let’s Adore!”), and its follow-ups “Proyecto Alabanza Adoración” (“Project Praise and Worship,” 1990) and “Tú y Yo” (“You and Me,” 1991) attracted younger Latin Americans by setting Scripture-inspired lyrics to the accompaniment of keyboards, electric guitars and drums. Many older pastors accused Witt of Satanism when these albums came out. The drum set, they said, was an instrument of the devil, and no godly music could sound anything like Bruce Springsteen or Billy Joel. But younger Latin Americans flocked to his concerts, filling stadiums. They were smitten not only by his pop and rock stylings but also by his way of addressing God.

During his years at Bible college in Texas, Witt soaked himself in the works of [*a musical ministry movement known as Praise and Worship*](https://influencemagazine.com/en/Podcast/A-History-of-Contemporary-Praise-and-Worship), whose origins can be traced to Pentecostals in Canada during the 1940s. Before Praise and Worship, the Rev. Michael Herron, one of Witt’s mentors, explained to me, the tone of most church songs was vaguely historical: They were about God, about Christ, about the crucifixion. Praise and Worship songs sounded more like love letters. “They were sung personally to the Lord,” Pastor Herron says. In this way, Witt’s lyrics nudge people to foster their own direct relationship with the divine. Comparing Witt’s music to “that wind” that blew through the Pentecost, Daniel de León Sr., pastor of Templo Calvario in Santa Ana, Calif., says, “It stirred the church from the bottom up.”

Witt, 61, may no longer be the most popular Christian worship artist among younger Latinos and Latin Americans — that laurel seems to belong to the group [*Miel San Marcos*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ofq9bxEVwPU) — but he is still determined to bring people to Christ. The América Ora y Adora (A.O.A.) tour is his latest effort. All its music and prayer happens in Spanish. In our conversations, he compared the tour to the unit that powers up a jet airplane before it takes off. “The Latino church is the jet,” he emphasized. Witt knows its strengths and weaknesses. He has been working with Spanish-speaking evangelicals all his life. A.O.A. is designed to energize their congregations.

The Latino Protestant community in the United States, which is largely Pentecostal or charismatic, has never been more influential than it is today. It is also navigating strong winds that will affect its future: the secularization of Latino youth, the politicization of congregations, the rivalries among pastors and the hungry interest of Anglo evangelicals, who may aid or co-opt its growing power.

That night in North Carolina, Witt introduced the audience to the Rev. Rusty Price, who learned Spanish while working as a missionary in Cuba and founded Camino Church in Charlotte, a major sponsor of A.O.A.’s tour through the state. “I want to thank all the immigrants for coming to my country,” Price said, and the audience whooped with delight. “God has sent you here to save the United States.”

Jonathan Mark Witt Holder was a missionary kid: born in San Antonio, Texas, and raised as Marcos in Durango, Mexico. His Anglo American Pentecostal parents devoted their lives to helping evangelical churches in Mexico. For most of his childhood, Witt believed that his vocation was different, which is why he became a classically trained pianist and a dramatic tenor. In his early years, he felt torn between two worlds: one that cherished music and another that cherished Christ. One afternoon when he was 17, he resolved the conflict by dedicating all his musical capacity to the Lord. “From that day to this,” he told me, “it was all about, How can I use music to let people know about the love of Christ?” Witt never performs songs about anything else.

After bringing the Praise and Worship movement to Latin America during his 20s and 30s, Witt moved to Houston with his wife and their four children, in part because the airport was a hub for flights to South America. In Texas, Witt signed a contract with Lakewood Church to lead a congregation there in Spanish. When the megachurch’s pastor Joel Osteen approached Witt in 2002, roughly 500 people were donning headphones every Sunday to listen to Osteen’s service in simultaneous translation. By the time Witt left 10 years later, Lakewood’s [*Spanish-language service*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qE5jI29yC7c) drew an in-person attendance of approximately 6,000 people every Sunday.

Lakewood became a model for Anglo evangelicals interested in attracting Spanish speakers to their churches. It was especially well positioned to welcome Latinos because it had already moved, years earlier, closer to Pentecostalism. Founded as Lakewood Baptist Church, it left the denomination decades ago, after Osteen’s father embraced faith healing. The shift was part of a larger national trend. Over the past half-century, as charismatic worship became more common in the United States, practices like speaking in tongues and faith healing have met with greater acceptance, and the number of nondenominational Protestants in the United States has grown. In recent years they surpassed the number of mainline Protestants.

Lakewood needed more than doctrinal sympathy, however, to win more Spanish-speaking Christians. For all its size, the Hispanic evangelical community in the United States is quite fragmented. “Here, there are a lot of 50-member churches, and there is no power,” Witt said in [*a 2013 interview*](https://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/marcos-witt-on-the-change-in-music-and-lyrics-of-worship-among-hispanics/). “We cannot even agree enough to have a cup of coffee.” The rivalries, he told me, can be “mind-numbing.”

Some of the divisions are national. In most neighborhood churches, if the pastors are from El Salvador, so is their congregation. Ditto if they’re from Guatemala, Argentina or other Latin American countries. As an Anglo raised in Mexico, Witt has a more fluid national identity, and the decades he spent touring Central and South America with local Christians gave him more experience in the region than most Latin Americans. At Lakewood, he leveraged that advantage. “I would use examples of food from different countries, and people would crack up: Oh, my gosh, he knows our food!” He also deliberately adopted a more uniform Spanish, erasing many of his Mexican telltales.

Latino evangelicals argue over the right way to be baptized, or whether congregations should be organized into groups of 12 disciples, or which aspects of Scripture they should emphasize. For Witt, however, the only measure that counts is whether you have been bathed in the blood of Christ and embraced Jesus as your personal savior. “I’m not about proselytizing people,” he says. “So you’re Catholic? That’s fine, but I need you to know Jesus. You’re a Baptist? Great, but you need to know Jesus. So you’re a Mormon? Fantastic; you need to know Jesus. So I’m more about people knowing who Jesus is than what brand or denomination or religion.”

This inclusive approach has made Witt popular at a time when American evangelism is fending off a demographic threat. [*Christians’ share of the population has been shrinking*](https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/) over the past two decades. The changes are especially stark among millennials. Last year, Pew Research Center [*issued a report*](https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/09/13/modeling-the-future-of-religion-in-america/) noting that if current trends continue, by 2070 the United States may no longer be a majority-Christian nation.

Given these patterns, it makes sense that Anglo institutions like Lakewood have begun wooing Spanish speakers. If they make inroads among Hispanics — the fastest-growing group of evangelicals — they have a better chance of ensuring their own relevance in the future.

“We’re going to do away with monochromatic American evangelicalism,” the Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, told me. “In the next 20 years, if the Lord tarries, you’re going to see less and less of all-white churches and all-Black churches. You’re going to see a lot of more beautiful churches that look like a Skittles bag. And I think that’s a byproduct of the Latino community.”

Many Anglo megachurches already host Spanish-language congregations, but not all their efforts are as equitable as Lakewood’s. Osteen gave Witt the same sanctuary that he used, as well as the leeway to preach whatever he wished. But at Templo Calvario, Pastor de León has been receiving calls from Latino pastors who say that their congregations are treated like second-class guests in an Anglo house. Often, he says, Anglo pastors instruct their Spanish-speaking colleagues to parrot the content of their sermons. “This has been a problem we’ve had all over the United States,” de León says.

For Latinos like him, the inequality feels especially galling because their pastoral tradition dates back to the early days of Pentecostalism. The first Latino Pentecostal pastors were ordained in 1909 at the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles by one of the movement’s founders, the Rev. William J. Seymour. Templo Calvario was founded by Latinos in 1925 — and has seeded hundreds of other churches. “God has raised our churches, just like the Anglos’,” de León says. “We have always pushed to do our own thing.”

In May, América Ora y Adora arrived in Kansas, and Maria Magdalena Rado de Espinoza, 64, traveled more than an hour to City Center Church with her 21-year-old granddaughter to see Witt, whom Rado listened to as a young mother in Peru. Back then, in the 1980s, her Pentecostal group held its meetings in the middle of a park on the outskirts of Lima because they had no church of their own. Strangers called them “crazies” and hurled rocks at them while they prayed. But Witt’s music brought young people to God, she said. On Saturday nights, her group blared it on a cassette player, and teenagers stopped by to find out what was happening, because their worship sounded like a party.

Berenice Merlos, 40, took her seat in the sanctuary with her husband and her four children. Merlos started listening to Witt with her grandmother when she was about 5. The little girl and the old woman held hands in an apartment in a rough neighborhood of Mexico City, singing “Te Amo” (“I Love You”) and “Tu Misericordia” (“Your Mercy”). “It was a moment of very intimate worship, between her and I and God,” Merlos says. Later, when she was 10, Merlos and her family saw Witt in concert. Together they sat way at the top of a Mexico City arena. When the crowd sang “Poderoso” (“Powerful”), she watched thousands of people below her lift their right hands as they praised the power of God. It was breathtaking. Witt’s music gave Merlos a way to verbalize what she saw happening, the way God moved the arena and renewed her family. The only thing that allowed her father to escape alcoholism and drug addiction, Merlos says, was God’s mighty hand.

These days a smaller share of Latinos are embracing God the way Merlos and Rado did. Even though the number of evangelicals keeps rising as the size of the Latino population climbs, the portion of Latinos who identify as evangelical has stabilized over the past decade at around 15 percent. At the same time, Pew Research has found, the percentage of Latinos who identify as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular” has steadily grown. In 2010, these more secular Latinos made up only 10 percent of the Hispanic population; in 2022, they were nearly a third.

Even so, Latino evangelicals have become an increasingly coveted voting bloc in swing states like Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia — in part because they have proved themselves more interested in voting than Latinos who are Catholic or more secular.

It’s also because they seem open to persuasion from both parties. According to a Pew Research survey conducted last August, a quarter of Latino evangelicals believe that Donald Trump should run for president again in 2024. But Pew has also found that Latino evangelicals are just as likely to say that Democrats represent their interests as that Republicans do. Sixty-nine percent believe that abortion should be illegal in all or most cases. Yet 70 percent believe it’s more important to control gun ownership than to protect the right to bear arms.

Perhaps no issue better reveals the group’s nuances than economic inequality. “If you define economic justice via the lens of socialism, communism, the majority of evangelicals, according to Pew, would be opposed,” Rodriguez notes. “If you say, Are Latino evangelicals fully committed to addressing poverty in the name of Jesus? Absolutely — and absolutely with three exclamation points.”

For many Latino evangelicals, drug rehabilitation, criminal justice and combating racism are top issues, right behind preserving life and religious liberty. The differences between their priorities and those of their Anglo counterparts come from experience. “When there was white urban flight, the Latino Pentecostals stayed in the city,” the Rev. Gabriel Salguero, president of the National Latino Evangelical Coalition, says. Their pastors walked alongside refugees, drug addicts and prisoners, as well as ***working-class*** families, small-business owners and, in rural areas, farmworkers. For pastors, Salguero says, the most important question is: How does this policy affect the people we serve?

This question thrust Witt into national politics after he began pastoring at Lakewood. There he witnessed firsthand the plight of undocumented immigrants in America. Every week he encountered someone whose parent or child or loved one was recently deported. Latinos were so frightened of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that if they saw uniformed officers outside the church, they often left. Witt regularly welcomed those who did enter the sanctuary with a version of: We’re so happy to have you here. By the way, the police out there, they’re just to direct traffic. That’s not ICE. “We had to say that for months before word got out where people weren’t doing the U-turns when they’d see a cop,” he recalls.

Shocked and outraged, Witt joined Esperanza, a faith-based organization in Philadelphia, in their efforts to reform federal immigration policy. The group’s president, the Rev. Luis Cortés Jr., told me that in the early 2000s, no other Anglo evangelical leader associated with a megachurch would speak out publicly in favor of immigration reform. But Witt lobbied politicians in Texas and on Capitol Hill, traveling to Washington almost every two months at his own expense. He was present at the White House in 2004 when President George W. Bush announced a proposal to revamp immigration policies.

But after Senator Barack Obama won the presidential election in 2008, the same year that Witt endorsed Senator John McCain for president, Witt stepped back from politics. He said that the Democratic win had nothing to do with it. The real break came in 2006, he insisted, after [*Senator John Cornyn*](https://www.texasobserver.org/john-cornyn-immigration-record/), the Texas Republican, promised Witt over the phone that he would do everything in his power to fight for a comprehensive immigration-reform bill. Then he voted against it. “I was so angry and disappointed, I think I spent three days in bed,” Witt says. “I went, like, into this depression.” About a week later, he told Miriam that he was done with Washington. (A spokeswoman for Cornyn denied that the senator would have promised to support an immigration bill that he ended up voting against.)

“This impasse that we’ve been living now for decades and decades is absolutely mind-boggling,” Witt says. “How they can live with themselves, making the promises and not doing a thing?” The hypocrisy drove him away.

So as other Spanish-speaking evangelicals grew increasingly politicized, the Witts turned deliberately apolitical. “Nothing ever that I know of in the Bible says, Oh, you got to believe this or be with this party,” Miriam says. “That’s just not there. There’s grace for all.”

“There are people very close to me who, ideologically, are very far from me,” Witt says. “I love them with my whole heart because they’re my family. And I’ll never stop loving them no matter what their ideology is.”

His only activism now is combating secularization. At every A.O.A. event, he invites attendees under 25 to approach the stage and commit themselves to Christ. The first time he did it, he was stunned to witness roughly half his audience step forward. His core fans may be older, but mothers and grandmothers bring him their young.

In Kansas, Rado and Merlos were each delighted to watch their children take their places before the stage. Merlos’s eldest, 15-year-old Mizrahim, was the first of several whom Witt singled out. “What’s your name?” Witt asked. When the boy answered, Witt replied, “God is going to use you.”

On the morning after the A.O.A. event at City Center Church, Witt held a conference for Christian leaders in the church’s smaller sanctuary. Some 75 people gathered there. When Witt arrived, the mood in the room was noticeably detached. These men and women, most of them middle-aged, led their own congregations and had their own ideas about worship. They sat in clumps, sorted by churches, many with their arms crossed.

Witt stood alone behind a keyboard and began improvising a selection of old hymns. At first, he would break from singing frequently with in-jokes about the hymnal they all used in church when they were young. I’m like you, the subtext read, I was brought up just like you. Within 10 minutes, he had them on their feet singing. Moments later, he started his song “Temprano Te Buscaré” (“Early I’ll Search for You”), and Merlos, who is a pastor in Kansas, fell to her knees in the front row, offering her hands to God. By the time the audience sat down again, wariness had given way to warmth. “That’s the power of worship,” Witt explained to me later. “When I get out and sing a few songs that they all identify with, bam! They come together.”

Witt’s gifts as a worship leader made the room more receptive when he switched roles and began interviewing a parade of A.O.A. sponsors: the development organization Living Water International, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, the technology platform Gloo. A.O.A. needs these sponsors to subsidize its free tickets because the average voluntary donation to its events is only $3. The tour has broken even only because Witt performs free.

By necessity, many of the pastors and leaders in the room that morning embraced the same approach; they worked day jobs and shepherded their flocks essentially as volunteers. Latino evangelicals, on average, simply donate less money to their churches, which makes it tough for smaller churches to stay afloat.

This is one reason some pastors in Kansas embraced the advantages of leading Spanish-language congregations from within Anglo megachurches: They no longer worried about rent. The Rev. Enrique Uria — who grew a Spanish-language congregation to 600 members from 180 for the Family Church in McAllen, Texas, and now is pastor of another congregation for Hope Chapel in Kansas City, Kan. — pointed out another key motivation: Second-generation Latinos often abandon their parents’ churches.

“We’re losing many of the young Hispanics,” he says. “And the ones who stay leave for a church in English, because their friends are there.” If you build a contemporary Spanish service within an English-language church, he argues, you have a better chance of holding on to your teenagers and 20-somethings.

Witt himself tries to host A.O.A. events at Anglo megachurches for two reasons. They have fantastic sound systems, and rival Latino churches tend to view them as neutral ground. If A.O.A. happens at the biggest Hispanic church in a given city, he says, then the pastors of that city’s many small and medium-size churches often feel slighted and instruct their congregations to stay away.

Even in Kansas, several pastors told their congregants not to attend A.O.A. at City Center Church. Some may have been afraid of losing their followers to its Spanish-language congregation, which the pastors Tommy and Janeth Torres started in 2019. Others may simply have opposed the way that the Torreses conduct services. “We broke the mold,” Tommy told me. He grew up attending old-school churches, the kind with three-hour services that don’t allow women to attend wearing pants. But at City Center, their service lasts no more than 90 minutes; they use a fog machine, and women can wear what they want. The Torreses, who began as youth pastors, want to reach millennials where they are. They host small groups not just for married couples but also for single mothers, divorced women and blended families.

These are the kinds of innovations that Witt likes to support. “Stop trying to correct how your brother does his ministry,” he told the pastors that morning. “You already have your own.” Jesus, he reminded them, said you can’t pour new wine into old wineskins; the old leather breaks, and the new wine spills. “Are you already an old leather?” he asked. The boomers and Gen X-ers in the room laughed uncomfortably. Witt chuckled, too, but he wouldn’t let them go. “Eh? It’s something one has to ask oneself,” he pushed. “If you live in constant indignation, how can the new wine flow through your life?”

When Witt was the young rebel and older pastors set his cassettes and CDs on fire, he vowed to support the young Christians who came up behind him. Now he pushed the older pastors to stay young as well: to minister with joy and humor, to stop fighting with one another and to rejoice in the souls they saved, no matter how many or few they were. “Maybe you already saw that pastor whom everyone says is crazy,” he said. “Go to that pastor and bless that pastor.”

Before every A.O.A. event, Witt prays for God to give him the discernment to understand the needs of the people who come. Some places are jubilant, others weepy. Charlotte was euphoric. Kansas was reserved. He wants to be used for the Holy Spirit’s own ends. “I’m going to get out onstage and get as small as I can so God can get as big as he can,” he told me. When it works, the pastors, the songs and the prayers touch people’s deepest needs for healing, for community, for love. That Saturday morning, I watched the transmutation again when Witt instructed the leaders to pray for one another. They formed new circles of three or four around the room. Onstage, Witt sang one of his greatest songs, “Tu Fidelidad” (“Your Faithfulness”), written by Miguel Cassina. The sweet, aching ballad embraced the pastors, but now they ignored Witt. Heads bent together, they were busy with their own work. If the jet of the Latino evangelical church takes off, they will be its fuel.

Maridelis Morales Rosado is a documentary photographer and photo editor, born in Puerto Rico and based in New York City. Her practice explores themes of culture, identity and sense of place.

PHOTOS: Berenice Merlos, a pastor in Kansas, started listening to Witt with her grandmother as a child in Mexico City. Opening pages: Witt performing at Center City Church in Kansas. (MM35; MM36-MM37); At every América Ora y Adora event, Witt invites attendees under 25 to approach the stage and commit themselves to Christ. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARIDELIS MORALES ROSADO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM38-MM39) This article appeared in print on page MM34, MM35, MM36, MM37, MM38, MM39.

**Load-Date:** July 3, 2023

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[***Rise of Adams Spurs His Party To Look Inward***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6313-8NC1-DXY4-X4CF-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Katie Glueck

**Body**

Mr. Adams, who ran a campaign focused on appealing to blue-collar Black and Latino voters, said America does not want ''fancy candidates.''

He bluntly challenged left-wing leaders in his party over matters of policing and public safety. He campaigned heavily in Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx, often ignoring Manhattan neighborhoods besides Harlem and Washington Heights. And he branded himself a blue-collar candidate with a keen personal understanding of the challenges and concerns facing ***working-class*** New Yorkers of color.

With his substantial early lead in the Democratic mayoral primary when votes were counted Tuesday night, Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, demonstrated the enduring power of a candidate who can connect to working- and middle-class Black and Latino voters, while also appealing to some white voters with moderate views.

Mr. Adams is not yet assured of victory. But if he prevails, it would be a triumph for a campaign that focused more heavily on those constituencies than any other winning New York City mayoral candidate in recent history.

As the national Democratic Party navigates debates over identity and ideology, the mayoral primary in the largest city in the United States is highlighting critical questions about which voters make up the party's base in the Biden era, and who best speaks for them.

Barely a year has passed since President Biden clinched the Democratic nomination, defeating several more progressive rivals on the strength of support from Black voters and older moderate voters across the board, and running as a blue-collar candidate himself. But Democrats are now straining to hold together a coalition that includes college-educated liberals and centrists, young left-wing activists and ***working-class*** voters of color.

''America is saying, we want to have justice and safety and end inequalities,'' Mr. Adams declared at a news conference on Thursday, offering his take on the party's direction. ''And we don't want fancy candidates.''

Mr. Adams's allies and advisers say that from the start, he based his campaign strategy on connecting with working- and middle-class voters of color.

''Over the last few cycles, the winners of the mayor's race have started with a whiter, wealthier base generally, and then expanded out,'' said Evan Thies, an Adams spokesman and adviser. Mr. Adams's campaign, he said, started ''with low-income, middle-income, Black, Latino, immigrant communities, and then reached into middle-income communities.''

Mr. Adams would be New York's second Black mayor, after David N. Dinkins. Mr. Dinkins, who described the city as a ''gorgeous mosaic,'' was more focused than Mr. Adams on trying to win over liberal white voters.

Mr. Adams was the first choice of about 32 percent of New York Democrats who voted in person on Tuesday or during the early voting period. Maya Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio and a progressive favorite, pulled in about 22 percent of that vote. Kathryn Garcia, a former sanitation commissioner who touted her managerial experience, got 19.5 percent.

Under the city's new ranked-choice system, in which voters could rank up to five candidates, the Democratic nominee will now be determined through a process of elimination. Ms. Garcia or Ms. Wiley could ultimately surpass Mr. Adams, although that appears to be an uphill battle, and a final winner may not be determined for weeks.

If Mr. Adams does win, it will be partly because he had major institutional advantages.

He was well financed and spent heavily on advertising. He received the support of several of the city's most influential labor unions, which represent many Black and Latino New Yorkers. His name was also well known after years in city politics, including as a state senator.

And although some of the most prominent members of New York's congressional delegation supported Ms. Wiley as their first choice, Mr. Adams landed other important endorsements, including those of the Queens and Bronx borough presidents and Representative Adriano Espaillat, the first Dominican-American member of Congress, and a powerful figure in Washington Heights.

Just as importantly, in his supporters' eyes, Mr. Adams was perceived as having credibility on what emerged as the most consequential, and divisive, issue in the race: public safety.

Mr. Adams, who experienced economic hardship as a child and has said he was once beaten by police officers, grew up to join the Police Department, rising to captain. Critics within the department saw him as something of a rabble-rouser, while many progressive voters now think his answers to complex problems too often involve an emphasis on law enforcement.

But to some voters, he long ago cemented a reputation as someone who challenged misconduct from within the system, giving him authority to talk about bringing down crime.

''He was in the police force, he knows what they represent,'' said Gloria Dees, 63, a Brooklyn resident who voted for Mr. Adams and described being deeply concerned about both rising crime and police violence against people of color. ''You have to understand something in order to make it work better.''

Polls this spring showed public safety increasingly becoming the most important issue to Democratic voters amid random subway attacks, a spate of bias crimes and a spike in shootings. On the Sunday before the primary, Mr. Adams's campaign staff said that a volunteer had been stabbed in the Bronx.

''Being an ex-cop, being able to have safety and justice at the same time, was a message that resonated with folks in the Bronx,'' said Assemblywoman Karines Reyes, a Democrat who represents parts of the borough and who did not endorse anyone in the race. Mr. Adams won the Bronx overwhelmingly in the first vote tally. ''They're looking for somebody to address the crime.''

The rate of violent crime in the city is far below where it was decades ago, but shootings have been up in some neighborhoods, and among older voters especially, there is a visceral fear of returning to the ''bad old days.''

Donovan Richards, the Queens borough president and a supporter of Mr. Adams, cited the recent fatal shooting of a 10-year-old boy in the Rockaways as something that hit home for many people in the area.

''We're nowhere near where we were in the '80s or '70s,'' he said. But, he added, ''when you see a shooting in front of you, no one cares about statistics.''

Interviews on Thursday with voters on either side of Brooklyn's Eastern Parkway illustrated vividly Mr. Adams's appeal and limitations. In parts of Crown Heights, the parkway was a physical dividing line, early results show, between voters who went for Ms. Wiley and those who preferred Mr. Adams.

Among older, ***working-class*** voters of color who live south of the parkway, Mr. Adams held a commanding lead.

''He'll support the poor people and the Black and brown people,'' said one, Janice Brathwaite, 66, who is disabled and said she had voted for Mr. Adams.

Ms. Brathwaite ruled out Ms. Wiley after hearing her plans for overhauling the Police Department, including a reallocation of $1 billion from the police budget to social service programs and anti-violence measures.

''She is someone who is against the policeman who is protecting me, making sure nobody is shooting me,'' Ms. Brathwaite said.

Ms. Wiley has said there are times when armed officers are needed, but she has also argued that in some instances, mental health experts can halt crime more effectively.

That approach appealed to Allison Behringer, 31, an audio journalist and podcast producer who lives north of the parkway, where Mr. Adams's challenges were on display among some of the young professionals who live in the area.

''She was the best progressive candidate,'' Ms. Behringer said of Ms. Wiley, whom she ranked as her first choice. ''She talked about reimagining what public safety is, that really resonated with me.''

Ms. Behringer alluded to concerns about ethical issues that have been raised about Mr. Adams. He has faced scrutiny over his taxes, real estate holdings, fund-raising practices and residency.

A fresh round of voting results to be released on Tuesday will provide further clarity about the race. They may show whether those issues hurt Mr. Adams among some highly engaged voters in Manhattan and elsewhere. The new results could also indicate whether Ms. Wiley or Ms. Garcia had sufficiently broad appeal to cut into his lead.

As in Brooklyn, there was a clear geographic divide among voters in Manhattan: East 96th Street, with those who ranked Ms. Garcia first mostly to the south, and those who favored Mr. Adams or Ms. Wiley further uptown.

Ms. Garcia, a relatively moderate technocrat who was endorsed by The New York Times's editorial board, among others, won Manhattan handily. Like Ms. Wiley, she hopes to beat Mr. Adams by being many voters' second choice, and with the benefit of absentee votes that have not been counted.

In Harlem one afternoon this month, Carmen Flores had just cast her early vote for Mr. Adams when she came across one of his rallies. She said she found his trajectory inspiring.

''He's coming from the bottom up,'' she said, adding, ''He's been in every facet of life.''

Whatever the final vote tally, Democratic strategists caution against drawing sweeping political conclusions from a post-pandemic, municipal election held in June. If Mr. Adams becomes mayor, as the Democratic nominee almost certainly will, progressive leaders can still point to signs of strength in other city races and elsewhere in the state.

Asked about the mayor's race, Waleed Shahid, a spokesman for the left-wing organization Justice Democrats, said, ''fear-mongering works when crime is rising,'' while noting that several left-wing candidates in the city were leading their races.

He also argued that some people who supported Mr. Adams could have done so for reasons that were not ideological.

''There might be some voters who voted for Eric Adams based on his policy platform,'' Mr. Shahid said. ''But there are probably many more voters who voted for Eric Adams based on how they felt about him. It's often whether they identify with a candidate.''

Nate Schweber contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/26/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/26/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: To some voters, Eric Adams had long ago cemented a reputation as someone who had the authority to talk about bringing down crime. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Maya Wiley, a favorite of progressives, seemed to turn off some of those same voters with her plans to redirect police funding. (PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHANIE KEITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A16)

**Load-Date:** June 27, 2021

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[***The Mike Pence Saga Tells Us More Than We Want to Know; The conversation***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6318-P051-DXY4-X02M-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1517 words

**Byline:** Gail Collins and Bret Stephens

**Highlight:** But he is not the only politician who shows which way the wind is blowing.

**Body**

Bret Stephens: Hi, Gail. I was hoping to pick up where we left off last week, with the New York City mayoral primary and our new ranked-choice voting system. Assuming Eric Adams holds on to his lead, what do you think his win says about the state of the city — and of the Democratic Party?

Gail Collins: Bret, this is why I love conversing with you. I’ve been hearing Republicans howl about the negotiations with Joe Biden on spending, and I was dreading a discussion on that subject.

Bret: Biden gets out a little over his skis with a dumb remark, publicly admits he screwed up, pledges to keep his word on a bipartisan bill. Imagine that.

Gail: Well, the city election is definitely a more interesting topic, and I can see why Eric Adams intrigues you. He’s a Black former police officer who ran on his crime-fighting skills. Politically he’s a moderate — by New York standards, anyway. And talking with his supporters after the vote, I did get the impression that some were most concerned with blocking off Maya Wiley, the only real leftie with a chance of winning.

Of course, while the left was getting bad news in New York City, regular Buffalo Democrats were discovering their longtime mayor had lost the primary to a Black female socialist. Hoping to hear a lot more discussion about India Walton as we slowly make our way through this political year.

Nothing is for sure yet in New York City. Thanks to our new preferential voting system, we may not get the final word on who won the primary for ages. But if it’s Adams, it could send a cheerful message to people like Chuck Schumer, who’s up for re-election next year. There’s been speculation about whether Schumer might be challenged by a progressive.

Bret: New system or not, I still don’t understand why it should take forever to know the results of a municipal election. But I’ll be happy if Adams holds on to his lead, for lots of reasons.

One good reason to cheer an Adams victory is that it would demonstrate yet again that the Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez left doesn’t represent the Democratic base. “Defund the police” is not a ***working-class*** interest.

Gail: Yeah, but having unarmed, trained mediators who could respond to complaints like family fighting might get a good response.

Bret: I used to think that was a good idea. Then several of our readers explained to me that family altercations are often violent and require more than a social worker.

Getting back to ***working-class*** interests: Blocking Amazon and the thousands of jobs it would have brought to Queens was not pro-worker. Nor does it help the ***working class*** to deny parents who can’t afford to send their kids to Dalton the school choice they need, when it comes to getting a better education for their children.

Gail: The public school issue is so important and so complicated. You want to make sure it’s always open to reform and improvement. Still, you don’t want to create a system that allows canny parents to get terrific options for their own kids while reducing public pressure for all-around quality education.

But go on.

Bret: My bottom line is that democratic socialism might be cool with pampered N.Y.U. undergrads, but it isn’t going to help people who aren’t partying in Washington Square Park. So hurray for Adams and all middle-of-the-road Democrats. In the meantime, our mutual friend Donald Trump is on the rally circuit again.

Gail: Wow, I watched his speech over the weekend. I guess it was a sort of return to national politics. Trump’s been off the trail since January, when his attempt to convince the world he didn’t lose the election led to a bloody riot.

No violence this time. In fact, the whole thing was one big snooze.

Hard to imagine him really making a comeback. But also hard to imagine who’d be coming next. Can’t really picture a President Mike Pence.

Bret: You know, I probably spend more time thinking about Mike Pence than I ought to, given my high blood pressure. He reminds me of Mr. Collins, the unctuous clergyman in “Pride and Prejudice” who’s always bowing and scraping to the overbearing, tasteless, talentless Lady Catherine de Bourgh while he lords it over the Bennet family because he stands to inherit their estate. Alternatively, Pence could be a character out of Dickens, with some ridiculous name like Wackford Squeers or Mr. Pumblechook.

Gail: Wow, great analogies. Plus, it is indeed possible you spend more time thinking about Pence than you ought to.

Bret: Here’s a guy who makes his career on the Moral Majority wing of the Republican Party, until he hitches his wagon to the most immoral man ever to win a big-ticket presidential nomination. Phyllis Schlafly deciding to elope with Larry Flynt would have made more sense. Then Pence spends four years as the most servile, toadying, obsequious, fawning, head-nodding, yes-sirring, anything-you-say-boss vice president in history. He’ll do anything for Trump’s love — but not, as the singer Meat Loaf might have said, attempt to steal the presidential election in broad daylight.

For this, Trump rewards Pence by throwing him to a mob, which tried to hunt him down and hang him. But even now, Pence can’t get crosswise with his dark lord, so the idea of him ever taking the party in an anti-Trump direction seems like a fantasy.

Gail: You have convinced me that Pence is too much of a wimp to rebel. But you can never tell — look what happened to Mitt Romney.

Bret: Unlike Pence, Romney is a true Christian, with actual principles. As for Nikki Haley, I just don’t see her winning the Republican nomination. She’s just not Trumpy enough. My bet is on the governor of Florida, Ron DeSantis, with Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina as his vice-presidential nominee. Crazy?

Gail: Oh, God. What a combo. l hear there’s a Ron Be Gone movement in Florida. Maybe they can combine it with a Tim, Don’t Get In. Or just Not Scott.

Bret: DeSantis is a very shrewd guy. He’s made a point of staying close to Trump, personally, and he’s also been very good at baiting the media. His handling of the pandemic was better than most liberals will ever give him credit for, because, unlike Andrew “I’m still standing” Cuomo, he made a point of protecting nursing homes. With Scott on the ticket, he could also peel off some of the Black vote or at least make white suburban voters feel comfortable about voting for a G.O.P. ticket that progressives will inevitably attack as racist.

Of course, none of that will stop Trump from turning on DeSantis if he decides to run again in 2024, and I have to assume there are skeletons in the governor’s closet. In the words of the immortal Beatles song, “Everybody’s got something to hide except me and my monkey.”

Gail: Right now the only thing we’re thinking about in DeSantis’s state is the terrible condo collapse near Miami. There are going to be lots of questions about how that disaster came to be and the government’s role in ensuring public safety.

Bret: It’s so heartbreaking. I have my own memories of what it’s like, from having lived through the Mexico City earthquake in 1985, which killed thousands of people and flattened a lot of buildings in the vicinity of my dad’s office. It’s hard to think of a more awful way to go.

But I’d hate to see the issue politicized. Buildings collapse in cities and states run by Democrats, too, like the Hard Rock Hotel in New Orleans a couple of years ago.

Gail: Good point. But you will remember DeSantis is also the guy who’s been fighting against vaccine requirements on cruise ships.

Bret: Sounds like an unreasonable government restriction on private enterprise trying to make the rules for what’s allowed on their premises.

By the way, I’m increasingly of the view that Medicare and health insurance companies should refuse to underwrite treatment for any nonvaccinated people who wind up getting sick. People who take unreasonable private risks shouldn’t be allowed to socialize the cost of the consequences. What do you think?

Gail: When said unvaccinated people get sick, they’re going to need medical care. Which, if they’re uninsured and of low income, is going to have to be taken care of by the taxpayer unless the hospitals are directed to refuse to admit the unvaccinated critically ill.

Bret: True, though my scheme would only apply to anti-vaxxers who refused to get a vaccine, not those who just didn’t have access to it. It’s never going to happen, for the same reason that we’re probably not going to deny coverage for lung cancer patients because they happen to be ex-smokers. But I just wish we lived in a country where being willfully dumb was a little more costly.

Gail: Make being willfully dumb a little more costly — I think you’ve got a campaign slogan, Bret. Don’t let Mike Pence get his hands on it.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Stephen M. Dowell/Orlando Sentinel, via Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***A Sweet Soul in Fame's Harsh Light***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65SP-NDH1-JBG3-62PH-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

''George Michael: Freedom Uncut,'' a film the musician worked on with his longtime collaborator David Austin, tells the story of his professional life via interviews and previously unseen footage.

George Michael and David Austin were best friends who met because their mothers were best friends. Austin's family lived at 67 Redhill Drive in the ***working class*** Edgware area of North London, and Michael's family was at 57. The two wrote songs together and remained close even as one became a global superstar and the other didn't.

Michael was a gifted and determined musical dynamo who became a star at the age of 19, first as a member of the British duo Wham! He won two Grammys in the solo career that followed, and collaborated with some of the greatest stars of the previous generation, including Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, Paul McCartney and Elton John. He was a gifted writer, producer, arranger and musician, sometimes playing all the instruments on his songs. And as a singer, he moved fluidly from Motown pop to hard funk to Brazilian bossa nova, with a voice that was sure, expressive and flush with poignancy and drama.

Neither Michael nor Austin had significant movie directing experience, but neither lacked confidence, so around 2014 they began directing a documentary detailing the vicissitudes of Michael's career and life, including pop supremacy and international scandal, euphoric love and lacerating deaths.

In December 2016, they'd picture-locked the film and planned a screening for their families, who'd gathered, as they often did, to celebrate Christmas together. ''We were going to show it to our parents on Boxing Day,'' Austin said. ''George was immensely proud of it.'' But Michael died in his sleep at 53 and was found by a lover, Fadi Fawaz, on Christmas morning. The cause was a heart condition.

Austin trimmed Michael's final cut to fit a TV time slot on Channel Four in England, where it aired in October 2017 as ''George Michael: Freedom.'' But he was dissatisfied with the edit because it didn't tell the full story as Michael saw it. So in the following years, while resolving some worldwide rights issues, Austin restored the final cut and added an introduction by Kate Moss and tribute performances by Adele as well as Chris Martin of Coldplay. The film, now called ''George Michael: Freedom Uncut,'' made its debut in theaters worldwide on June 22.

''Freedom Uncut'' was preceded in 2004 by the BBC's ''A Different Story,'' which included interviews with Michael's close friends as well as his father, a Greek immigrant who'd viewed his son's dreams of stardom as juvenile and foolhardy. Throughout ''A Different Story,'' Michael discusses his private life with self-mocking candor, which was one of his most charming traits: ''Oh my God, I'm a massive star and I think I may be a poof,'' he says at one point, describing a time when he began coming to grips with being gay. ''What am I going to do?''

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

So for ''Freedom Uncut,'' Michael wanted to focus on his professional life. ''He said, 'This is a different film. This is about me and about the people I work with,''' Austin recalled in a phone call from his office in London. The documentary includes interviews with fellow music stars, including Elton John, Stevie Wonder and Mary J. Blige, the comedians Ricky Gervais and James Corden, the producer Mark Ronson and the supermodels Naomi Campbell, Linda Evangelista, and others who starred in his ''Freedom! '90'' video. The film includes recently discovered 35 mm footage shot by the director David Fincher, who directed ''Freedom! '90'' before his successful career in Hollywood, and unseen home videos Michael made of Anselmo Feleppa, his longtime boyfriend, who died in March 1993 of an AIDS-related illness.

Michael was a self-described homebody who was happiest playing with his dogs at his country house, but his career brought him into contact with music and fashion's biggest stars. ''What struck me instantly was how down to earth and what a sweet, beautiful soul he was,'' the supermodel Naomi Campbell wrote in an email. ''He was unique, a one-of-a-kind divine personality of our time.''

IN THE RAPID-ASCENT stage of his career, Michael was a remarkably prolific songwriter: Starting in 1982, Wham! (the duo he formed with Andrew Ridgeley) had four Top 10 U.K. singles in a row. The pair's second album, ''Make It Big,'' gave them three No. 1 songs in the United States: ''Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go,'' ''Careless Whisper'' and ''Everything She Wants.'' When I interviewed Michael following the breakup of Wham!, he described the duo as a carefully plotted return to pop escapism. ''I can understand why people wanted to punch me out,'' he admitted.

Everything Michael learned about craft and marketing conjoined on his first solo album, ''Faith'' (1987), which made him a star on the magnitude of Michael Jackson or Madonna. But the celebrity he'd desired and attained ''had taken me to the edge of madness,'' he says in ''Freedom Uncut.''

For the release of his next album, ''Listen Without Prejudice Vol. 1,'' he insisted his name and face not appear on the cover. He refused to promote the record or appear in his own videos. And in his song ''Freedom! '90,'' he deconstructed pop stardom and exploded the foundational illusion of fandom: ''I don't belong to you, and you don't belong to me.'' It was, regardless of its message, a massive hit.

Michael felt that his record company, Sony, was not promoting his new album avidly enough, and in 1992, he sued in the hope of terminating his contract. By then, he'd met Feleppa and felt loved for the first time in a sexual relationship. ''I was happier than I'd ever been in my entire life,'' he says in a ''Freedom Uncut'' voice-over.

His disenchantment with stardom collapsed into depression over the following years. In June 1994, a little more than a year after Feleppa died, Michael lost the Sony case. In 1997, his beloved mother, Lesley, died of cancer. And in 1998, he was arrested in a Beverly Hills park for committing a ''lewd act'' with an undercover policeman, which is when he came out as gay and declared, ''I don't feel any shame whatsoever.''

In the midst of these troubles, he released a 1996 album, ''Older,'' which included the Top 10 hits ''Jesus to a Child,'' written in tribute to Feleppa, and ''Fastlove.'' (Michael called ''Older'' ''my greatest moment,'' and an expanded edition will be reissued on July 8.) But he made only one more album of original songs in the following 20 years before his death.

''Freedom Uncut'' vivifies Michael for younger generations that didn't live through the Pop Star Wars of the '80s. He loved and emulated Black music, which created controversy in the moment -- George Benson's eyes nearly rolled back into his head when he announced Michael's 1989 American Music Award win in the favorite soul/R&B album category. But time often engenders empathy, and the singer is now viewed as an ally. ''Michael's journey as a ***working-class*** gay white man from London who loved Black music and Black culture gave him an intersectional legacy that few artists (save Prince) will ever achieve,'' Jason Johnson wrote in The Root, a website that focuses on African American issues, two days after the singer died.

The fact that Michael was able to write, arrange and produce at such a high level places him in ''the rarefied air of Sly Stone, Prince or Shuggie Otis,'' Mark Ronson added in a phone interview. ''It's crazy, because he made incredible R&B music, but he didn't go to America to record it'' with Black musicians, he noted. ''There wasn't the insecurity of being a white soul boy from England.''

Ronson also hears melancholic or even mournful qualities in Michael's music: ''A lot of our favorite artists sound catchy and peppy, but when you peel back one or two layers, you see somebody who's dealing with serious inner demons.''

IN 1984, WHEN Michael was already a gleaming pop phenom in England, he went on TV and introduced David Austin, who was singing his debut single, ''Turn to Gold,'' which Michael wrote with Austin and produced. ''I've known this young man since he was 2 years old,'' Michael said, before declaring his pal ''the biggest star of 1984.''

Austin recalled, ''He was telling a porky pie,'' and laughed, using Cockney rhyming slang for a lie. ''We'd known each other since he was the grand old age of 6 months, and I was 11 months older. From early childhood, right through to our late teens, we were together all the time.''

David Austin is a stage name; he was born David Mortimer, to Irish parents. George Michael was born Georgios Panayiotou, to an English mother and an industrious Greek Cypriot father who worked in a fish and chips shop and became a restaurateur.

Austin doesn't often give interviews. Although he's sometimes described as Michael's manager, he wasn't -- he was a collaborator, an adviser, a deputy and since his friend's death, he's been in charge of the estate's artistic decisions. In the course of a 70-minute phone call, he talked warmly about Michael, sometimes referring to him in the present tense, and joked about his own modest recording career. (''What career?'')

His father made trumpets and other instruments for the British music company Boosey & Hawkes. Their home was full of instruments, and Austin learned clarinet and guitar, while Michael played drums. ''We both aspired to be pop stars,'' he said.

By age 6, Austin had learned to use a Revox recording machine, and he recorded four or five songs with Michael, including ''Crocodile Rock'' by Elton John, ''Wig Wam Bam'' by the Sweet, who were Michael's favorite band, and their first co-written original, called ''The Music Maker of the World.'' (''I'm never going to tell you what the lyrics are, because I'm going red talking about it,'' he said, and chuckled.)

The two friends had a band called Stainless Steel, and they decorated Michael's bass drum with the band's initials. ''But they were slanted S's,'' Austin recalled, which made them look like the Nazi Schutzstaffel logo. ''One of the parents came up -- 'Right, off with that!' We were like, 'What?' We hadn't been taught about World War II yet.''

After that, Michael and Austin played in a five-piece ska band called the Executive, with their pal Andrew Ridgeley. ''We were terrible, but everyone loved us,'' Michael had told me years ago.

But when the Executive broke up, Michael and Ridgeley kept working together, finding almost immediate success as Wham! while Austin chased a solo career. ''It was very hard at the time, watching my two best friends have enormous success,'' Austin admitted. ''It took me a few years to accept.''

The success of Wham! ''opened the door to the industry for me,'' Austin continued. But he turned out not to be the biggest star of 1984. After Wham! broke up in 1986, he and Michael went to the south of France and tried to write Austin's next single. Michael wrote ''I Want Your Sex,'' which Austin demoed, and the two wrote ''Look at Your Hands'' together. But Austin's label didn't love the songs, so Michael held on to them and released them on ''Faith.'' (That album has gone 10 times platinum, giving Austin considerable publishing royalties.)

As a director, Austin's strength was his rapport with Michael, and his inside understanding of the singer's feelings and fears, going all the way back to Redhill Drive. He even knew Michael during his awkward phase: ''People have no comprehension of what I looked like as a kid,'' the singer had told me, laughing wildly. ''I was such an ugly little bastard.''

Austin confirmed his friend's self-effacing analysis: ''George didn't feel attractive as a child,'' he said. ''People who go on to have extraordinary careers, quite often there's something lacking in their life. The career is filling a void, and that's what the extra drive is about.

''When you initially get there, it's everything you want.'' he added. ''Then when it becomes huge, you realize fame will never, ever fill that void.''

Rather than repairing anyone's bad feelings, fame is more likely to exacerbate them. Michael figured this out, Austin said, which is why he spent his last two decades among friends and family, more than in front of fans. ''Now I'm gonna get myself happy,'' he sang, and he did.

''George and I used to fight as kids, and even as adults,'' Austin said. ''But we were incredibly close. Music, family, close friendships -- those are the things in life that fill the void.''

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: George Michael, top, onstage during his Faith Tour in 1988, and, above, accepting an American Music Award in 1989. The documentary ''Freedom Uncut'' vivifies Michael for younger generations. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES

ALAN GRETH/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (AR14)

Andrew Ridgeley, left, and George Michael performing as Wham! in 1985. Starting in 1982, the duo had four Top 10 British singles in a row, then three No. 1 songs in the United States. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES) (AR17)

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**End of Document**



[***The Delightful Implosion of Boris Johnson***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65WF-JGM1-DXY4-X470-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

There isn't much good news in the world these days, so it's worth taking time to appreciate the delightful implosion of soon-to-be former Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

His 2019 landslide victory against the hapless Jeremy Corbyn of the Labour Party seemed to be ushering in a long period of right-wing dominance. Johnson, said The Economist, ''is well placed to become one of the most powerful prime ministers in modern times.'' Less than three years later, undone by scandal, incompetence and the rebellion of his own party, he's announced plans to step aside once a new Conservative leader can be found. There may not be a new general election soon, but if there were, polls suggest that Labour could win a majority.

On Wednesday, I listened to the hosts of the left-of-center British podcast ''Oh God, What Now?'' react, almost in real time, as Johnson's cabinet ministers abandoned him en masse. Their elation was contagious. ''This isn't analysis; this is giggling euphoria!'' said the journalist Ian Dunt. At least someone's having fun out there!

For an American liberal, however, the schadenfreude brought by Johnson's collapse is mixed with envy. We are watching a still-functioning democracy dispatch its bombastic populist leader because his amorality and narcissistic dishonesty were simply too much. On Wednesday, a day after resigning as health secretary, Sajid Javid lambasted Johnson during Question Time in the House of Commons: ''We've seen in great democracies what happens when divisions are entrenched and not bridged. We cannot allow that to happen here.''

Johnson, a nationalist demagogue and mendacious blowhard, has often been compared to Donald Trump, right down to the poufy yellow hair. Their political careers have certain parallels.

The shocking success of the Brexit referendum, the cause Johnson eventually rode to power, presaged Trump's even more shocking presidential victory. Both men created new electoral coalitions by making inroads with disaffected ***working-class*** voters. Both were given to cruel anti-immigrant stunts, like the Johnson government's recent plan to deport asylum seekers to Rwanda. Both shared a contempt for truth and the norms of their respective governments.

But, of course, Britain and the United States are very different countries, and not just because the U.K. is a parliamentary system, a generally more effective form of government than our own presidential system. British people are still evidently capable of being shocked by officials' sexual harassment and shameless untruths, even when those officials are on their side. Their country is not heavily armed, and does not have a powerful faction that regularly threatens violence. Britain still appears to have some minimal social agreement about acceptable political behavior. Its government is falling apart precisely because its society is not.

Mired as I am in the demoralizing squalor of American politics, I'm jealous of the relative quaintness of the scandal that finally brought Johnson down: lying about someone else's sexual misconduct! The end of the Johnson era was precipitated by a member of Parliament named Christopher Pincher, who recently got drunk and groped two men at a private Tory club.

It turns out that Pincher, whom Johnson appointed as deputy chief whip in February, had been accused of sexual harassment several times in the past. Johnson and his allies claimed he hadn't known about the allegations when he gave Pincher the job, but he did, even reportedly joking that the M.P. was ''Pincher by name, Pincher by nature.''

Both Pincher and Johnson obviously behaved egregiously. The quaint part is the near universal condemnation of their behavior, and the widespread acknowledgment that, after years of bullying and dishonesty, Johnson's dissembling was the final straw. Imagine having final straws!

I felt similarly wistful contemplating Partygate, the scandal over Johnson's secret pandemic socializing that led conservatives to hold a no-confidence vote last month, which the prime minister survived. Occasionally I've asked British people if there really was widespread anger at Johnson, or just satisfaction at catching him out. Under Trump, after all, Americans largely became inured to hypocrisy, even if they still felt the need to denounce it. Everyone I spoke to, though, told me that the outrage was real.

That was partly because Britain's lockdown was much stricter than ours, and applied to the whole country; unlike Trump's partying in 2020, Johnson's violated rules his government was imposing on others. Still, to be really furious at hypocrisy, you have to have some expectation that people in power will follow the rules. And to be shamed by the revelation of hypocrisy, as the Tories seemed to be, you have to accept that the standards applied to others also apply to you. Another way of saying this is that intolerance of hypocrisy implies a democratic sensibility, in which everyone is at least supposed to be bound by the same strictures.

Johnson's career is ending, at least for now, the way Trump's should have ended -- with public revulsion leading his own party to oust him. Like Trump, Johnson initially wanted to cling to power when it was no longer feasible; unlike with Trump, there was never a prospect of him summoning an armed mob. Watching Johnson's fall after living through Trump is like chasing a slasher film with a cozy mystery. Both may be murder stories, but only one has a reassuring order to it.

''We deserve a better class of bastards,'' Dunt said on the podcast. We all do. Still, as an American, I have to say: Be thankful for what you've got.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Justin Tallis/Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Fetterman, Recovering After Stroke, Labors to Adjust to Life in the Senate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67HH-MCV1-DXY4-X0S3-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Annie Karni

**Highlight:** The first-term Democrat, who was released Friday after two days in the hospital, is coping with the lasting effects of a near-fatal stroke last year, and Congress is adapting to accommodate him.

**Body**

The first-term Democrat, who was released Friday after two days in the hospital, is coping with the lasting effects of a near-fatal stroke last year, and Congress is adapting to accommodate him.

WASHINGTON — At Senator John Fetterman’s desk in the Senate chamber, there is a newly installed monitor that rises or lowers, depending on whether he sits or stands, and provides closed captioning so he can follow the proceedings. At the center dais, a custom desk stand has been built to accommodate the same technology for when he takes his shifts presiding over the Senate.

The sergeant-at-arms has arranged for live audio-to-text transcription for the committees on which Mr. Fetterman serves, and plans to expand the service to all Senate hearings.

Mr. Fetterman, 53, the 6-foot-8, tattooed and goateed Democrat from Pennsylvania who suffered a near-fatal stroke last May and went on to win one of the most competitive seats in November’s midterm elections, was never going to blend in seamlessly in the marbled corridors of Congress.

But his adjustment to serving in the Senate has been made vastly more difficult by the strains of his recovery, which left him with a physical impairment and serious mental health challenges that have rendered the transition extraordinarily challenging — even with the accommodations that have been made to help him adapt.

“What you’re supposed to do to recover from this is do as little as possible,” said Adam Jentleson, his chief of staff. Instead, Mr. Fetterman “was forced to do as much as possible — he had to get back to the campaign trail. It’s hard to claw that back.”

On Wednesday, Mr. Fetterman was hospitalized after feeling lightheaded while attending a daylong Senate Democratic retreat in Washington. Initial tests showed no sign of another stroke, but he spent two days in the hospital while doctors ran additional tests to confirm that finding and monitored him for seizures, according to a spokesman. He was released late Friday afternoon, the spokesman said, and planned to return to the Senate on Monday.

The latest health scare convinced his staff that Mr. Fetterman needs a better plan to take care of himself, both physically and emotionally.

Mr. Fetterman declined to be interviewed for this story. But aides and confidantes describe his introduction to the Senate as a difficult period, filled with unfamiliar duties that are taxing for someone still in recovery: meetings with constituents, attending caucus and committee meetings, appearing in public at White House events and at the State of the Union address, as well as making appearances in Pennsylvania.

The most evident disability is a neurological condition that impairs his hearing. Mr. Fetterman suffers from auditory processing issues, forcing him to rely primarily on a tablet to transcribe what is being said to him. The hearing issues are inconsistent; they often get worse when he is in a stressful or unfamiliar situation. When it’s bad, Mr. Fetterman has described it as trying to make out the muffled voice of the teacher in the “Peanuts” cartoon, whose words could never be deciphered.

The stroke — after which he had a pacemaker and defibrillator implanted — also took a less apparent but very real psychological toll on Mr. Fetterman. It has been less than a year since the stroke transformed him from someone with a large stature that suggested machismo — a central part of his political identity — into a physically altered version of himself, and he is frustrated at times that he is not yet back to the man he once was. He has had to come to terms with the fact that he may have set himself back permanently by not taking the recommended amount of rest during the campaign. And he continues to push himself in ways that people close to him worry are detrimental.

“It is stressful, having to go through that experience in the context of the most high-profile Senate race in the country,” said Mr. Jentleson.

As Mr. Fetterman adjusts to his new life, the Senate and his colleagues are also adjusting to his special needs.

“We’re going to have to learn our own styles with it,” said Senator Amy Klobuchar, Democrat of Minnesota, who said she experimented with the tablet at a recent Democratic caucus lunch. “What I was saying was accurate even when I talked fast. I wanted to make sure it was accurate. It was kind of to imagine what it would be like to be him.”

“He answers like you would answer anyone,” Ms. Klobuchar added. “It’s us that have to get used to it; he’s used to it.”

The ongoing hearing issue means Mr. Fetterman cannot partake in the hallway scrums with journalists that are part of most lawmakers’ daily existence in the Capitol. He typically walks around the building with many staffers, in part because he needs assistants to test his technological setup before he enters any room and in part because they’re all still learning their way around the building.

These days, Mr. Fetterman, who as lieutenant governor had reporters’ numbers in his cellphone and had near-constant running conversations with some of them, has stopped interacting with journalists, whose voices he often cannot hear in the echoing hallways.

“Before the stroke, he was the kind of person who loved the give-and-take with reporters,” Mr. Jentleson said. “The challenge is to be able to get back to that place, given the current limitations.”

For now, Mr. Fetterman is glad to have a little break from the media glare. Current and former staff members describe him as someone who has no desire to be at the center of every negotiation and who campaigned on a promise to be a solid 51st Democratic vote in the Senate supporting President Biden’s agenda. He has often been befuddled by the attention he attracts, even from colleagues who stop him for selfies, and wants less of it.

The attacks during the campaign — Fox News’ Tucker Carlson called him “unapologetically brain damaged” and Republicans accused him of lying about his health — also are never far out of mind. Some of those aspersions continue; the Republican National Committee blasted out a clip earlier this month of Mr. Fetterman tripping over the word “water” at an event announcing $340 million in federal funding for Philadelphia to modernize its water infrastructure. On Thursday night, Mr. Carlson was back to attacking Mr. Fetterman’s health even as he recuperated in the hospital. “Sad, but also, you wonder, what is going on?” Mr. Carlson said.

Mr. Fetterman and his staff take it in stride, noting that they learned from the campaign that most people are reflexively compassionate about his condition, in part because they may have personal experiences with similar situations.

Senator Bob Casey, the other Democrat from Pennsylvania, noted that Mr. Fetterman had been widely criticized for his halting debate performance against his Republican opponent, Dr. Mehmet Oz, but was treated more kindly by voters, ultimately winning his race by five points.

“There are a lot of people out there who understand disability, and understand struggle, and he won big,” Mr. Casey said.

At his first Agriculture Committee hearing earlier this month, Mr. Fetterman asked questions about trade and organic farming, stumbling slightly over his words. Despite the flubs, his office circulated video of his presentation to supporters.

Mr. Fetterman pushed hard to get seated on the agriculture panel, in part because he views the farm bill as one of the few major pieces of legislation that has a good chance of passage in a divided Congress, and an opportunity for a freshman senator to influence major policy without having to whip votes or create coalitions for the package itself.

Still, keeping one’s head down and doing the work unnoticed is a tall order for someone whose national appeal was looking different and speaking differently to voters, even before his stroke.

Representative Marie Gluesenkamp Pérez, Democrat of Washington, said she approached Mr. Fetterman at a White House reception for new members because she was curious about a fellow lawmaker who could speak to ***working-class*** voters.

She was wearing boots, jeans and a Carhartt jacket. Mr. Fetterman, much to her chagrin, was dressed in a business suit instead of his signature hoodie.

“I thought I was going to have an ally here,” she said. “He said, ‘Why does she get to wear jeans, and I don’t?’”

Ms. Gluesenkamp Pérez said the tablet allowed for seamless small talk and dress code jokes.

“It’s just a slight delay,” she said. “I didn’t notice he was using it at first. Then I was like, ‘Why are they holding it?’ It took me a minute to figure out what was going on.”

His Democratic colleagues in the Senate said they view the changes being made to accommodate him as modernizations for the Senate, a workplace like any other.

“The right attitude has to be consistent with what we hope we learned in the last 30 years or so, that we can provide reasonable accommodations in the workplace,” said Mr. Casey. “If we’re doing it right, it should not be him adapting to the workplace, it should be senators in both parties adapting and accommodating him. Just like we would anyone.”

He compared the accommodations being made for Mr. Fetterman with the Senate installing a ramp for Senator Tammy Duckworth, Democrat of Illinois, a former combat veteran who lost both of her legs in 2004 while serving as a helicopter pilot in the Iraq War.

Senator Ben Ray Luján, Democrat of New Mexico, who also suffered a stroke last year, said recovering mentally can be as difficult as recovering physically.

“I was very blessed there was a lot of love and humanity around me,” he said. “I can’t imagine what my recovery would have been like if I had people saying horrible, disrespectful, uneducated, hateful things. It’s tough.”

Mr. Luján has checked in with Mr. Fetterman regularly since his stroke.

“I would just say, ‘Hey, just thinking about you, hope you’re having a great day,’” Mr. Luján said.

Throughout the Senate’s history, there have been physically impaired senators, from amputees to those who were blind. There has been one deaf senator: Samuel McEnery of Louisiana, who served in the Senate from 1897 to 1910. And there have been those who have suffered massive strokes that have left them impaired.

Former Senator Tim Johnson, Democrat of South Dakota, suffered a brain hemorrhage in 2006 that left his speech and mobility impaired. Former Senator Mark Kirk, Republican of Illinois, suffered a major stroke in 2012, two years into his first and only term, and underwent intense physical therapy to relearn how to walk.

But Mr. Fetterman is the only one who is dealing with recuperation as he enters the Senate for the first time. For now, that means living alone in a Washington apartment during the week, and driving four hours home to Braddock, Pa., most weekends to see his wife and three children.

Ms. Klobuchar said her sense is that Mr. Fetterman wants to be in the Senate, despite the additional challenges he faces.

“If you’re not happy, you don’t show up at all these things,” she said. “He seems very active and wants to be involved in what’s going on. He seems glad to be there.”

PHOTOS: Senator John Fetterman left a hospital on Friday after a bout of lightheadedness. He had a near-fatal stroke last May. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1); Senator John Fetterman with his wife, children and Vice President Kamala Harris. A stroke left him with multiple disabilities. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JON CHERRY/REUTERS) (A16) This article appeared in print on page A1, A16.

**Load-Date:** February 11, 2023

**End of Document**



[***‘The Menu’ Movie Serves Fine Dining on a Skewer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66WF-YCJ1-JBG3-60PG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** DINING

**Length:** 1440 words

**Byline:** Julia Moskin

**Highlight:** A look at how the creators of the new satirical film, now streaming on HBO Max, took the already high-pressure world of elite restaurants to a thrilling and terrifying level.

**Body**

A look at how the creators of the new satirical film, now streaming on HBO Max, took the already high-pressure world of elite restaurants to a thrilling and terrifying level.

Is the thriller “[*The Menu*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_uTkUGcHv4),” now streaming on HBO Max, a parody of the state of fine dining? You’d think so: A small group of people pay astronomical sums to be isolated on an island, fed ingredients that wash up on the beach by employees who are trapped there, and subjected to the hospitality of a creative visionary who is secretly filled with rage.

Yet much of this is a reality in the top tier of modern restaurants, a world that has become a fascination of popular culture.

The movie is billed as “black comedy horror,” but the horror that stalks this Agatha Christie-style island is not gore; it’s gastronomy. Anyone who has ever felt trapped in a “chef’s tasting,” whether of four or 40 courses, will recognize the roller coaster of claustrophobia and euphoria, satiation and starvation that is “The Menu.”

In interviews with the people who dreamed up the food in the film, the consensus was that the tropes of modern fine dining are so extreme that there’s little need to exaggerate them.

“The more serious you are about something that seems silly, the funnier the work gets,” said the film’s co-writer, Will Tracy, who knows something about parody, having written for “[*The Onion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/04/us/the-onion-supreme-court.html)” for many years with his creative partner Seth Reiss.

The film, which which was released in theaters in November , stars Ralph Fiennes as the chef Julian Slowik; Nicholas Hoult as Tyler, the pretentious sycophant who worships him; and Anya Taylor-Joy as his dinner date, Margot, the pragmatist who punctures the balloon.

“You’re the customer, you’re paying him to serve you,” Margot says matter-of-factly to Tyler, who is in a panic about having offended the chef by taking forbidden photos of each course. “It really doesn’t matter whether he likes you or not.”

Hawthorn, the fictional restaurant, is a mash-up of haute-rustic destinations like [*Noma*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/18/dining/noma-pop-up-kyoto-japan.html) in Copenhagen; [*Blue Hill at Stone Barns*](https://www.bluehillfarm.com/), north of New York City; [*Mugaritz*](https://www.mugaritz.com/en/) in the Basque Country; [*the Willows*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/27/dining/blaine-wetzel-willows-inn-lummi-island-abuse.html) in the Pacific Northwest; and the chef Francis Mallman’s [*private island*](https://www.travelandleisure.com/food-drink/francis-mallman-argentina-la-isla-hotel) off the coast of Patagonia. These restaurants, adored by critics and awards panels, and visited mainly by wealthy gastro-tourists, are places where — according to their own literature — chefs are not cooks but “[*storytellers*](https://guide.michelin.com/en/article/features/when-chefs-become-storytellers)” about “[*time and place,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/06/magazine/rene-redzepi-the-prince-of-denmark.html)” who are not merely feeding people but “[*weaving a tale of senses, gestures and emotions*](https://www.mugaritz.com/en/food/co-9/).”

Hawthorn is at the opposite end of the restaurant spectrum from the sandwich shop in last summer’s lovable “[*The Bear*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/08/dining/the-bear-fx-hulu.html),” about an ambitious young chef called home to run his family’s chaotic business, where he introduces the phrase “yes, chef” to build respect and camaraderie in the kitchen. In “The Menu,” when “yes, chef” is demanded by the tyrannical Chef Slowik, it rings of subservience, intimidation and gaslighting.

On the night of the action, Hawthorn is filled with every kind of loathsome, privileged customer: know-nothing finance bros, wealthy regulars who love the access but hardly notice the food, investors with “suggestions” about the menu, celebrities who expect V.I.P. treatment and preening journalists who take credit for putting a restaurant “on the map.” (Ouch.)

Worst of all is Tyler, the needy, aggressive know-it-all who has watched every episode of “[*Chef’s Table*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/25/arts/television/review-chefs-table-profiles-top-culinary-talents.html)” on Netflix “two or three times,” and can’t help showing off that he knows what a [*Pacojet*](https://pacojet.com/en-GB/) is (an expensive countertop freezer that makes ice creams, sorbets and snows).

The director, Mark Mylod, said he knew little about this elite corner of the culinary world before working on the film, having grown up ***working-class*** in the southwest of England, then working primarily on remote sets for shows like “Succession” and “Game of Thrones.” On shoots in Europe, he said, he had tried restaurants like the one in “The Menu,” and generally felt out of place and underfed.

“As an outsider, there’s a whole language you don’t understand,” he said. “Like opera, your ear has to be trained for it.”

Most people lack the time, the curiosity and the funds to study this arcane art form, but it’s fun to see it skewered.

In one meal, the script hits on countless fine-dining clichés. The restaurant has its own shellfish beds, where diners watch their dinner being harvested; it boasts a “Nordic-style smokehouse” and free-range goats; and the wines are “[*hyperdecanted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/30/dining/drinks/wine-questions.html).” The chef is male, but the director of the dining room is a woman (played by [*Hong Chau*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/25/movies/hong-chau-downsizing-stereotyping.html)), severely dressed in black and white, who carries out his vision and enforces his rules. Dishes are delivered by a coordinated cadre of cooks in pristine white shirts and roughspun aprons.

The plot holds many outlandish twists, but the food — like a “breadless bread course” of dips and emulsions — is all too real.

Many details weren’t written for laughs, but lifted from actual restaurants. The spice racks are replicated from the kitchen at the Spanish restaurant [*El Bulli*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/21/special-series/ferran-adria-reality-food.html) (now closed), housemade granola in gift bags are a nod to [*Eleven Madison Park*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/dining/eleven-madison-park-restaurant-review-plant-based.html) and the notion of the “perfectly unripe” strawberry is from the chef René Redzepi of Noma.

A course of a single raw scallop perched on a craggy rock and surrounded by carefully tweezed seaweed and algaes is virtually indistinguishable from an actual dish at [*Atelier Crenn*](https://www.ateliercrenn.com/), a San Francisco restaurant with three Michelin stars. This is not a coincidence: the chef, Dominique Crenn, was brought on to design the dishes in the 10-course meal and to make sure that other culinary details rang true.

She said she identified with Chef Slowik: with his intensity, his vulnerability, his frustration. “We work 18 hours a day, every day, under pressure to feed thousands of people a perfect meal,” she said. “And one person can walk into the restaurant and put you down, or a writer can judge you for using too much salt.”

Mr. Mylod said that recreating a modern fine-dining kitchen was surprisingly disturbing. Long hours, sexual harassment and verbal abuse are among the horrors inflicted by Chef Slowik and the system he represents. “We were reading the exposé as we were shooting,” he said of [*the New York Times’s reporting on the Willows*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/27/dining/blaine-wetzel-willows-inn-lummi-island-abuse.html), a restaurant on a remote island in Washington State.

“The people who work in that restaurant are expected to maintain this extraordinary level night after night,” he said. “I get to say ‘wrap’ at some point and go home, but they never seem to get that kind of break.”

It’s an extreme version of going out to dinner that only the world’s .01 percent has actually experienced. But the Disney-owned [*Searchlight Pictures*](https://www.searchlightpictures.com/) is betting that there’s now a wide audience familiar enough with these restaurants to enjoy the satire.

“This movie probably wouldn’t have happened without ‘Mind of a Chef’ and ‘Chef’s Table,’” said Mr. Tracy, the filmmaking team’s main food lover, referring to the behind-the-kitchen-door food shows that have been streaming successes for the last decade.

The “Menu” production hedged its bets by bringing on David Gelb, the creator of the “Chef’s Table” series, as second-unit director. His team’s job: to film Hawthorn in precisely the same style as the earlier shows, shooting lingering close-ups of blue flames, shining tweezers, herb gardens and perfectly arrayed dots of food.

“I am honored to have had a number of parodies of the work,” he said, citing the brilliant “[*Juan Likes Rice and Chicken*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47j9jWMegUs),” a 2016 episode of the mockumentary series “Documentary Now!” that parodied “Chef’s Table.”

Mr. Gelb’s first film, [*“Jiro Dreams of Sushi,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/09/movies/jiro-dreams-of-sushi-directed-by-david-gelb.html) held the seeds of the solemn respect accorded to modern chefs, by showing the extraordinary dedication that the Tokyo sushi chef Jiro Ono brings to each bite of nigiri: the octopus that must be massaged for at least 40 minutes, the rice that must be fanned by hand.

The possibility of controlling every detail of a meal feeds the genius, the worship and the madness of the chef, Mr. Gelb said. “That’s both the comedy — and the horror — of the film.”

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PHOTOS: Clockwise, from top: Hawthorn, the film’s restaurant, with Ralph Fiennes, center right, as the chef; Anya Taylor-Joy and Nicholas Hoult; “The Island,” a rock with seaweed, algae and one scallop; an oyster with lemon caviar, a reference to a signature dish by Thomas Keller, a real chef; and, well, it’s some kind of food. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES) This article appeared in print on page D4.

**Load-Date:** January 12, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Give Power to the Parents!; David Brooks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JJ-KN41-DXY4-X3JD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 29, 2021 Thursday 10:03 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 957 words

**Byline:** David Brooks

**Highlight:** Biden gets family policy half right.

**Body**

We live in a diverse country, where people have a lot of different preferences about how to live. For example, a 2016 [*Pew Research Center survey*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/10/10/most-americans-say-children-are-better-off-with-a-parent-at-home/) found that 59 percent of Americans believed children with two parents were better off if one parent stayed at home, but 39 percent thought children were just as well off if both parents worked.

So which side was right? Well, obviously, neither. It depends on the personality, values and circumstances of the people in each particular family. Despite what Tolstoy wrote, happy families are in fact all happy in their own ways.

Our debates about family structure have been poisoned by people who can’t acknowledge difference without immediately rendering some judgment. Family pluralism is a source of strength for this country, not a weakness.

It should be said that people’s views on what is the ideal family form are powerfully linked to their class standing. As [*research*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/10/10/most-americans-say-children-are-better-off-with-a-parent-at-home/) by scholars at the American Compass think tank has shown, people in the ***working class*** and to a lesser extent the middle class are more likely to prefer the “breadwinner” model, in which one parent stays home, when children are younger than 5. Families making more than $150,000 are more likely to admire the “dual earner” model, in which both parents work.

The crucial question is this: In a society with such a diverse array of [*family forms*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/10/10/most-americans-say-children-are-better-off-with-a-parent-at-home/), which kind of family structure should the government favor? My answer is, “None.” The role of government is to help people build the kind of family they prefer, not tell them what kind of family they should prefer. Government should be neutral about what kind of family is best.

Joe Biden’s American Families Plan has one element that beautifully accomplishes this, by extending the child tax credit, or child allowance. If parents want to use the extra money from the credit to help pay for day care, they can. If they want to use it to reduce work hours time so they can spend more time at home, they can. The child tax credit will help millions of families do what surveys show they already want to do — have more kids than they can now afford, and spend more time at home.

But the Biden administration is not entirely neutral when it comes to family policy. When, during a conference call, I asked three administration officials Thursday about this, they mentioned two other social goals. First, getting people working. “We want parents to be in the work force, especially mothers,” said Susan Rice, head of the Domestic Policy Council. Second, the administration wants kids in classroom settings, to extend the public school system down two years. The administration is aggressively expanding child care subsidies and pre-K programs.

These are understandable public goals, but I wonder about the emphasis. In the first place, direct parental subsidies — perhaps because they let parents cut back on work and cultivate their kids’ social and emotional skills — can be a powerful tool to boost kids’ educational attainment.

As Grover J. Whitehurst, formerly of the Brookings Institution, [*once put it*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/10/10/most-americans-say-children-are-better-off-with-a-parent-at-home/), “It turns out that putting money directly into the pockets of low-income parents, as many other countries do, produces substantially larger gains in children’s school achievement per dollar of expenditure than does a year of preschool or participation in Head Start.”

Second, when it comes to parenting there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. Whether a child will be helped or harmed by professional child care experience [*depends*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/10/10/most-americans-say-children-are-better-off-with-a-parent-at-home/) an awful lot on the nature of the particular child, the particular care center and the particular parents. These are circumstances only the parents, who are right there, can know, so parents should be given maximum power and flexibility to make decisions.

The way to do that, the family scholar W. Bradford Wilcox of the University of Virginia argues, is to focus money on direct subsidies and go big.

“Because the Biden administration is trying to be all things to all people,” Wilcox emailed me, “it partially funds a number of initiatives, including the child allowance. I’d much rather see the administration cut out the money promised for pre-K and child care and fully fund a generous child allowance.”

Finally, I worry about the class politics of all this. In that American Compass research, more-affluent families support day care expansion but ***working-class*** families overwhelmingly support direct subsidies. Thriving meritocrats may be eager to re-enjoy the satisfactions of full-time work, but in one 2018 survey only [*28 percent*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/10/10/most-americans-say-children-are-better-off-with-a-parent-at-home/) of married mothers said working full time was ideal. Forty percent said working part time was ideal.

We are living in a time of huge economic and educational inequalities, and seething populist resentments as a result. I worry that the upper middle class will be inviting a furious backlash if it is seen to be privileging its parenting preferences through the use of state power.

Over the past few decades the economy has placed enormous strain on American families, forcing people to have fewer kids and spend less time with them than they would prefer. A fully generous child tax credit would give some parents a chance to step back from the job market for a few years while their kids were young — if they so chose.

The opportunity to drastically improve American family life is suddenly right before us.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/10/10/most-americans-say-children-are-better-off-with-a-parent-at-home/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/10/10/most-americans-say-children-are-better-off-with-a-parent-at-home/). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/10/10/most-americans-say-children-are-better-off-with-a-parent-at-home/).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by The New York Times; photograph by PeopleImages/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 30, 2021

**End of Document**



[***His Fake Populism***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:613B-M8W1-DXY4-X2MM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 18, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1711 words

**Byline:** By Farah Stockman

**Body**

The president tricked ***working-class*** voters. But the problems he railed about are real.

Kathleen Kingsbury, acting editorial page editor, wrote about the editorial board's verdict on Donald Trump's presidency in a special edition of our Opinion Today newsletter. You can read it here.

The Trump presidency has been such a five-alarm fire that many people are understandably consumed with trying to put out the flames or simply survive it. But there will come a day, hopefully in the not too distant future, when people have the breathing room to investigate how the fire got started.

It's tempting to heap scorn and blame on President Trump's millions of enthusiastic supporters. Without their adoration, he wouldn't have been able to do the damage he has done. But there are good reasons to refrain. Calling large swaths of the American electorate deplorable turns out to be an ineffective way to gain their backing.

Another reason: The mess the nation faces is bigger than Donald Trump. If he is voted out in November, the people who cast ballots for him will remain, pining for the policies he promoted. About 40 percent of American voters want tariffs and a border wall. More than half say it's important to deport more undocumented immigrants.

Much ink has been spilled about whether Trump supporters voted for him out of economic anxiety or racial anxiety, with plenty of studies concluding the latter. But spend time at a dying factory and you might see how difficult it can be to disentangle the two.

For the past four years, I've followed a group of steelworkers in Indiana -- men and women, Black and white -- who had worked at a factory that moved to Mexico. I watched them agonize about whether to train their Mexican replacements, or stand with their union and refuse. I watched them grieve the plant like a parent. I followed them as they applied for new jobs, some of which paid half as much as they made before.

A machinist named Tim carried his steelworker union card in his wallet for years after the factory closed, just to remind himself who he was. Tim grew up in a union household. His dad had been an autoworker; his grandfather, a coal miner.

''We always voted Democrat because they looked after the little man,'' Tim told me. ''My father went to his grave and I can guarantee you he never voted for a Republican.''

Tim had such faith in Democrats that he didn't worry when President Bill Clinton pushed the North American Free Trade Agreement over the finish line in 1993. Nor did he worry when Mr. Clinton normalized trade with China in 2000. But then the factory where Tim worked moved to Shanghai. And the next one moved to Mexico.

By the time I met Tim, he loathed the Clintons and the Democratic Party. Democrats had gotten in bed with the corporations, while no one was looking. Tim felt betrayed, and politically abandoned -- until Mr. Trump came along.

College-educated people scoffed at Mr. Trump's promises to bring back the factories. The factories are never coming back, they insisted. But even false hope is a form of hope, perhaps the most ubiquitous kind.

There is little doubt that Mr. Trump is president today because of blue-collar people like Tim who were once a reliable pillar of the Democratic Party. About 55 percent of voters who expected to support Mr. Trump during the 2016 primaries identified as ***working class***, according to a 2015 study by the Public Religion Research Institute. Fewer than a third who backed other Republican candidates identified as such.

In Mahoning County, Ohio, more than a quarter of people who voted in the Republican primary were ex-Democrats, according to The Washington Post. Eighteen members of the county's Democratic central committee crossed over to cast ballots for Mr. Trump, the county's Democratic chairman told The Post.

Those defections stemmed in part from anger over millions of factory jobs that went to China in the 2000s. Workers who made instrument panels for G.M. trucks in Michigan, stitched shirts in Pennsylvania and sanded wooden dressers in North Carolina saw alarming increases in child poverty, single motherhood, deaths from alcohol and drugs and reliance on public assistance.

Exposure to trade with China led to ''sizable increases in the likelihood of G.O.P. victory in majority-white non-Hispanic congressional districts from 2002-2010,'' said a study co-written by David Autor, an economics professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Hillary Clinton would have won Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin -- and thus the presidency -- in 2016 had the economic blow of imports from China been half as big, the report concluded.

It is worth noting that many of those same counties that hemorrhaged factory jobs also saw large increases in undocumented immigrants competing for the unskilled jobs that remained -- cleaning hotel rooms, slaughtering chickens and mowing lawns. Their arrival fueled still more resentment of the world beyond America's borders.

Anger about globalization is not confined to the right. It fueled the rise of Bernie Sanders, who won the endorsement of the steelworkers I followed. The same week I met Tim, I interviewed an anarchist facing criminal charges for his role in the disruption of Mr. Trump's inauguration when windows were smashed and a limousine was set on fire. Why had he became an anarchist? NAFTA and the tyranny of global capitalism, he said.

To many, that anger can seem silly or misplaced. Free trade and globalization have undoubtedly made the country richer. But those riches have flowed disproportionately to the few with capital and education, while globalization's downsides have piled on the shoulders of the most vulnerable Americans.

NAFTA has come to symbolize a world order crafted by elites, for elites. The deal traded away blue-collar factory jobs in exchange for white-collar opportunities to invest in Mexico's banking and insurance sectors. Today, even its biggest supporters admit that it resulted in a net loss of American jobs.

In hindsight, it seems inevitable that globalization would cause a backlash. During the height of euphoria about free trade in the 1990s, the philosopher Richard Rorty predicted that workers ''will sooner or later realize that their government is not even trying to prevent wages from sinking or to prevent jobs from being exported.'' At that point, he wrote, parts of the electorate ''will decide that the system has failed and start looking around for a strongman to vote for -- someone willing to assure them that, once he is elected, the smug bureaucrats, tricky lawyers, overpaid bond salesmen and postmodernist professors will no longer be calling the shots.''

In countries from Britain to Brazil, voters have elected leaders who promised to reverse decades of international economic integration. Most of those populist movements are right wing. The rebellion against free trade and globalization has largely taken the left by surprise. Dani Rodrik, an economics professor at Harvard who is perhaps the country's most prominent skeptic of unfettered globalization, lamented in an article a few months before Mr. Trump's election that left-wing parties around the world had failed to present viable alternatives to protectionism and walls.

Since then, the landscape has changed. Joe Biden, who once whole-heartedly embraced free trade, acknowledges the harm it's inflicted on the ***working class***. Mr. Biden's economic plan includes a 10 percent tax on businesses that send manufacturing offshore, and a 10 percent tax credit for companies that bolster job growth inside the United States. He has also put forth a plan to spend $2 trillion over four years on green energy infrastructure.

''Biden, the nominally centrist candidate, has a platform that is far more progressive than Hillary Clinton's on economics,'' Mr. Rodrik told me in an email. ''But the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and we will see whether Biden will deliver real change if elected.''

Many Americans who longed for a strongman will vote for Mr. Trump again. They revere him for tearing up NAFTA (even if the new version looks an awful lot like the old one) and slapping tariffs on Chinese imports and Korean washing machines (even if his unpredictable trade war forced the deepest contraction in the manufacturing sector in a decade).

Yet, ***working-class*** voters who look a little deeper will notice something strange about their perceived champion: He is against unions. His first Supreme Court pick, Neil Gorsuch, helped erode the ability of unions to collect dues and fees in a landmark case. Another strange thing: The Trump administration's interim trade deal with China focuses far more on opening up the Chinese banking and insurance sectors than on creating blue-collar jobs.

Also, Mr. Trump's 2017 tax cut favored corporations and shareholders -- including those who aren't American citizens. Money that would have flowed into the U.S. Treasury went instead into their pockets and deep bank accounts. The companies used much of it to buy back their own stock, making their owners richer, instead of hiring and training new workers or increasing pay. The buybacks were so shameless that even Mr. Trump couldn't defend them.

''We thought they would have known better,'' he told reporters.

President Trump is the one who should have known better. He's either incompetent or he's a Trojan horse who used blue-collar workers to get into the White House, only to hand over the keys to the one percent. Now that the Trump administration is trying to kill the Affordable Care Act, which millions of people depend on in the middle of a pandemic, it could not be more clear whose side he is on.

Health care is one of the things that sent Shannon, a steelworker I followed in Indiana, back to the Democrats, even though most people in her family still support Mr. Trump.

''He's bragging that he's saving all these jobs,'' she told me. ''But he's not.''

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 18, 2020

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[***As New Leaders Take Office, Los Angeles Confronts Lingering Wounds***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:672R-0X91-JBG3-647Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 12, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 11

**Length:** 1567 words

**Byline:** By Shawn Hubler and Soumya Karlamangla

**Body**

An altercation and City Council protest indicate the city still has a long way to go to overcome divisions that erupted this year.

LOS ANGELES -- Come Monday evening, Kevin de León will be the lone Los Angeles politician still in his job among the four leaders who discussed local politics in racist terms on a recording that has roiled the nation's second most populous city since October, when it surfaced online.

If anyone thought a new mayor, a new City Council class and two months of time would defuse tensions, perhaps giving Mr. de León, a veteran Democrat, a path to political redemption, a string of events on Friday signaled otherwise.

When he unexpectedly attempted to return to the council dais after an absence of weeks, demonstrators shouted and screamed, three colleagues walked out in protest, and the council recessed until Mr. de León left the chambers.

That was only the prelude to an uglier confrontation hours later. On Friday evening, as a food and toy giveaway wrapped up in his district, Mr. de León, wearing a Santa hat, got into a skirmish with a well-known local activist who has called for months for the councilman's resignation.

Another recording -- this time a cellphone video released by activists -- showed Mr. de León and the activist, Jason Reedy, confronting each other, their faces inches apart, then the two of them wrestling in a nearby corridor, with Mr. de León shoving Mr. Reedy in one corner. Each man has accused the other of starting the altercation.

The upheaval underscored the ongoing challenges facing Karen Bass, who was sworn in on Sunday as the first female mayor of Los Angeles, and five new City Council members as they begin work this week. They will confront a city exhausted by mounting homelessness, crime, costs of living and ethnic divisions.

Angelenos have welcomed the new leadership, but the political confrontations on Friday dimmed hopes for a quick return to civility. The latest developments epitomized the acrimony that has plagued the city's governance, said Fernando Guerra, whose Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University regularly surveys residents.

''None of this was surprising at all,'' Mr. Guerra said. ''Kevin de León, the protesters -- it could have been scripted exactly as it happened. It was almost a symbolic end that sums up this whole City Council. And it remains to be seen whether the next City Council can make a new beginning.''

The leadership turnover in Los Angeles will be among the most comprehensive in a generation. Ms. Bass's predecessor, Eric Garcetti, led the city for nearly a decade, and a third of the 15-member City Council will be replaced.

Yet another council vacancy will be filled with a new leader early next year, when a special election is held to fill the office of the former council president, Nury Martinez, who resigned in the aftermath of the audio scandal. On the recording, Ms. Martinez, who is Mexican American, made disparaging and racist remarks about the Black son of a fellow council member, as well as Oaxacan immigrants and other ethnic groups.

Still more turmoil awaits City Hall as court proceedings unfold in public corruption cases involving one former council member and another who has been suspended.

Ms. Bass, who has represented Los Angeles for years in the State Legislature and Congress, campaigned on a vow to help lead the city to consensus, building coalitions in the diverse and teeming metropolis of four million people. But the challenge is formidable as the city continues to grapple with quality of life issues that have festered since the pandemic, reflecting a struggle that has occurred nationally.

Tent camps dot sidewalks citywide -- one downtown encampment, in fact, was dismantled last week, its occupants moved to hotel rooms, to make room for a celebration of Ms. Bass's inauguration before incoming storms forced the festivities indoors at L.A. Live, a downtown entertainment complex. In her inauguration speech, Ms. Bass said her first act as mayor will be to declare a state of emergency on homelessness, a step toward creating a citywide strategy to ''move people inside for good.''

Crime rates, while far lower than their peak in the 1990s, have risen, and a citywide poll done this year by Mr. Guerra's research center found that for the first time since 2012, a majority of Angelenos felt the city was going in the wrong direction.

And that was before Mr. de León, Ms. Martinez and a third Latino council member, Gil Cedillo, were caught on a recording last year strategizing in blunt and occasionally bigoted terms to consolidate power for themselves and the city's Latino communities as the city's redistricting maps were being redrawn.

The group believed that their conversation, which included a powerful local labor leader who also resigned, was private, but it was being secretly recorded and was later uploaded to Reddit. Mr. Cedillo, who lost a bid for re-election before the recording's emergence, has apologized for not cutting the conversation short but has not stepped down and will leave office on Monday. He has not returned to the council chambers since the scandal, and investigations have since ensued into the unlawful recording, the leak and the city's redistricting process.

Of the four participants in the recorded conversation, only Mr. de León will remain in office after Monday. He has apologized profusely but refused to step down, saying his remarks were less caustic than those of Ms. Martinez, for example, and that what he did say had been misunderstood and that his resignation would leave his constituents, many of whom are poor or ***working class***, without adequate representation.

On Tuesday, political opponents who have tried unsuccessfully to recall Mr. de León received approval from the city clerk to begin collecting signatures for a fresh recall petition. To qualify for the ballot, organizers of the campaign must collect more than 20,000 signatures from registered voters in his district by the end of March.

In an interview last week, before Friday's unsettling events, Mr. Garcetti, the outgoing mayor, reiterated calls for Mr. de León to resign.

''He seems determined to come back, and I've told him, 'Look, the way back is by doing the hard work. And that can't be by holding the institution of the council hostage, which essentially is what he's doing by not resigning,'' Mr. Garcetti said. ''You have to listen to the communities you've hurt.''

Mr. Garcetti, who has been nominated to an ambassador post in India by the Biden administration and is awaiting Senate confirmation, said he was unswayed by the argument, raised both by Mr. de León and Mr. Cedillo, that their remarks on the audio had not been overtly racist.

''Just because you've crossed the line by a couple inches and somebody does it by a couple of feet, doesn't mean you haven't crossed the line,'' Mr. Garcetti said.

He and Mr. Guerra also both faulted the protesters who for the past several years have escalated disruptions at council meetings. Mr. Guerra noted that the ongoing practice of shouting council members down has not worked and has become increasingly counterproductive, undercutting support for progressive causes. And Mr. Garcetti denounced the corrosion of respect the demonstrations have caused at the City Council.

As Mr. de León struggled to return to City Hall on Friday, another council member, Paul Koretz, whose term just ended, used his farewell remarks at the meeting to bid an uncharacteristically profane goodbye to local activists who have, he said, ''done their best to make it difficult for us to do our work in the last 2½ years.'' The 67-year-old councilman then signed off with one of the demonstrators' most frequently deployed epithets.

Friday's holiday party confrontation, according to Mr. de León and an aide, spiraled out of control after Mr. Reedy and his crew blocked the exits, head-butted the councilman and elbowed his aide in the face.

''Kids were crying, parents were horrified. It was stunning. They crossed every line imaginable,'' Mr. de León said in an interview on Friday. ''Verbal assaults have escalated to political violence, and that's not good. It's not good for society, it's not good for democracy.''

An attorney for Mr. Reedy said in an email that the councilman's supporters initiated the assault, shoving Mr. Reedy after he criticized Mr. de León and called for his resignation.

The attorney, Shakeer Rahman, also shared a statement from Mr. Reedy, defending the ongoing demonstrations. ''We are the only reason Kevin de León hasn't returned to City Council meetings,'' the statement said. ''If it weren't for the protests, the same politicians who demanded his resignation and censured him would have moved on. People in power will never like the protests they face.''

Despite current tensions, Mr. Garcetti said the leak of the recording will result in needed, lasting reforms in Los Angeles. He said he was pleasantly surprised by how much the reaction solidified coalitions in the city, as opposed to deepening racial and ethnic divides.

''It's kind of like an earthquake shows you how strong your buildings are,'' he said. ''This was a metaphor for that. There was an earthquake, and we didn't fall down.''

Jill Cowan contributed reporting from Los Angeles.Jill Cowan contributed reporting from Los Angeles.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/10/us/los-angeles-council-fight-transition.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/10/us/los-angeles-council-fight-transition.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Jason Reedy, a well-known activist in Los Angeles, speaking at the City Council meeting on Friday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MYUNG J. CHUN / LOS ANGELES TIMES VIA GETTY IMAGES)

Mr. Reedy later got into an altercation with Kevin de León, above, a councilman who had been part of a racially charged discussion. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RINGO H.W. CHIU/ASSOCIATED PRESS) This article appeared in print on page A11.

**Load-Date:** December 12, 2022

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[***Give Power to the Parents!***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JP-42N1-DXY4-X3V9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 30, 2021 Friday

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22; DAVID BROOKS

**Length:** 946 words

**Byline:** By David Brooks

**Body**

We live in a diverse country, where people have a lot of different preferences about how to live. For example, a 2016 Pew Research Center survey found that 59 percent of Americans believed children with two parents were better off if one parent stayed at home, but 39 percent thought children were just as well off if both parents worked.

So which side was right? Well, obviously, neither. It depends on the personality, values and circumstances of the people in each particular family. Despite what Tolstoy wrote, happy families are in fact all happy in their own ways.

Our debates about family structure have been poisoned by people who can't acknowledge difference without immediately rendering some judgment. Family pluralism is a source of strength for this country, not a weakness.

It should be said that people's views on what is the ideal family form are powerfully linked to their class standing. As research by scholars at the American Compass think tank has shown, people in the ***working class*** and to a lesser extent the middle class are more likely to prefer the ''breadwinner'' model, in which one parent stays home, when children are younger than 5. Families making more than $150,000 are more likely to admire the ''dual earner'' model, in which both parents work.

The crucial question is this: In a society with such a diverse array of family forms, which kind of family structure should the government favor? My answer is, ''None.'' The role of government is to help people build the kind of family they prefer, not tell them what kind of family they should prefer. Government should be neutral about what kind of family is best.

Joe Biden's American Families Plan has one element that beautifully accomplishes this, by extending the child tax credit, or child allowance. If parents want to use the extra money from the credit to help pay for day care, they can. If they want to use it to reduce work hours time so they can spend more time at home, they can. The child tax credit will help millions of families do what surveys show they already want to do -- have more kids than they can now afford, and spend more time at home.

But the Biden administration is not entirely neutral when it comes to family policy. When, during a conference call, I asked three administration officials Thursday about this, they mentioned two other social goals. First, getting people working. ''We want parents to be in the work force, especially mothers,'' said Susan Rice, head of the Domestic Policy Council. Second, the administration wants kids in classroom settings, to extend the public school system down two years. The administration is aggressively expanding child care subsidies and pre-K programs.

These are understandable public goals, but I wonder about the emphasis. In the first place, direct parental subsidies -- perhaps because they let parents cut back on work and cultivate their kids' social and emotional skills -- can be a powerful tool to boost kids' educational attainment.

As Grover J. Whitehurst, formerly of the Brookings Institution, once put it, ''It turns out that putting money directly into the pockets of low-income parents, as many other countries do, produces substantially larger gains in children's school achievement per dollar of expenditure than does a year of preschool or participation in Head Start.''

Second, when it comes to parenting there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. Whether a child will be helped or harmed by professional child care experience depends an awful lot on the nature of the particular child, the particular care center and the particular parents. These are circumstances only the parents, who are right there, can know, so parents should be given maximum power and flexibility to make decisions.

The way to do that, the family scholar W. Bradford Wilcox of the University of Virginia argues, is to focus money on direct subsidies and go big.

''Because the Biden administration is trying to be all things to all people,'' Wilcox emailed me, ''it partially funds a number of initiatives, including the child allowance. I'd much rather see the administration cut out the money promised for pre-K and child care and fully fund a generous child allowance.''

Finally, I worry about the class politics of all this. In that American Compass research, more-affluent families support day care expansion but ***working-class*** families overwhelmingly support direct subsidies. Thriving meritocrats may be eager to re-enjoy the satisfactions of full-time work, but in one 2018 survey only 28 percent of married mothers said working full time was ideal. Forty percent said working part time was ideal.

We are living in a time of huge economic and educational inequalities, and seething populist resentments as a result. I worry that the upper middle class will be inviting a furious backlash if it is seen to be privileging its parenting preferences through the use of state power.

Over the past few decades the economy has placed enormous strain on American families, forcing people to have fewer kids and spend less time with them than they would prefer. A fully generous child tax credit would give some parents a chance to step back from the job market for a few years while their kids were young -- if they so chose.

The opportunity to drastically improve American family life is suddenly right before us.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by The New York Times

photograph by PeopleImages/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 30, 2021

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[***It's a Snap to Make a Pizza That Crackles***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67V1-XPK1-JBG3-60JC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 22, 2023 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Dining In, Dining Out / Style Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 2095 words

**Byline:** By J. Kenji López-Alt

**Body**

Among his many revelations: a game-changing technique for yielding that crisp crust at home.

Some family members may call it obsessive behavior. I call it a gripping intellectual and culinary pursuit.

For the past five months, I've been on a mission to dial-in a home cook-friendly recipe for a thin-crust pizza popular in the Midwest, Chicago in particular. It's taken me through scores of iterations, furtive late-night pizza texts with other obsessives across the country, dozens of eating excursions (including a two-day, 12-stop tour of Chicago and Milwaukee), bags of flour, pounds of sausage and several gallons of tomato sauce.

Before we begin, it's worth considering the definition of ''Chicago pizza.'' If you're not from Chicago, chances are you think of a cheesy, sauce-topped, wading-pool-sized deep dish. But if you're from Chicago, it is probably thin crust.

I'm talking thinner-than-a-saltine thin, with a shatteringly crisp crackle and just enough structure to hold its own weight against a heavily seasoned sauce and a caramelized layer of mozzarella. It's probably topped with hand-torn nubs of sausage, maybe a sprinkle of hot giardiniera. Forget the puffy, handlebarlike crust of a New York pie: Thin crust has sauce and cheese all the way to the edge -- an edge that comes out extra crisp with a frizzle of nearly blackened cheese overhanging it.

Most notably, the pizza is round but comes cut into small squares, no more than a bite or two apiece.

Recipe: Chicago Thin-Crust (Tavern-Style) PizzaWith Sausage and Giardiniera

Whether you call it party-cut, bar-style, tavern-style, Midwest thin crust, Chicago-thin or, if you're from the Midwest, just plain ''pizza,'' with its small squares, it's a dish that's equally easy to share with a large group, or to polish off on your own. (''I'll just have one more piece'' is too easy to say when each piece is a bite.)

That square-cut shareability is no accident, said Steve Dolinsky, a journalist and the author of ''Pizza City, USA: 101 Reasons Why Chicago Is America's Greatest Pizza Town.''

With its roots in the 1940s at ***working-class*** taverns like Vito & Nick's on the South Side of Chicago, the cheap-to-produce, thirst-inducing style was invented to encourage customers to linger long enough to order another beer.

''That's my father and my uncle, the first day they started serving pizza,'' said Rose Barraco George, the octogenarian third-generation owner of Vito & Nick's, as she points to one of the old family photos that line the dining room. By the pizza ovens, several of her grandchildren -- the fifth generation to staff the kitchen -- bustle about, rolling out dough based on her grandmother Mary's original recipe, pinching raw sausage and cutting thin, charred pies served on aluminum trays. In the dining room, regulars grabbed squares of pizza under a ceiling trimmed with shag carpet; Old Style beer posters decorated the walls. The pizza at Vito & Nick's is excellent, but the atmosphere, tinged with history, is superb.

''Workers from the factories or the Union Stock Yards would stop at the tavern on their way home,'' Mr. Dolinsky said.

The proximity to those stockyards led to cheap, plentiful sausage becoming a near integral part of the style, while the small square cuts made it easy to share among all patrons: No plates required -- just a napkin would do. And best of all? ''In the early days, tavern pizza was always free,'' Mr. Dolinsky said.

Eventually, the free pizza became so popular that taverns started selling it to-go. From Chicago, it spread, becoming one of the dominant pizza styles throughout the Midwest.

What Makes This Crust So Thin

Recipe: Chicago Thin-Crust(Tavern-Style) Pizza Dough

At home in Seattle, I started off working with a 2018 recipe, loosely inspired by Vito & Nick's, and published by my old colleague Bryan Roof, in Cook's Country. His recipe starts with flour, sugar, salt, yeast, water and oil combined in a food processor, which works well for two-pizza batches -- any bigger and I use a stand mixer or knead by hand instead. It's then rested for a couple hours; rolled out with a rolling pin (professional thin-crust pizzerias use industrial sheeters); topped with a sauce, shredded cheese and sausage; and then baked in a 500-degree oven on a pizza stone for 10 to 14 minutes. It was a great starting point, especially considering that his recipe can be made in a single afternoon.

My friend Dave Lichterman, a Chicago native who operates two pizzerias in Seattle, began work on his own recipe to serve at his Windy City Pie. In one of the many tasting sessions at his restaurant, he turned me on to how dry thin-crust dough can be. Mr. Roof's recipe calls for around 56 percent hydration -- that is, for every 100 grams of flour in a batch of dough, you'd add 56 grams of water. This is already on the low end for pizza dough: Neapolitan-style doughs typically hover just north or south of 60 percent hydration. But Mr. Lichterman was making his dough even dryer, around 50 percent hydration, with the addition of 10 percent to 15 percent oil.

This made a huge difference in the texture of my crust, which, up until then, had been coming out crisp but a little too flexible and tough. This had to do with the way that water and oil interact with protein in flour. When water is kneaded with flour, proteins in the flour unravel and untangle, forming a chewy network of gluten. In general, a wetter dough will form more gluten and result in a stretchier, chewier crumb, the kind you'd find in the inside of a sourdough boule. Fat, on the other hand, coats flour proteins and prevents them from entangling, resulting in dough that's more tender, like a soft brioche bun. Less water and more oil led to a lighter, crisper crust.

I tried using even less water but found that the dough became too difficult to roll out.

What Makes This Crust So Crunchy

My next breakthrough came when I accidentally overfermented a batch of pizza dough by leaving it on the counter for too long. Overfermentation severely weakens gluten structure, which can lead to dough that refuses to rise when baked. This is bad for bread but great for thin crust. I started intentionally incorporating a three- to five-day fermentation period in the fridge, which led to the thinnest, crispiest pies yet.

John Carruthers likes to overferment his dough as well. As the proprietor of Crust Fund Pizza, he has no restaurant, but he's made a name for himself delivering his tavern-style pizza in Chicago's back alleys in exchange for donations to local organizations. From his home, he baked pizzas with crackling crusts made from dough that had rested in his fridge for five days for me and Mr. Lichterman. (Mr. Carruthers's outstanding recipe can be found in my friend Andrew Janjigian's baking newsletter.)

Mr. Carruthers also employs a method called ''curing'' the dough, a technique I'd heard rumor of but had to see in person to fully understand. The idea is simple: Roll out the dough as if to top it, but then set it aside in the fridge for a day -- completely uncovered -- to dry out.

Billy and Cecily Federighi and their partner Brad Shorten cure the dough at Kim's Uncle, a thin-crust pizzeria that opened last year in the Chicago suburb of Westmont, Ill. Popping open a stack of dough proofing containers in their walk-in refrigerator, Mr. Federighi revealed an overlapping stack of pizza skins -- what pizzamakers call dough that's been stretched but not yet topped -- that were dry to the touch, with the texture of cured leather. You can lift the dough with one hand, and it keeps its shape, flopping a little like an Acme portable hole from a Looney Tunes cartoon. The pizzas at Kim's Uncle, baked in an antique Faulds oven with four decks that revolve like the cars in a Ferris wheel, are incredible: shatteringly, impossibly crisp and flavorful.

Neither Mr. Carruthers nor the team at Kim's Uncle invented the curing technique. Mr. Dolinsky attributes it to Nick Pianetto Jr., who was the second-generation owner of Pat's when he started employing it in the 1970s at his father's Lincoln Park pizzeria. To this day, the pizza at Pat's arrives with a wavy, blistered edge, a sign that the dough was leathery before baking.

Back home, I rolled out 14-inch rounds of pizza dough and let them sit uncovered overnight in my fridge on parchment-lined cutting boards. I was stunned at how much of a difference curing made to the finished pizza's crispness, though, in retrospect, it makes sense. Dough becomes crisp as it dehydrates in the oven, and curing jump-starts that dehydration. By weighing dough before and after curing, I calculated that the skins end up with an effective hydration level of just 25 percent to 33 percent before baking.

Curing also has some wonderful side effects. The leathery disks of dough slide easily on and off a peel, making getting them into the oven a breeze. Cured dough doesn't sag as easily as fresh, which allows the pizza to almost ''float'' on top of the stone as it bakes, making moisture loss easier and crisping more efficient. It can bake to a dark crunchy brown without burning.

The only difficulty was finding space in the fridge to cure several 14-inch rounds of dough. I wondered: Would a room-temperature cure work just as well? Thankfully, it does.

A Fine, Fat Finish

Recipe: Pizza Saucefor Chicago Thin-Crust Pizza

With the crust handled, I turned my attention to the sauce. In Chicago, pizza sauce tends to have an intensely savory flavor that comes from cooking down canned tomatoes heavily seasoned with dried herbs, like marjoram and oregano, and garlic (I like to use a combination of punchy fresh garlic and sweeter granulated garlic). Some sauces are very sweet; others lean more vinegary. You can adjust those elements to your own taste. These days, I don't bother simmering the sauce first: I find that it develops plenty of that cooked flavor during the pizza's 10-minute bake time, especially with the addition of tomato paste.

The last components to address were the cheese, giardiniera and sausage. Cheese is simple: shredded low-moisture mozzarella (fresh shredded and full-fat if you can manage, preshredded and part-skim work fine if you can't) and a sprinkle of Parmesan or Romano.

Giardiniera is the chopped mixture of pickled vegetables typically served on Chicago Italian beef sandwiches that has become a popular pizza topping. It pairs perfectly with sausage, and it's easy to find online. Look for Chicago-style brands, such as Marconi or the excellent J.P. Graziano, that pack the giardiniera in oil as opposed to vinegar or brine.

Milder than typical supermarket Italian sausage, Chicago-style Italian sausage is a true regional specialty, but it's simple to make at home. I chatted with Rob Levitt, head butcher at Publican Quality Meats in Chicago, about what makes Chicago-style sausage unique.

''The only real common through line is black pepper and fennel,'' he said. This rang true after tasting and soliciting tips from other Chicago pizzamakers.

Recipe: Chicago-Style Italian Sausage

My sausage uses whole fennel seeds that I toast in a skillet, then roughly crack with a mortar and pestle -- a spice grinder, food processor, blender or the bottom of a heavy pan will work -- before mixing into fatty ground pork seasoned with salt, black pepper, fresh and granulated garlic, a bit of dried herbs and a pinch of red pepper flakes. The key is to knead the mixture (by hand or in a stand mixture fitted with a paddle) until the proteins begin to unravel and cross-link, giving it a tacky texture that turns springy and juicy as the sausage cooks, releasing its flavorful fat to mingle with the sauce and cheese as the pizza bakes.

Fermenting and curing your dough takes a little planning, but your active time commitment is minimal. If you start today, just shy of a week from now, you will wait the longest 10 minutes of your life as the aroma of oregano and caramelized cheese wafts from your oven. Your reward will sizzle as it comes out and crackle as you cut it into squares, whether you plan to share it or not.

I grew up eating folded triangular slices in New York City, but these days at my house, it's hip to be square, and thin is in. Of course, if you're from the Midwest, thin was always in. The rest of us are just catching up.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/17/dining/tavern-thin-crust-pizza-chicago.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/17/dining/tavern-thin-crust-pizza-chicago.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Tavern-style pizza, common in the Midwest, arrives cut into small squares to more easily be shared by a group. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID MALOSH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: SIMON ANDREWS) (D1)

Clockwise from top: Rose Barraco George, the owner of Vito & Nick's in Chicago

from left, Cecily and Billy Federighi and their partner Brad Shorten of Kim's Uncle in Westmont, Ill.

Mr. Shorten with one of the doughs, which can be lifted with one hand and still keep its shape. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUCY HEWETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (D4)

The dining room at Vito & Nick's in Chicago is tinged with history, with old photos lining the walls. A fifth generation of family members staffs the kitchen, which turns out tavern-style pizzas made with recipes from the owner's grandmother. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID MALOSH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: SIMON ANDREWS.) (D5) This article appeared in print on page D1, D4, D5.

**Load-Date:** March 22, 2023

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[***The Delightful Implosion of Boris Johnson; Michelle Goldberg***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65W4-6CG1-DXY4-X1R5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 7, 2022 Thursday 15:25 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1000 words

**Byline:** Michelle Goldberg

**Highlight:** His career is ending the way Donald Trump’s should have.

**Body**

There isn’t much good news in the world these days, so it’s worth taking time to appreciate the delightful implosion of soon-to-be former Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

His 2019 landslide victory against the hapless Jeremy Corbyn of the Labour Party seemed to be ushering in a long period of right-wing dominance. Johnson, [*said The Economist*](https://www.economist.com/britain/2020/01/02/boris-johnson-is-reinventing-one-nation-conservatism), “is well placed to become one of the most powerful prime ministers in modern times.” Less than three years later, undone by scandal, incompetence and the rebellion of his own party, he’s announced plans to step aside once a new Conservative leader can be found. There may not be a new general election soon, but if there were, polls suggest that Labour [*could win*](https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/labour-10-point-lead-keir-starmer-boris-johnson-approval-1725579) a majority.

On Wednesday, I listened to the hosts of the left-of-center British [*podcast*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-end-of-the-world-king/id1245265763?i=1000569041499) “Oh God, What Now?” react, almost in real time, as Johnson’s cabinet ministers abandoned him en masse. Their elation was contagious. “This isn’t analysis; this is giggling euphoria!” said the journalist Ian Dunt. At least someone’s having fun out there!

For an American liberal, however, the schadenfreude brought by Johnson’s collapse is mixed with envy. We are watching a still-functioning democracy dispatch its bombastic populist leader because his amorality and narcissistic dishonesty were simply too much. On Wednesday, a day after resigning as health secretary, Sajid Javid [*lambasted*](https://www.c-span.org/video/?c5022634/health-secretary-javid-tells-prime-minister-johnson-enough-enough) Johnson during Question Time in the House of Commons: “We’ve seen in great democracies what happens when divisions are entrenched and not bridged. We cannot allow that to happen here.”

Johnson, a nationalist demagogue and mendacious blowhard, has often been compared to Donald Trump, right down to the poufy yellow hair. Their political careers have certain parallels.

The shocking success of the Brexit referendum, the cause Johnson eventually rode to power, presaged Trump’s even more shocking presidential victory. Both men created new electoral coalitions by making inroads with disaffected ***working-class*** voters. Both were given to cruel anti-immigrant stunts, like the Johnson government’s [*recent plan*](https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/the-shameless-farce-of-boris-johnsons-attempt-to-send-refugees-to-rwanda) to deport asylum seekers to Rwanda. Both shared a contempt for truth and the [*norms*](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/aug/29/day-democracy-died-what-the-papers-say-about-proroguing-parliament) of their respective governments.

But, of course, Britain and the United States are very different countries, and not just because the U.K. is a parliamentary system, a generally more effective form of government than our own presidential system. British people are still evidently capable of being shocked by officials’ sexual harassment and shameless untruths, even when those officials are on their side. Their country is not heavily armed, and does not have a powerful faction that regularly threatens violence. Britain still appears to have some minimal social agreement about acceptable political behavior. Its government is falling apart precisely because its society is not.

Mired as I am in the demoralizing squalor of American politics, I’m jealous of the relative quaintness of the scandal that finally brought Johnson down: lying about someone else’s sexual misconduct! The end of the Johnson era was precipitated by a member of Parliament named Christopher Pincher, who recently got drunk and groped two men at a private Tory club.

It turns out that Pincher, whom Johnson appointed as deputy chief whip in February, had been accused of sexual harassment several times in the past. Johnson and his allies claimed he hadn’t known about the allegations when he gave Pincher the job, but he did, even [*reportedly joking*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzXCxjenP4I) that the M.P. was “Pincher by name, Pincher by nature.”

Both Pincher and Johnson obviously behaved egregiously. The quaint part is the near universal condemnation of their behavior, and the widespread acknowledgment that, after years of bullying and dishonesty, Johnson’s dissembling was the final straw. Imagine having final straws!

I felt similarly wistful contemplating Partygate, the scandal over Johnson’s secret pandemic socializing that led conservatives to hold a no-confidence vote last month, which the prime minister survived. Occasionally I’ve asked British people if there really was widespread anger at Johnson, or just satisfaction at catching him out. Under Trump, after all, Americans largely became inured to hypocrisy, even if they still felt the need to denounce it. Everyone I spoke to, though, told me that the outrage was real.

That was partly because Britain’s lockdown was much stricter than ours, and applied to the whole country; unlike [*Trump’s*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/04/politics/white-house-july-4-party-pandemic/index.html) [*partying*](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/trump-holding-white-house-holiday-parties-ignoring-cdc/story?id=74625136) in 2020, Johnson’s violated rules his government was imposing on others. Still, to be really furious at hypocrisy, you have to have some expectation that people in power will follow the rules. And to be shamed by the revelation of hypocrisy, as the Tories seemed to be, you have to accept that the standards applied to others also apply to you. Another way of saying this is that intolerance of hypocrisy implies a democratic sensibility, in which everyone is at least supposed to be bound by the same strictures.

Johnson’s career is ending, at least for now, the way Trump’s should have ended — with public revulsion leading his own party to oust him. Like Trump, Johnson initially wanted to cling to power when it was no longer feasible; unlike with Trump, there was never a prospect of him summoning an armed mob. Watching Johnson’s fall after living through Trump is like chasing a slasher film with a cozy mystery. Both may be murder stories, but only one has a reassuring order to it.

“We deserve a better class of bastards,” Dunt said on the podcast. We all do. Still, as an American, I have to say: Be thankful for what you’ve got.

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[***Who Was Out to Get This Man?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68GV-80T1-DXY4-X41B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Body**

Kyle Roche was a rising star in the field of cryptocurrency law -- until his career imploded. Who orchestrated his downfall?

When he arrived in London in late January 2022, Kyle Roche was riding high. At just 34 years old, he had established himself as one of the biggest players in the burgeoning field of cryptocurrency litigation. He boasted a law firm bearing his name, lawsuits filed against more than a dozen crypto companies and a huge verdict against the man who claimed to have invented Bitcoin.

Now a new opportunity beckoned. Two businessmen had flown Mr. Roche over from Miami to discuss investing in a new business venture he was forming. A waiting car whisked him from Heathrow Airport to meet the men in a plush townhouse in Mayfair.

That evening, Mr. Roche went to dinner with one of the men, who identified himself as Mauricio Andres Villavicencio de Aguilar. Mr. Villavicencio, who said he was from Argentina, had picked one of London's fanciest restaurants, Jean-Georges in the Connaught hotel.

When he woke up the next morning, Mr. Roche says, he felt groggy. He couldn't remember much aside from being pretty sure he had spotted Mr. Villavicencio's business partner, a Norwegian named Christen Ager-Hanssen, lurking at a nearby table. The brain fog was odd because he didn't think he'd had all that much to drink. As he flew back to Miami a few days later, Mr. Roche couldn't shake the feeling that something was amiss.

Months passed. Then, one day last summer, Mr. Roche's world detonated. A website called Crypto Leaks posted two dozen videos of him that had been secretly recorded during his meetings with Mr. Villavicencio and Mr. Ager-Hanssen.

The videos portrayed Mr. Roche and his law firm, Roche Freedman, as being in the pocket of one of their crypto clients. In one clip, Mr. Roche revealed that the client, a company called Ava Labs, had granted him tens of millions of dollars' worth of its digital tokens, making him beholden to the company and its founder, whom he likened to a ''brother.''

In other clips, Mr. Roche made it sound like his sole concern, even when representing other clients, was to promote Ava Labs' interests. He bragged that he had managed to distract regulators from looking into Ava Labs and suggested that his lawsuits against other crypto companies were designed to harm Ava Labs' competitors.

In the videos filmed at Jean-Georges, Mr. Roche looked intoxicated, waving his hands, cursing and referring to jurors as ''idiots.''

After he got over his initial shock, Mr. Roche realized he had a major problem on his hands. The videos made him look corrupt. To defend himself, he published a piece on Medium saying they had been ''illegally obtained'' and ''spliced out of context,'' and he denied being in cahoots with Ava Labs.

It was too late. One after another, companies that Roche Freedman had sued filed motions to disqualify the firm from their cases. In October, the first of those motions succeeded: A federal judge in New York tossed Roche Freedman from a case it had filed against Tether, the operator of the world's most used ''stablecoin.''

Within days, Mr. Roche was forced to resign from the law firm he had founded. With his career in tatters, he says, he enrolled in ethics classes and began to see a therapist.

Mr. Roche was felled by his own loose lips and his overly cozy relationship with a client. But he also was the victim of an elaborate international setup.

The question was: Who was behind it?

The New Sheriff

Mr. Roche grew up in a ***working-class*** family in Buffalo. The oldest of four siblings, he shared a bedroom with intellectually disabled twin brothers. Watching them struggle with simple tasks while he breezed through school made Mr. Roche feel both guilty and determined to succeed so he could one day provide for them.

After attending Purdue University and working for a few years as a management consultant, he enrolled at Northwestern University's Pritzker School of Law. During his first semester, in the fall of 2013, he caught the crypto bug. Joe Delich, a classmate who later worked with Mr. Roche at his law firm, remembers him constantly checking the price of Bitcoin on his laptop during classes. Mr. Roche cashed out before a big price drop, earning about $100,000 in profits. He used the money to pay his tuition.

As a third-year student, Mr. Roche collaborated with a professor on a paper discussing Bitcoin's virtues as the first currency free from government interference. That led to an opinion piece in The Wall Street Journal.

''That was the first moment I thought, 'Oh, wow, maybe I can do something with this,''' he said.

By then, Mr. Roche was a first-year associate at Boies Schiller Flexner, where he was developing a reputation as the kid who understood crypto. When a colleague in Miami approached him a few days after the Journal piece with a Bitcoin-related case, he jumped at the opportunity.

The case pitted a man named Ira Kleiman against Craig Wright, the Australian computer scientist who claims to be Bitcoin's enigmatic creator, Satoshi Nakamoto. Mr. Kleiman wanted to sue Dr. Wright for defrauding his brother David, a paraplegic computer forensics expert who had died in his mid-40s, out of billions of dollars of Bitcoin they supposedly mined together in Bitcoin's early days.

The facts were murky: There was evidence that Dr. Wright and David Kleiman had indeed been friends, and David Kleiman had been known to carry around his neck an encrypted hard drive that might or might not have contained the passwords to Bitcoin wallets. But many people considered Dr. Wright a fraud, calling into question the notion that he had mined early blocks of Bitcoin, much less cheated someone out of them.

To Mr. Roche, that was one of the allures of the case. If he could make Dr. Wright hand over his files during discovery, he might be able to solve Bitcoin's great enduring mystery: Satoshi Nakamoto's true identity. Mr. Roche and his young Miami colleague, Velvel Freedman, were soon devoting most of their time to the case.

In 2019, with the Kleiman case slowly progressing toward a trial, Mr. Roche met a new client, who was locked in a dispute with a crypto company. In a matter of days, he negotiated a lucrative settlement on the client's behalf. As a token of his gratitude, the client agreed to invest $7.5 million with Mr. Roche and Mr. Freedman so they could start their own law firm. At first, Mr. Roche set up shop in a co-working space in Brooklyn, but when the pandemic hit he joined Mr. Freedman in Miami.

Their firm, Roche Freedman, soon made a splash. Mr. Roche had watched with increasing skepticism as a number of crypto start-ups rode Bitcoin's growing popularity by marketing new digital coins that surged in value and then crashed. It reminded him of pump-and-dump scams in which a group inflates the price of a stock by talking it up publicly before selling all at once and making off with the profits.

Regulators didn't seem to be doing anything about it, so Mr. Roche decided he would. On April 3, 2020, Roche Freedman filed lawsuits seeking class action status against seven issuers of digital coins, alleging they had pumped what amounted to unregistered securities with false statements and then dumped them, leaving retail investors holding the bag.

It also sued four crypto exchanges for enabling the coin issuers' conduct, foreshadowing some of the legal arguments the Securities and Exchange Commission used to sue Binance and Coinbase this month. (Binance and Coinbase have vowed to fight the S.E.C. in court.)

Those suits were just an opening salvo: Sixteen months later, Mr. Roche filed his biggest securities fraud case yet. It alleged that a British entrepreneur, Dominic Williams, and entities he controlled had swindled investors out of billions of dollars by aggressively promoting, and then dumping, a digital coin tied to a grandiose plan to revolutionize computing.

Mr. Williams had boldly proclaimed that his Internet Computer blockchain -- a decentralized network of computers powered by a digital token called ICP -- would supplant the big cloud services offered by Amazon and Microsoft and become humanity's primary computing platform. But after an initial surge that briefly made it one of the most valuable cryptocurrencies, ICP had plummeted 92 percent -- a collapse that Mr. Roche's lawsuit attributed to ''massive'' selling by Mr. Williams and other insiders. (Mr. Williams denied the allegations.)

If crypto was the Wild West of finance, Mr. Roche had announced himself as the new sheriff. But sheriffs, as he would soon learn, make enemies.

A Big Verdict

Around the time Mr. Roche was working on his first pump-and-dump lawsuits, he befriended Emin Gun Sirer, a Cornell University computer science professor who was hatching a cryptocurrency project of his own in the Brooklyn co-working space where Mr. Roche initially worked. Mr. Roche agreed to do legal work for Dr. Sirer's company, Ava Labs, in exchange for an equity stake and a small percentage of the cryptocurrency tokens it planned to issue.

Such arrangements aren't uncommon in the tech industry. Mr. Roche's former boss David Boies had struck a similar one with Theranos, the blood-testing company whose founder, Elizabeth Holmes, was later convicted of fraud. The scandals involving Theranos and another client, Harvey Weinstein, had badly tarnished Mr. Boies's reputation, but to Mr. Roche he remained a role model.

When Mr. Roche reached his deal with Dr. Sirer in September 2019, he says, there was no guarantee that Dr. Sirer's project would be successful. At the time, the tokens granted to him were valued at less than 3 cents each.

A year later, Dr. Sirer's blockchain, Avalanche, went live. As crypto fever spread, its AVAX tokens rocketed to more than $100, making Mr. Roche a multimillionaire.

Mr. Roche's compensation agreement with Ava Labs was supposed to be confidential, but anyone who wanted to gather intel on him would soon be able to find out about it. In February 2021, Roche Freedman fired one of its partners, Jason Cyrulnik. He hit back with a lawsuit that disclosed each partner's share of the AVAX tokens.

That fall, Kleiman v. Wright went to trial in U.S. District Court in Miami. Mr. Roche gave a fiery opening statement during which he repeatedly pointed an accusatory finger at Dr. Wright.

In the end, the trial didn't resolve whether Dr. Wright had really invented Bitcoin, but the jury ordered him to pay $100 million in damages to a company Ira Kleiman had inherited from his dead brother. (The judge later tacked on $43 million in interest.) Mr. Roche and Mr. Freedman toasted over cocktails at a Miami restaurant. Their law firm stood to make more than $10 million.

With the Kleiman trial over, Mr. Roche turned to a project he and Dr. Sirer had been discussing: Ryval, a company that would help people raise money on Avalanche to pay for lawsuits. Mr. Roche saw it as a GoFundMe for litigation and thought it could level the legal playing field between individuals and big corporations.

But while he was plotting his new venture, someone was plotting his downfall.

The Setup

In December 2021, Mr. Roche received an email from someone he trusted introducing him to Mr. Villavicencio, according to a copy of the message reviewed by The New York Times. Mr. Villavicencio presented himself as an associate of Mr. Ager-Hanssen, a venture capitalist who was interested in Mr. Roche's new project. Mr. Roche had no idea who the two men were, but he welcomed the approach: He was raising money for Ryval, which had received some attention in the crypto press.

After an introductory Zoom call, Mr. Roche agreed to fly to London at the men's expense the next month.

They met at Mr. Ager-Hanssen's townhouse office, where things soon took a strange turn: According to Mr. Roche, Mr. Ager-Hanssen pressed his index finger to Mr. Roche's forehead -- ''I didn't think it was a gun motion, but I thought he was trying to intimidate me'' -- and said that if he was going to invest with him, he needed to know everything Mr. Roche was capable of.

In hindsight, Mr. Roche wishes he had gotten up and left. Instead, he took it as a cue to sell himself harder. According to Mr. Roche, Mr. Ager-Hanssen spent the next couple of hours goading him into bragging about his relationship with Ava Labs while Mr. Villavicencio, who was sitting across a table from him, secretly filmed him.

Armed with the information he had gleaned from the lawsuit filed by the fired Roche Freedman partner, Mr. Ager-Hanssen coaxed Mr. Roche into saying he had been granted 1 percent of the supply of Avalanche's AVAX tokens. At the time, that would have been equivalent to more than $100 million. (Mr. Roche says he exaggerated the 1 percent figure, and AVAX tokens have since lost 80 percent of their value.)

Mr. Ager-Hanssen then asked Mr. Roche to give examples of how he had made himself useful to Ava Labs executives.

''They haven't been sued yet, and there's a reason for that,'' said the baby-faced Mr. Roche, wearing a blazer over a button-down shirt and sweater, according to a video clip from the meeting.

''Brilliant,'' Mr. Ager-Hanssen replied. ''Good answer.''

Mr. Roche later elaborated. ''I deal with making sure that the S.E.C. and the C.F.T.C. have other magnets to go after,'' he said, referring to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. He added, ''Litigation can be a tool'' to attack competition. ''It's a fantastic tool.''

That night, when Mr. Roche got to Jean-Georges, he says, he found Mr. Villavicencio at a table and a drink waiting for him. Mr. Roche recalls Mr. Ager-Hanssen arriving about 15 minutes later and sitting at a nearby table with a tall blond man. Mr. Roche says the rest of the evening was a blur. He now believes the drink was laced with a drug, though he has no proof.

In one video clip from the restaurant, Mr. Roche revels in his power to crush companies with lawsuits. In another, Mr. Villavicencio asks him whether Ava Labs has sued any of its competitors. Mr. Roche replies, ''No, they have me do that on behalf of the class,'' suggesting that he filed his class actions against other crypto companies at Ava Labs' behest.

After the dinner at Jean-Georges, Mr. Roche never saw Mr. Villavicencio again, though he did meet one last time with Mr. Ager-Hanssen in New York.

On Aug. 26, Mr. Roche was in California to attend a wedding when one of his clients came across the Crypto Leaks videos on Twitter and sent him a link.

Blindsided, he scrambled to understand when and where they had been recorded. Once he pieced it together, he called Mr. Freedman and reached out to clients to do damage control.

Mr. Roche's biggest worry was his comments suggesting he had filed lawsuits to harm Ava Labs' competitors and to distract regulators. It was baseless bluster, he now says, blaming the blue-collar kid in him who was trying to impress a prospective investor. He says he started putting together the first lawsuits a month before he met Dr. Sirer, the Ava Labs founder.

Dr. Sirer denied that he or Ava Labs had anything to do with those lawsuits, some of which he said he strongly disagreed with. Six weeks before Crypto Leaks published its videos, Ava Labs' general counsel wrote an article criticizing one of the Roche Freedman lawsuits as ''scurrilous.''

To insulate his law firm, Mr. Roche recused himself from the lawsuits Roche Freedman had filed against crypto companies, sold his stake in Ava Labs back to the company and stopped representing it. (Mr. Roche declined to say whether he profited on the sale.)

When it became clear that wouldn't be enough, he resigned from his firm, which was renamed Freedman Normand Friedland.

'Someone That Doesn't Exist'

A week after the videos surfaced, Mr. Roche got another jolt: A friend of one of his colleagues reported that he had heard rumors at a crypto event that Mr. Roche's life was in danger, according to an affidavit later filed in court. Spooked, Mr. Roche and his fiancée hunkered down in a short-term rental in Brooklyn.

Mr. Roche felt that his world was unraveling. He says he became so stressed that he stopped eating and lost 10 pounds. After several weeks, he and his fiancée returned to Miami but, still worried for their safety, moved to an apartment leased under a relative's name.

While Mr. Roche's career imploded, Mr. Ager-Hanssen called for Mr. Roche's disbarment and tweeted about a report he had compiled on Mr. Roche that largely repeated the Crypto Leaks allegations. He also emailed Mr. Cyrulnik, the former Roche Freedman partner, and offered to help him prove his case against Mr. Roche and his former firm.

To Mr. Roche, the implication was clear: Mr. Ager-Hanssen had set him up.

In an interview, Mr. Ager-Hanssen denied that. ''This was not an operation run by me at all,'' he said. ''It was run by someone else.'' He said that he had been genuinely interested in investing in Ryval, that Mr. Villavicencio had filmed the videos at his office without his knowledge and that he wasn't at Jean-Georges that night. Mr. Ager-Hanssen said he thought he knew who was behind the operation, but he wouldn't reveal the person's identity.

Mr. Villavicencio, for his part, seems to have disappeared. Attempts to reach him at the phone number and email address he gave Mr. Roche were unsuccessful.

Mr. Ager-Hanssen said he didn't know Mr. Villavicencio's whereabouts. He said he had met the man only a few weeks before Mr. Roche came to London and allowed that Villavicencio was probably not his real name. ''Of course, it's someone that doesn't exist,'' he said.

But Mr. Ager-Hanssen, in addition to running his venture capital firm, has long had a sideline digging up dirt on behalf of wealthy clients entangled in business disputes in Britain and Scandinavia.

On multiple occasions, he has secretly recorded his targets. For example, in a 2014 interview, he recounted how he had snared the adversary of a Swedish financier with a hidden microphone and boasted that he employed former intelligence officers from the C.I.A., MI6 and Mossad.

But if Mr. Ager-Hanssen did set Mr. Roche up, who hired him to do it -- and why?

A Series of Clues

Plenty of people had reason to celebrate Mr. Roche's downfall.

First in line were Dr. Wright, the man who claims to be Satoshi Nakamoto, and Calvin Ayre, a gambling tycoon who bankrolls Dr. Wright. Dr. Wright quickly sought to exploit the videos, filing an unsuccessful motion to disqualify Roche Freedman from the Kleiman case. And after the videos came out, Mr. Ager-Hanssen became chief executive of nChain, a company that Mr. Ayre funds and that employs Dr. Wright as chief science officer.

Through a spokeswoman, Mr. Ayre acknowledged that he and Dr. Wright were ''pleased'' when the videos came out. But they denied having anything to do with the London sting.

Mr. Roche believes them because he thinks he knows who hired Mr. Ager-Hanssen: Mr. Williams, the British entrepreneur who was the target of Roche Freedman's biggest pump-and-dump lawsuit.

A series of clues, documented by his former law firm in court filings, led Mr. Roche to that conclusion. The first is that on May 12, 2022, Mr. Williams wrote on Twitter that he was ''coming for'' his critics. That was the same day the cryptoleaks.info domain name was registered.

Then, on June 9, 2022, the Crypto Leaks website went live. Billing itself as the defender of ''the honest crypto community,'' it posted two reports that aligned with Mr. Williams's interests. The first espoused a complicated theory about the ICP token crash that Mr. Williams had previously floated on Twitter.

The second attacked The Times for an article it had published about the crash. Mr. Williams tweeted a link to that Crypto Leaks report, calling it ''Gobsmacking.'' The Dfinity Foundation, a Swiss nonprofit that Mr. Williams created to oversee his blockchain, has since sued The Times for defamation in New York. The Times is seeking to dismiss the suit.

The videos of Mr. Roche were the crux of Crypto Leaks' third exposé. After they were published, Mr. Williams and Dfinity filed a motion to disqualify Roche Freedman as plaintiffs' counsel in the pump-and-dump lawsuit, saying Mr. Roche's comments demonstrated ''a disregard for the integrity of the judicial system.''

In court filings opposing the motion, Mr. Roche's former firm accused Mr. Williams of being behind Crypto Leaks and said the videos filmed at Jean-Georges showed signs of deepfake alterations. It also blamed Mr. Williams for the rumored death threats against Mr. Roche.

Pete Padovano, a spokesman for Dfinity and Mr. Williams, denied that anyone at the foundation had made death threats. Asked if he was connected to Crypto Leaks, Mr. Williams said, ''We appreciate the coverage of Crypto Leaks and believe their articles speak for themselves.''

Mr. Roche spent last fall lying low, but he has recently begun to rebuild his career as a solo practitioner.

In April, he won a $12.5 million verdict on behalf of six former Cantor Fitzgerald partners who sued the Wall Street firm for withholding some of their compensation. The judgment, which Cantor has appealed, opened the way for Mr. Roche to file a separate class action against the firm. Mr. Roche is also representing dozens of investors in a dispute with Coinbase.

But Mr. Roche's videotaped remarks continue to dog him and his former firm. Last month, the judge overseeing the pump-and-dump case granted Mr. Williams's motion and disqualified Freedman Normand Friedland as plaintiffs' counsel.

The judge cited Mr. Freedman's continuing friendship with Mr. Roche -- and the fact that they together control a cryptocurrency wallet holding more than a million AVAX tokens. He also voiced concern that the law firm was consumed by ''extreme animosity'' toward Mr. Williams, which might lead it to turn down equitable settlement offers.

Unless the lead plaintiff can enlist new lawyers by August, the lawsuit is essentially dead. In Mr. Roche's view, the plot against him worked to perfection.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/16/business/kyle-roche-crypto-leaks-satoshi.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/16/business/kyle-roche-crypto-leaks-satoshi.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Kyle Roche, a cryptocurrency lawyer, in Brooklyn last month. In late 2022, he was forced to resign from the law firm he had founded three years earlier. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GILI BENITA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BU1)

Top, the Connaught Hotel in London, where Kyle Roche said he believes his drink was laced with a drug by a man he was meeting with. Above, Dominic Williams, a target of one of Mr. Roche's lawsuits. Above right, Emin Gun Sirer of Ava Labs. Right, Christen Ager-Hanssen, a Norwegian venture capitalist and one of the men who invited Mr. Roche to London. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSHUA BRIGHT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

STEPHEN McCARTHY/SPORTSFILE, VIA GETTY IMAGES

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SHUTTERSTOCK) (BU6-BU7) This article appeared in print on page BU1, BU6, BU7.

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[***Not Your Daddy’s Freud***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67V2-T581-DXY4-X04W-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 2482 words

**Byline:** Joseph Bernstein

**Highlight:** A new generation of analysts and patients is embracing the father of psychoanalysis – in magazines and memes and many hours on the couch.

**Body**

In the fall of 2020, Ilan Zechory stepped down as president of Genius, the annotation site he founded with two friends from Yale. After more than a decade at the start-up, he could have been forgiven for taking a break.

Now Mr. Zechory is hard at work again, though not running another zeitgeisty digital media site. Instead, the 39-year-old is training to be a psychoanalyst.

Five days a week from an office on the Upper West Side, Mr. Zechory helps his 20 or so patients — some of them supine, in the classic style — plumb the depths of their unconscious minds. Having gained an appreciation for the method during his own multiyear analysis, Mr. Zechory loves his new role.

“For the first time in my life I feel at peace with work, and have stopped dreaming about what else I should be doing with my days,” he said.

Mr. Zechory is part of what may be a larger psychoanalytic moment. Around the country, on divans and in training institutes, on Instagram meme accounts and in small magazines, young (or at least young-ish) people are rediscovering the talking cure, along with the ideas of the Viennese doctor who developed it at the turn of the 20th century.

After several decades at the margins of American healthcare — and 100 years after he published his last major theoretical work — Sigmund Freud is enjoying something of a comeback.

Look and listen carefully these days, and you’ll find Herr Doktor. For instance, the Instagram account [*freud.intensifies*](https://www.instagram.com/freud.intensifies/)has more than a million followers and posts memes like a portrait of Freud overlaid with the text “Every time you call your boyfriend ‘Daddy,’ Sigmund Freud’s ghost becomes a little stronger.” In an April 2022 TikTok, which has been watched nearly five million times, a young man extols Freud: “Fast forward a hundred years, and he ain’t miss yet!”

The magazine Parapraxis, which was started last year to [*“inquire into and uncover the psychosocial dimension of our lives,”*](https://www.parapraxismagazine.com/about) has attracted [*a progressive “new psychoanalysis crowd.”*](https://www.vulture.com/2023/01/parapraxis-literary-magazine.html) The forthcoming film “Freud’s Last Session,” starring Anthony Hopkins, is currently filming in a reconstruction of Freud’s famous Hampstead study, complete with antiquities. The Showtime series “Couples Therapy” documents several patients who see Orna Guralnik, a New York psychoanalyst and psychologist. “Know Your Enemy,” an au courant lefty podcast, has devoted multiple episodes to discussions of Freud, who has become a frequent topic of conversation among the show’s hosts.

And Opulent Tips, an influential fashion newsletter, referred in January to a “Freudian-core” aesthetic inspired by “the freaky underbelly of the 1950s,” psychoanalysis’ so-called golden age in the United States: “Looking the part. A crisp and correct surface with strange feelings boiling just beneath.”

Plus, any culture that has just produced “MILF Manor” is going through something Freudian.

‘You’re Working With People’s Fantasies’

In her 1981 book about psychoanalysis, “The Impossible Profession,” Janet Malcolm interviews a pseudonymous analyst. “The insights of psychoanalysis are never taken for granted from one generation to the next,” he says. “Each generation has to make the original discoveries afresh!”

Like anything formative from long in the past, Freud never totally disappeared. Some of his concepts, like denial and libido, are so deeply embedded in popular culture that we no longer even think of them as Freudian. And no young century that has canonized “The Sopranos,” which featured many sessions of Tony’s psychotherapy with Dr. Melfi, as well as episode-long dream sequences, could be completely devoid of “golden Siggie,” as Freud’s mother reportedly called him.

But today, the interest is more literal.

According to a spokesperson, the American Psychoanalytic Association, the country’s main professional organization for psychoanalysts, doesn’t keep data on the number of new analysts — though its 3000 members, in comparison to the 106,000 licensed psychologists in the United States, give a sense of the field’s niche status. But several prominent training institutes say applications are on the rise. And the Institute for Psychoanalytic Training and Research (IPTAR) says the number of sessions performed by its in-house clinic has roughly doubled since 2017, a sign that more people are seeking analytic treatment.

Violet Lucca, 37, the vice president of digital at Harper’s Magazine, started analysis recently for two reasons. First, she is working on a book about the director David Cronenberg, whose interest in psychoanalysis yielded the 2011 film “A Dangerous Method,” which dramatizes the relationship between Freud and his most famous follower, Carl Jung. Ms. Lucca thought going through analysis herself would be creatively useful. Second, in the last five years Ms. Lucca has dealt with the death of her mother, who she said was schizophrenic, as well as the end of a long relationship.

“I’m overdue,” she said. (Ms. Lucca’s analyst is Griffin Hansbury, who writes the widely read [*blog*](http://vanishingnewyork.blogspot.com/) Jeremiah’s Vanishing New York under the pseudonym Jeremiah Moss.)

Ms. Lucca said she hopes to become a little happier.

That could take a while. According to a 2022 paper in The International Journal of Psychoanalysis, a typical analysis lasts three to seven years.

But it’s the length and depth of that conversation that drew Yelena Akhtiorskaya to analytic training. An acclaimed novelist (The New York Times [*called her debut*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/07/books/panic-in-a-suitcase-by-yelena-akhtiorskaya.html), “Panic in a Suitcase,” “​​brilliant and often funny”), Ms. Akhtiorskaya, 37, found her financial prospects as a full-time writer dim. (According to Tessa Peteete Ivers, chief operating officer of IPTAR, a first-year analyst could expect to make between $75,000 and $120,000 a year.)

So, inspired by an uncle who was a poet and an analyst, she decided in 2017 to get her license in psychoanalysis.

“As a literary person, what could be better than discussing dreams and symbols and delving as deep as possible four days a week?” she said. “I don’t see why everyone isn’t doing it. You are your own boss. You make your own hours. And you’re working with people’s fantasies.”

Ms. Akhtiorskaya is part of a new cohort of people from creative backgrounds embarking on psychoanalytic training, a career change that would have been unthinkable in the heyday of the practice. The European émigrés who helped popularize analysis in the United States tethered themselves to the American medical establishment as a way of lending their method institutional legitimacy. For years, only psychiatrists — medical doctors — could receive analytic training.

Much of the field came to resemble, as Ms. Malcolm wrote, “a hidden, almost secret byway traveled by few (the analysts and their patients), edged by decrepit mansions with drawn shades.” In this atmosphere, some wildly sexist, homophobic, and racist ideas, such as the notion that racial minorities were unanalyzable, flourished.

“Our politics of exclusivity have done us a disservice,” said Kerry Sulkowicz, president of the American Psychoanalytic Association.

In 1988,[*a lawsuit opened up analytic training*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/wellness/1988/10/18/shrink-vs-shrink/5767445b-3bf0-4822-b156-a01efc2ec15c/) to social workers and psychologists. (In 2010, New York state began allowing people without mental-health training to pursue licenses in psychoanalysis.) But by then the field was already in a period of steep decline. The advent of modern psychopharmacology and the rise of short-term cognitive behavioral therapy made Freud’s clinical legacy seem to many fuzzy, or worse, quaint.

(C.B.T., pioneered in the 1960s by an erstwhile Freudian psychiatrist named Aaron Beck, is considered the gold standard in treating anxiety and depression by many mental health professionals, [*with the strongest empirical support*](https://div12.org/treatments/).)

Analysis is also notoriously expensive and time-consuming; a senior analyst in Manhattan might charge $400 an hour, which, on the suggested four-to-five day a week schedule, could easily work out to an $80,000 yearly expense that is only partly reimbursed by insurance. But many analysts work on a sliding scale, and some of the training institutes offer therapy for rates as low as $10 an hour.

The goals of analysis are in one sense modest — Freud wrote, “much will be gained if we succeed in transforming your neurotic misery into ordinary unhappiness” — but its claims about the operations of the mind are vast, and have drawn enormous skepticism. Karl Popper, the philosopher of science, famously criticized psychoanalysis as non-falsifiable, and therefore unscientific; Frederick Crews, an emeritus professor of literature at the University of California, Berkeley, made it the mission of much of his career to argue that [*Freudianism was so unempirical*](https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/02/23/freud-whats-left/) that it wasn’t even a suitable basis for literary criticism.

“Freud’s writings are full of ambiguities, so anyone who wants to find either positive or despairing implication in them can do so,” Professor Crews said. “When propositions contradict each other, I regard that as a fatal problem. If you’re just a casual reader and you come across sentences that you like, perhaps that suffices for you.”

But[*some high-profile research has raised doubts*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41380-022-01661-0) about the science behind selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, a class of medications frequently prescribed to treat depression and anxiety. And a younger generation has grown at least a bit [*skeptical*](https://twitter.com/WordsandGuitar/status/1502795482673860610) about the way insurance companies and venture-backed mental health startups seem to favor cognitive-behavioral therapy, perhaps paving the way for this renewed interest in less symptom-focused forms of treatment.

Indeed, the idea that there are no magic bullets for mental health is part of what drew Mr. Zechory — the ex-start-up boss — to analytic training.

“I always had a sense that there is no free lunch, psychologically,” he said.

‘There’s an Inward Turn Now’

Analysis, which is focused on excavating highly personal narratives of meaning over long periods of time, may seem like an odd fit in a culture that often embraces broad structural explanations for social traumas.

But Freud’s ideas, according to a group of social-justice-oriented analysts, offer a way of understanding the unarticulated forces that create the social world and shape one’s place within it.

“C.B.T. may help you with your panic attack today,” said Dr. Beverly Stoute, a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst in Atlanta, referring to cognitive behavioral therapy. “But after you recover from your panic attack, you realize, ‘Damn, this world is crazy.’”

Dr. Stoute, who is Black, is a co-chairwoman of the Holmes Commission, convened in 2020 by the American Psychoanalytic Association to investigate systemic racism within institutional analysis in the United States. (Dr. Stoute estimates there are somewhere between 40 and 50 Black psychoanalysts in the United States.) The commission, along with work by the group Black Psychoanalysts Speak, and an influential 2016 documentary called Psychoanalysis in El Barrio, have argued that analysis is a powerful tool for addressing buried racial and class trauma.

“Psychoanalysis is the study of how we maintain not knowing what we know,” said Matthew Steinfeld, a professor of psychiatry at the Yale School of Medicine. “And America is organized around not remembering what happened here.”

Sam Adler-Bell, 32, a writer and the co-host of the “Know Your Enemy” podcast, started reading Freud during the pandemic, as Bernie Sanders’s 2020 campaign foundered. He thinks that the left looks for Freudian explanations during times of defeat.

“There’s an inward turn now,” Mr. Adler-Bell said. “Maybe this purely materialist analysis of people’s motivations doesn’t give us what we need to make sense of the moment.”

Nico Fuentes, a 32-year-old student at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, came to analysis three years ago, feeling emotionally stuck. She said she was turned off by the C.B.T. workbooks friends recommended, with their narrow focus on treating symptoms and quick diagnostics.

Ms. Fuentes was drawn instead to the intensity of traditional psychoanalysis. Her experience has left her convinced that the treatment has universal value.

“I am not bourgeois,” she said. “I’m a ***working class***, trans woman of color who began in analysis with very little understanding of analysis.” “But,” Ms. Fuentes argued, despite the longstanding perception to the contrary, “there is nothing fancy about psychoanalysis,” just two people in a room, talking.

Then there’s the matter of how we remember Freud himself. After decades of lacerating criticism over the sexism of concepts like penis envy and the theory that homosexuality resulted from abnormal Oedipal development, Freud came to symbolize for many the white, domineering, and pseudoscientific legacy of analysis.

“I originally read Freud as a teenager and thought, this is amazing,” said Dr. Guralnik, of “Couples Therapy.” “Then I came into all sorts of deep feminist critiques of Freud and started thinking, this is a whole bunch of patriarchal garbage. But having read a lot more and having come to realize that you have to see Freud in the context of his time, I came out on the other side. There are all kinds of Freuds. And you kind of pick and choose what Freud you want to have.”

That people see what they want in Freud is fitting: The first psychoanalyst is still, more than 80 years after his death, a transference figure. As Sophie Kemp pointed out earlier this year [*in a piece for Dirt*](https://dirt.fyi/article/2023/02/the-impossible-profession), the appeal of the Freudaissance for certain “downtown gamines obsessed with daddy” may be precisely that he has a retrograde and sexist image.

But some of the new vogue for Freud emphasizes his status as a racial minority in his native Austria, whose views on, for example, homosexuality, were nuanced and ahead of their time. A TikTok user recently discovered the famous 1935 letter in which Freud reassures the concerned American mother of a gay son that “homosexuality is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation.”

“I don’t know how the idea that Freud hated gay people got started,” the fresh-faced TikTok user concluded, “But he did not. He absolutely did not.” (“the more you know [*#freud*](https://www.tiktok.com/tag/freud) [*#psychology*](https://www.tiktok.com/tag/psychology) [*#lgbt*](https://www.tiktok.com/tag/lgbt),” he added in a caption.)

“When I actually read him, the things he was writing in the late 19th century are so much more progressive than most of America is now,” said Ms. Akhtiorskaya. “To say that we’re all polymorphously perverse, that we all have bisexual fantasies. It’s modern.”

And as for the charge that psychoanalysis isn’t results-oriented, try explaining that to the moneymakers, who seem to see a return on the investment. One of the treatments Mr. Zechory offers is a hybrid therapy-coaching practice. His clientele: Start-up founders.

PHOTOS: Below, the psychoanalyst Orna Guralnik in “Couples Therapy,” and Viggo Mortensen, left, as Sigmund Freud and Michael Fassbender as Carl Jung in the 2011 film “A Dangerous Method.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SHOWTIME; SHOWTIME SONY PICTURES CLASSICS) This article appeared in print on page ST10.

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[***He Went After Crypto Companies. Then Someone Came After Him.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68GV-7371-JBG3-62PW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Kyle Roche was a rising star in the field of cryptocurrency law — until his career imploded. Who orchestrated his downfall?

When he arrived in London in late January 2022, Kyle Roche was riding high. At just 34 years old, he had established himself as one of the biggest players in the burgeoning field of cryptocurrency litigation. He boasted a law firm bearing his name, lawsuits filed against more than a dozen crypto companies and a huge verdict against the man who claimed to have invented Bitcoin.

Now a new opportunity beckoned. Two businessmen had flown Mr. Roche over from Miami to discuss investing in a new business venture he was forming. A waiting car whisked him from Heathrow Airport to meet the men in a plush townhouse in Mayfair.

That evening, Mr. Roche went to dinner with one of the men, who identified himself as Mauricio Andres Villavicencio de Aguilar. Mr. Villavicencio, who said he was from Argentina, had picked one of London’s fanciest restaurants, Jean-Georges in the Connaught hotel.

When he woke up the next morning, Mr. Roche says, he felt groggy. He couldn’t remember much aside from being pretty sure he had spotted Mr. Villavicencio’s business partner, a Norwegian named Christen Ager-Hanssen, lurking at a nearby table. The brain fog was odd because he didn’t think he’d had all that much to drink. As he flew back to Miami a few days later, Mr. Roche couldn’t shake the feeling that something was amiss.

Months passed. Then, one day last summer, Mr. Roche’s world detonated. A website called [*Crypto Leaks*](https://cryptoleaks.info/) posted [*two dozen videos*](https://cryptoleaks.info/case-no-3) of him that had been secretly recorded during his meetings with Mr. Villavicencio and Mr. Ager-Hanssen.

The videos portrayed Mr. Roche and his law firm, Roche Freedman, as being in the pocket of one of their crypto clients. In one clip, Mr. Roche revealed that the client, a company called Ava Labs, had granted him tens of millions of dollars’ worth of its digital tokens, making him beholden to the company and its founder, whom he likened to a “brother.”

In other clips, Mr. Roche made it sound like his sole concern, even when representing other clients, was to promote Ava Labs’ interests. He bragged that he had managed to distract regulators from looking into Ava Labs and suggested that his lawsuits against other crypto companies were designed to harm Ava Labs’ competitors.

In the videos filmed at Jean-Georges, Mr. Roche looked intoxicated, waving his hands, cursing and referring to jurors as “idiots.”

After he got over his initial shock, Mr. Roche realized he had a major problem on his hands. The videos made him look corrupt. To defend himself, he published [*a piece*](https://medium.com/@kyleroche/my-response-b691563c255b) on Medium saying they had been “illegally obtained” and “spliced out of context,” and he denied being in cahoots with Ava Labs.

It was too late. One after another, companies that Roche Freedman had sued filed motions to disqualify the firm from their cases. In October, the first of those motions succeeded: A federal judge in New York tossed Roche Freedman from a case it had filed against Tether, the operator of the world’s most used “stablecoin.”

Within days, Mr. Roche was forced to resign from the law firm he had founded. With his career in tatters, he says, he enrolled in ethics classes and began to see a therapist.

Mr. Roche was felled by his own loose lips and his overly cozy relationship with a client. But he also was the victim of an elaborate international setup.

The question was: Who was behind it?

The New Sheriff

Mr. Roche grew up in a ***working-class*** family in Buffalo. The oldest of four siblings, he shared a bedroom with intellectually disabled twin brothers. Watching them struggle with simple tasks while he breezed through school made Mr. Roche feel both guilty and determined to succeed so he could one day provide for them.

After attending Purdue University and working for a few years as a management consultant, he enrolled at Northwestern University’s Pritzker School of Law. During his first semester, in the fall of 2013, he caught the crypto bug. Joe Delich, a classmate who later worked with Mr. Roche at his law firm, remembers him constantly checking the price of Bitcoin on his laptop during classes. Mr. Roche cashed out before a big price drop, earning about $100,000 in profits. He used the money to pay his tuition.

As a third-year student, Mr. Roche collaborated with a professor on [*a paper*](https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/ilj/vol94/iss4/6/) discussing Bitcoin’s virtues as the first currency free from government interference. That led to [*an opinion piece*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/why-bitcoin-is-booming-1499638932) in The Wall Street Journal.

“That was the first moment I thought, ‘Oh, wow, maybe I can do something with this,’” he said.

By then, Mr. Roche was a first-year associate at Boies Schiller Flexner, where he was developing a reputation as the kid who understood crypto. When a colleague in Miami approached him a few days after the Journal piece with a Bitcoin-related case, he jumped at the opportunity.

The case pitted a man named Ira Kleiman against Craig Wright, the Australian computer scientist who claims to be Bitcoin’s enigmatic creator, Satoshi Nakamoto. Mr. Kleiman wanted to sue Dr. Wright for defrauding his brother David, a paraplegic computer forensics expert who had died in his mid-40s, out of billions of dollars of Bitcoin they supposedly mined together in Bitcoin’s early days.

The facts were murky: There was evidence that Dr. Wright and David Kleiman had indeed been friends, and David Kleiman had been known to carry around his neck an encrypted hard drive that might or might not have contained the passwords to Bitcoin wallets. But many people considered Dr. Wright a fraud, calling into question the notion that he had mined early blocks of Bitcoin, much less cheated someone out of them.

To Mr. Roche, that was one of the allures of the case. If he could make Dr. Wright hand over his files during discovery, he might be able to solve Bitcoin’s great enduring mystery: Satoshi Nakamoto’s true identity. Mr. Roche and his young Miami colleague, Velvel Freedman, were soon devoting most of their time to the case.

In 2019, with the Kleiman case slowly progressing toward a trial, Mr. Roche met a new client, who was locked in a dispute with a crypto company. In a matter of days, he negotiated a lucrative settlement on the client’s behalf. As a token of his gratitude, the client agreed to invest $7.5 million with Mr. Roche and Mr. Freedman so they could start their own law firm. At first, Mr. Roche set up shop in a co-working space in Brooklyn, but when the pandemic hit he joined Mr. Freedman in Miami.

Their firm, Roche Freedman, soon made a splash. Mr. Roche had watched with increasing skepticism as a number of crypto start-ups rode Bitcoin’s growing popularity by marketing new digital coins that surged in value and then crashed. It reminded him of pump-and-dump scams in which a group inflates the price of a stock by talking it up publicly before selling all at once and making off with the profits.

Regulators didn’t seem to be doing anything about it, so Mr. Roche decided he would. On April 3, 2020, Roche Freedman filed lawsuits seeking class action status against seven issuers of digital coins, alleging they had pumped what amounted to unregistered securities with false statements and then dumped them, leaving retail investors holding the bag.

It also sued four crypto exchanges for enabling the coin issuers’ conduct, foreshadowing some of the legal arguments the Securities and Exchange Commission used [*to sue*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/07/business/sec-lawsuit-crytocurrency-explainer.html) Binance and Coinbase this month. (Binance and Coinbase have vowed to fight the S.E.C. in court.)

Those suits were just an opening salvo: Sixteen months later, Mr. Roche filed his biggest securities fraud case yet. It alleged that a British entrepreneur, Dominic Williams, and entities he controlled had swindled investors out of billions of dollars by aggressively promoting, and then dumping, a digital coin tied to a grandiose plan to revolutionize computing.

Mr. Williams had boldly proclaimed that his Internet Computer blockchain — a decentralized network of computers powered by a digital token called ICP — would supplant the big cloud services offered by Amazon and Microsoft and become humanity’s primary computing platform. But after an initial surge that briefly made it one of the most valuable cryptocurrencies, ICP had plummeted 92 percent — a collapse that Mr. Roche’s lawsuit attributed to “massive” selling by Mr. Williams and other insiders. (Mr. Williams denied the allegations.)

If crypto was the Wild West of finance, Mr. Roche had announced himself as the new sheriff. But sheriffs, as he would soon learn, make enemies.

A Big Verdict

Around the time Mr. Roche was working on his first pump-and-dump lawsuits, he befriended Emin Gun Sirer, a Cornell University computer science professor who was hatching a cryptocurrency project of his own in the Brooklyn co-working space where Mr. Roche initially worked. Mr. Roche agreed to do legal work for Dr. Sirer’s company, Ava Labs, in exchange for an equity stake and a small percentage of the cryptocurrency tokens it planned to issue.

Such arrangements aren’t uncommon in the tech industry. Mr. Roche’s former boss David Boies had struck a similar one with Theranos, the blood-testing company whose founder, Elizabeth Holmes, was later convicted of fraud. The scandals involving Theranos and another client, Harvey Weinstein, had [*badly tarnished*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/21/business/david-boies-pleads-not-guilty.html) Mr. Boies’s reputation, but to Mr. Roche he remained a role model.

When Mr. Roche reached his deal with Dr. Sirer in September 2019, he says, there was no guarantee that Dr. Sirer’s project would be successful. At the time, the tokens granted to him were valued at less than 3 cents each.

A year later, Dr. Sirer’s blockchain, Avalanche, went live. As crypto fever spread, its AVAX tokens rocketed to more than $100, making Mr. Roche a multimillionaire.

Mr. Roche’s compensation agreement with Ava Labs was supposed to be confidential, but anyone who wanted to gather intel on him would soon be able to find out about it. In February 2021, Roche Freedman fired one of its partners, Jason Cyrulnik. He hit back with a lawsuit that disclosed each partner’s share of the AVAX tokens.

That fall, Kleiman v. Wright went to trial in U.S. District Court in Miami. Mr. Roche gave a fiery opening statement during which he repeatedly pointed an accusatory finger at Dr. Wright.

In the end, the trial didn’t resolve whether Dr. Wright had really invented Bitcoin, but the jury ordered him to pay $100 million in damages to a company Ira Kleiman had inherited from his dead brother. (The judge later tacked on $43 million in interest.) Mr. Roche and Mr. Freedman toasted over cocktails at a Miami restaurant. Their law firm stood to make more than $10 million.

With the Kleiman trial over, Mr. Roche turned to a project he and Dr. Sirer had been discussing: Ryval, a company that would help people raise money on Avalanche to pay for lawsuits. Mr. Roche saw it as a GoFundMe for litigation and thought it could level the legal playing field between individuals and big corporations.

But while he was plotting his new venture, someone was plotting his downfall.

The Setup

In December 2021, Mr. Roche received an email from someone he trusted introducing him to Mr. Villavicencio, according to a copy of the message reviewed by The New York Times. Mr. Villavicencio presented himself as an associate of Mr. Ager-Hanssen, a venture capitalist who was interested in Mr. Roche’s new project. Mr. Roche had no idea who the two men were, but he welcomed the approach: He was raising money for Ryval, which had received some attention in the crypto press.

After an introductory Zoom call, Mr. Roche agreed to fly to London at the men’s expense the next month.

They met at Mr. Ager-Hanssen’s townhouse office, where things soon took a strange turn: According to Mr. Roche, Mr. Ager-Hanssen pressed his index finger to Mr. Roche’s forehead — “I didn’t think it was a gun motion, but I thought he was trying to intimidate me” — and said that if he was going to invest with him, he needed to know everything Mr. Roche was capable of.

In hindsight, Mr. Roche wishes he had gotten up and left. Instead, he took it as a cue to sell himself harder. According to Mr. Roche, Mr. Ager-Hanssen spent the next couple of hours goading him into bragging about his relationship with Ava Labs while Mr. Villavicencio, who was sitting across a table from him, secretly filmed him.

Armed with the information he had gleaned from the lawsuit filed by the fired Roche Freedman partner, Mr. Ager-Hanssen coaxed Mr. Roche into saying he had been granted 1 percent of the supply of Avalanche’s AVAX tokens. At the time, that would have been equivalent to more than $100 million. (Mr. Roche says he exaggerated the 1 percent figure, and AVAX tokens have since lost 80 percent of their value.)

Mr. Ager-Hanssen then asked Mr. Roche to give examples of how he had made himself useful to Ava Labs executives.

“They haven’t been sued yet, and there’s a reason for that,” said the baby-faced Mr. Roche, wearing a blazer over a button-down shirt and sweater, according to a video clip from the meeting.

“Brilliant,” Mr. Ager-Hanssen replied. “Good answer.”

Mr. Roche later elaborated. “I deal with making sure that the S.E.C. and the C.F.T.C. have other magnets to go after,” he said, referring to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. He added, “Litigation can be a tool” to attack competition. “It’s a fantastic tool.”

That night, when Mr. Roche got to Jean-Georges, he says, he found Mr. Villavicencio at a table and a drink waiting for him. Mr. Roche recalls Mr. Ager-Hanssen arriving about 15 minutes later and sitting at a nearby table with a tall blond man. Mr. Roche says the rest of the evening was a blur. He now believes the drink was laced with a drug, though he has no proof.

In one video clip from the restaurant, Mr. Roche revels in his power to crush companies with lawsuits. In another, Mr. Villavicencio asks him whether Ava Labs has sued any of its competitors. Mr. Roche replies, “No, they have me do that on behalf of the class,” suggesting that he filed his class actions against other crypto companies at Ava Labs’ behest.

After the dinner at Jean-Georges, Mr. Roche never saw Mr. Villavicencio again, though he did meet one last time with Mr. Ager-Hanssen in New York.

On Aug. 26, Mr. Roche was in California to attend a wedding when one of his clients came across the Crypto Leaks videos on Twitter and sent him a link.

Blindsided, he scrambled to understand when and where they had been recorded. Once he pieced it together, he called Mr. Freedman and reached out to clients to do damage control.

Mr. Roche’s biggest worry was his comments suggesting he had filed lawsuits to harm Ava Labs’ competitors and to distract regulators. It was baseless bluster, he now says, blaming the blue-collar kid in him who was trying to impress a prospective investor. He says he started putting together the first lawsuits a month before he met Dr. Sirer, the Ava Labs founder.

Dr. Sirer [*denied*](https://el33th4x0r.medium.com/my-statement-about-the-crypto-leaks-lies-ef2005da752) that he or Ava Labs had anything to do with those lawsuits, some of which he said he strongly disagreed with. Six weeks before Crypto Leaks published its videos, Ava Labs’ general counsel wrote [*an article*](https://www.crowdfundinsider.com/2022/07/193572-oranges-are-not-securities-and-neither-is-sol/) criticizing one of the Roche Freedman lawsuits as “scurrilous.”

To insulate his law firm, Mr. Roche recused himself from the lawsuits Roche Freedman had filed against crypto companies, sold his stake in Ava Labs back to the company and stopped representing it. (Mr. Roche declined to say whether he profited on the sale.)

When it became clear that wouldn’t be enough, he resigned from his firm, which was renamed Freedman Normand Friedland.

‘Someone That Doesn’t Exist’

A week after the videos surfaced, Mr. Roche got another jolt: A friend of one of his colleagues reported that he had heard rumors at a crypto event that Mr. Roche’s life was in danger, according to an affidavit later filed in court. Spooked, Mr. Roche and his fiancée hunkered down in a short-term rental in Brooklyn.

Mr. Roche felt that his world was unraveling. He says he became so stressed that he stopped eating and lost 10 pounds. After several weeks, he and his fiancée returned to Miami but, still worried for their safety, moved to an apartment leased under a relative’s name.

While Mr. Roche’s career imploded, Mr. Ager-Hanssen [*called for*](https://twitter.com/agerhanssen/status/1564780966413058050?s=20) Mr. Roche’s disbarment and [*tweeted*](https://twitter.com/agerhanssen/status/1570179665943461888?s=20) about a report he had compiled on Mr. Roche that largely repeated the Crypto Leaks allegations. He also emailed Mr. Cyrulnik, the former Roche Freedman partner, and offered to help him prove his case against Mr. Roche and his former firm.

To Mr. Roche, the implication was clear: Mr. Ager-Hanssen had set him up.

In an interview, Mr. Ager-Hanssen denied that. “This was not an operation run by me at all,” he said. “It was run by someone else.” He said that he had been genuinely interested in investing in Ryval, that Mr. Villavicencio had filmed the videos at his office without his knowledge and that he wasn’t at Jean-Georges that night. Mr. Ager-Hanssen said he thought he knew who was behind the operation, but he wouldn’t reveal the person’s identity.

Mr. Villavicencio, for his part, seems to have disappeared. Attempts to reach him at the phone number and email address he gave Mr. Roche were unsuccessful.

Mr. Ager-Hanssen said he didn’t know Mr. Villavicencio’s whereabouts. He said he had met the man only a few weeks before Mr. Roche came to London and allowed that Villavicencio was probably not his real name. “Of course, it’s someone that doesn’t exist,” he said.

But Mr. Ager-Hanssen, in addition to running his venture capital firm, has long had a sideline digging up dirt on behalf of wealthy clients entangled in business disputes in Britain and Scandinavia.

On multiple occasions, he has secretly recorded his targets. For example, in a [*2014 interview*](https://www.dn.no/magasinet/dokumentar/stockholm/q-rapporten/1-1-5269082), he recounted how he had snared the adversary of a Swedish financier with a hidden microphone and boasted that he employed former intelligence officers from the C.I.A., MI6 and Mossad.

But if Mr. Ager-Hanssen did set Mr. Roche up, who hired him to do it — and why?

A Series of Clues

Plenty of people had reason to celebrate Mr. Roche’s downfall.

First in line were Dr. Wright, the man who claims to be Satoshi Nakamoto, and Calvin Ayre, a gambling tycoon who bankrolls Dr. Wright. Dr. Wright quickly sought to exploit the videos, filing an unsuccessful motion to disqualify Roche Freedman from the Kleiman case. And after the videos came out, Mr. Ager-Hanssen became chief executive of nChain, a company that Mr. Ayre funds and that employs Dr. Wright as chief science officer.

Through a spokeswoman, Mr. Ayre acknowledged that he and Dr. Wright were “pleased” when the videos came out. But they denied having anything to do with the London sting.

Mr. Roche believes them because he thinks he knows who hired Mr. Ager-Hanssen: Mr. Williams, the British entrepreneur who was the target of Roche Freedman’s biggest pump-and-dump lawsuit.

A series of clues, documented by his former law firm in court filings, led Mr. Roche to that conclusion. The first is that on May 12, 2022, Mr. Williams [*wrote on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/dominic_w/status/1524809701145333761?s=20) that he was “coming for” his critics. That was the same day the cryptoleaks.info domain name [*was registered*](https://who.is/whois/cryptoleaks.info).

Then, on June 9, 2022, the Crypto Leaks website went live. Billing itself as the defender of “the honest crypto community,” it posted two reports that aligned with Mr. Williams’s interests. The first espoused a complicated theory about the ICP token crash that Mr. Williams had previously floated on Twitter.

The second attacked The Times for [*an article*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/28/business/dealbook/icp-cryptocurrency-crash.html) it had published about the crash. Mr. Williams [*tweeted a link*](https://twitter.com/dominic_w/status/1535285899583533057?s=20) to that Crypto Leaks report, calling it “Gobsmacking.” The Dfinity Foundation, a Swiss nonprofit that Mr. Williams created to oversee his blockchain, has since sued The Times for defamation in New York. The Times is seeking to dismiss the suit.

The videos of Mr. Roche were the crux of Crypto Leaks’ third exposé. After they were published, Mr. Williams and Dfinity filed a motion to disqualify Roche Freedman as plaintiffs’ counsel in the pump-and-dump lawsuit, saying Mr. Roche’s comments demonstrated “a disregard for the integrity of the judicial system.”

In court filings opposing the motion, Mr. Roche’s former firm accused Mr. Williams of being behind Crypto Leaks and said the videos filmed at Jean-Georges showed signs of deepfake alterations. It also blamed Mr. Williams for the rumored death threats against Mr. Roche.

Pete Padovano, a spokesman for Dfinity and Mr. Williams, denied that anyone at the foundation had made death threats. Asked if he was connected to Crypto Leaks, Mr. Williams said, “We appreciate the coverage of Crypto Leaks and believe their articles speak for themselves.”

Mr. Roche spent last fall lying low, but he has recently begun to rebuild his career as a solo practitioner.

In April, he won a $12.5 million verdict on behalf of six former Cantor Fitzgerald partners who sued the Wall Street firm for withholding some of their compensation. The judgment, which Cantor has appealed, opened the way for Mr. Roche to file a separate class action against the firm. Mr. Roche is also representing dozens of investors in a dispute with Coinbase.

But Mr. Roche’s videotaped remarks continue to dog him and his former firm. Last month, the judge overseeing the pump-and-dump case granted Mr. Williams’s motion and disqualified Freedman Normand Friedland as plaintiffs’ counsel.

The judge cited Mr. Freedman’s continuing friendship with Mr. Roche — and the fact that they together control a cryptocurrency wallet holding more than a million AVAX tokens. He also voiced concern that the law firm was consumed by “extreme animosity” toward Mr. Williams, which might lead it to turn down equitable settlement offers.

Unless the lead plaintiff can enlist new lawyers by August, the lawsuit is essentially dead. In Mr. Roche’s view, the plot against him worked to perfection.

PHOTOS: Kyle Roche, a cryptocurrency lawyer, in Brooklyn last month. In late 2022, he was forced to resign from the law firm he had founded three years earlier. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GILI BENITA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BU1); Top, the Connaught Hotel in London, where Kyle Roche said he believes his drink was laced with a drug by a man he was meeting with. Above, Dominic Williams, a target of one of Mr. Roche’s lawsuits. Above right, Emin Gun Sirer of Ava Labs. Right, Christen Ager-Hanssen, a Norwegian venture capitalist and one of the men who invited Mr. Roche to London. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSHUA BRIGHT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; STEPHEN McCARTHY/SPORTSFILE, VIA GETTY IMAGES; MATTHEW BUSCH/BLOOMBERG; SHUTTERSTOCK) (BU6-BU7) This article appeared in print on page BU1, BU6, BU7.

**Load-Date:** June 18, 2023

**End of Document**



[***8 New Books Coming in December***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6452-H0T1-DXY4-X0XS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 24, 2021 Wednesday 16:28 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 571 words

**Byline:** Joumana Khatib

**Highlight:** A Booker Prize finalist based on a true story, essays from Siri Hustvedt, an imaginative biography of John Milton and more.

**Body**

A Booker Prize finalist based on a true story, essays from Siri Hustvedt, an imaginative biography of John Milton and more.

‘[*The Ballerinas*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9781250274236),’ by Rachel Kapelke-Dale (St. Martin’s, Dec. 7)

In this debut thriller, three dancers try to conceal their secrets at the Paris Opera Ballet. Delphine is back in Paris after years in St. Petersburg, choreographing a new ballet and hoping to reconcile with her former friends, but their shared past threatens to topple the production.

[*Read our review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/24/books/review/the-ballerinas-rachel-kapelke-dale.html)

‘[*Creative Types: And Other Stories*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/634995/creative-types-by-tom-bissell/),’ by Tom Bissell (Pantheon, Dec. 14)

Expect plenty of satire and uncomfortably funny scenarios for the characters in this collection, which run the gamut from a literary magazine assistant to a couple considering a threesome to a Bush administration lawyer.

‘[*The Fortune Men*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/703359/the-fortune-men-by-nadifa-mohamed/),’ by Nadifa Mohamed (Knopf, Dec. 14)

This novel taps the real-life story of a Somali sailor in Wales who was falsely accused of murder. With this book, Mohamed became the first British Somali writer [*shortlisted for the Booker Prize*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/14/books/booker-prize-2021-shortlist.html), and she [*said in an interview*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/books/nadifa-mohamed-fortune-men.html) that writing the novel, despite its tragic premise, was “cathartic.”

[*Read our interview with Mohamed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/books/nadifa-mohamed-fortune-men.html)

‘[*Garbo*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374298357/garbo),’ by Robert Gottlieb (Farrar, Straus &amp; Giroux, Dec. 7)

A veteran editor of The New Yorker and Knopf attempts to pin down the life of an actress known for her elusiveness. Greta Garbo stopped acting in her 30s and appeared in just 24 Hollywood films, yet left an outsize influence. Gottlieb traces her life from her early years in ***working-class*** Stockholm through her later years living as “a hermit about town” in New York, and includes clips from scholars, co-stars and critics that offer fresh perspectives on her life.

‘[*Making Darkness Light: A Life of John Milton*](https://www.basicbooks.com/titles/joe-moshenska/making-darkness-light/9781541620681/),’ by Joe Moshenska (Basic, Dec. 7)

An Oxford professor offers an imaginative biography of the 17th-century poet that sets out to capture Milton’s “desire to escape time, to be perennially contemporary.” Readers learn about his adolescence, a pivotal journey to Italy during which Milton met Galileo, and his later years, along with Milton’s own influence on the author.

‘[*Mothers, Fathers and Others: Essays*](https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/Mothers-Fathers-and-Others/Siri-Hustvedt/9781982176396),’ by Siri Hustvedt (Simon &amp; Schuster, Dec. 7)

This new collection draws on Hustvedt’s ancestors, both literary and familial. (The opening selection begins: “My paternal grandmother was ornery, fat, and formidable.”) She touches on her intellectual forebears, ruminates on the allure of mentorship and perhaps above all, wrestles with the peculiarities of motherhood.

‘[*Twenty Years Later*](https://www.kensingtonbooks.com/9781496727169/twenty-years-later/),’ by Charlie Donlea (Kensington, Dec. 28)

Victoria, the mysterious character at the center of this literary thriller, was killed on Sept. 11 while meeting with her lawyer in one of the towers. She had been accused of killing her lover, and her case was essentially forgotten until some of her remains are discovered decades later. But the discovery forces a new reckoning with the truth, leading a journalist and a retired F.B.I. agent to reconsider the mystery.

‘[*White on White*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/669773/white-on-white-by-aysegul-savas/),’ by Aysegül Savas (Riverhead, Dec. 7)

A graduate student moves to a new city to study Gothic nudes, “an ambiguous topic, whose greatest challenge would be one of consciousness: to view the naked human form as medievals did.” Her conversations with her landlord, a painter named Agnes, veer from artistic meditations to personal history, and the student’s original area of study takes on a deeper dimension.

[*Read our review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/23/books/review-white-on-white-aysegul-savas.html)

PHOTO

**Load-Date:** December 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Scranton Mulls Vote for a Proud Son***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:613H-P671-DXY4-X4D1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 19, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1601 words

**Byline:** By Sabrina Tavernise

**Body**

Scranton, Pa., is no longer the dying coal town of Joseph Biden's youth. It is more racially diverse and prosperous, and not everyone there is enthusiastic about his candidacy.

SCRANTON, Pa. -- Despite it all, Gabriel Perez, the Empanada King of Scranton, is still hopeful about America.

In the first few months of the pandemic, ''it was scary, business dropped for a little while,'' he said. But now, more people are ordering delivery from his small shop where he has been serving steaming beef and chicken empanadas to go since 2016. Last month he invested in a renovation of his kitchen, with new equipment and a fresh coat of paint.

Mr. Perez did not vote for Donald J. Trump in 2016. He did not vote at all. But he does not dislike him. Mr. Trump's book ''The Art of the Deal'' gave him ''guidelines for how to run my business: No matter how many times you make a mistake, just keep going.''

And while he does not think he will vote for President Trump this year, he is not sold on former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. either.

''The Democrats and Republicans are both lost,'' he said a few weeks ago in his shop, a Biden ad on mute on the television on the wall. ''They are not giving solutions. They just want you to pick their side.''

In the final weeks of the campaign, Mr. Biden has made Scranton, his hometown, a major part of his closing pitch. ''I really do view this campaign as a campaign between Scranton and Park Avenue,'' he said at a CNN event in town last month. Embedded in Mr. Biden's shorthand is that he can win back the paradigmatic Scranton voter: white, ***working class***, disaffected by Democrats.

But Scranton is no longer the dying coal town of Mr. Biden's youth. It is both more racially diverse and prosperous. In more than two dozen interviews the week of Mr. Biden's visit, few voters were particularly enthusiastic about his candidacy, despite his personal roots, but about half said they probably would vote for him anyway. Voters who abandoned the Democratic Party in 2016 said they planned to vote for Mr. Trump again this year. Some people said they were so fed up with politics that they were not going to vote at all. Others expressed annoyance at what they said was Mr. Biden's habit of making Scranton into a kind of blue-collar cartoon.

At the town-hall-style event, held six miles from downtown in a stadium parking lot, Mr. Biden said that not many people in Scranton owned stock.

''Frankly, it was insulting,'' said Frances Keating, 74, a retired accountant who has lived in Scranton most of her life. ''He's using Scranton as a prop.''

Still, she said she planned to vote for Mr. Biden because ''Trump is a monster.''

Scranton has become a symbol for Democrats' lost dreams in 2016, when ***working-class*** voters abandoned the party in droves. The city itself is blue. But the surrounding county, Lackawanna, and a neighboring one, Luzerne, had the second- and third-largest swings toward Mr. Trump of any county with more than 100,000 voters in the United States. The surge was enough to cover his 44,000-vote victory in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Trump is trailing in the state by seven percentage points, but the enthusiasm he enjoys among many ancestral Democrats in Scranton highlights the challenges Mr. Biden still faces in a state regarded by both parties as a must-win next month.

Kim Anzelmi, a former meat inspector, was watching television after dinner in a suburb of Scranton last month when Mr. Biden flashed on the screen.

''Mr. President, do your job,'' Mr. Biden said.

Ms. Anzelmi scoffed. She said that she was tired of hearing from progressives that she had privilege because she was white and that she feared a Biden presidency would only give them more power.

''I put myself through college,'' said Ms. Anzelmi, who is 55 and whose vote for Mr. Trump in 2016 was the first she had ever cast for president. ''I was a security guard at Sears. I worked in meat plants where I was the only woman. Now you tell me I'm entitled?''

That Mr. Biden is from this area did not matter. Ms. Anzelmi plans to vote for Mr. Trump again. But in a sign of how complicated politics have become within families, her husband -- an immigrant from Uruguay who got his citizenship in 2009 but has never voted -- likes Mr. Biden and said he thought he might vote for him.

Mr. Trump ''is crazy,'' he said, sitting in an armchair near his wife. ''He speaks too much.''

He asked his wife why she liked him.

''I agree with Trump because I got screwed,'' she said.

''But nobody does nothing for you,'' he said. ''It's going to be the same.''

A saw-shaped spot on the map whose coal mines drew immigrants from Europe in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Scranton has a population that peaked in the 1930s and declined sharply in the following decades.

In the early 2000s, the economy began to pick up. Located at the intersection of several major Interstate highways, logistics companies and warehouses began to open up. The economic engines that powered revivals in places like Pittsburgh -- education and health care -- have grown too. Colleges have expanded dramatically. A new medical school has opened.

Demographics have changed too. Hispanics are now about 14 percent of the population in Scranton. In Hazleton, a city in Luzerne County, they make up more than half. Scranton now has two Hindu temples and Indian grocery stores that serve South Asians working in the hospitals and at a nearby T.J. Maxx warehouse.

But immigrants in Scranton do not all default to the Democratic Party.

The day after Mr. Biden's visit, Dipen Vyas was standing outside his Indian food supply store with two friends. All of them were Indian immigrant business owners and all had voted for Mr. Trump in 2016. They liked that he was a businessman, and that he had promised to be tough on illegal immigration.

But they could not decide whether to vote for Mr. Trump again. On the one hand, Indians who had been waiting years for permanent residence were now being rejected. On the other, the president seemed to have struck up a strong relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India. But they liked Mr. Biden too. He was from Scranton. And he had already been vice president, so he knew the ropes.

''I'm going to toss the coin,'' Mr. Vyas said. ''Heads or tails.''

On Scranton's South Side, where new arrivals from Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean are now moving into houses that used to belong to immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, Mr. Perez at the empanada shop, Papi's Kitchen, was reflecting on the political decision before him.

In 2016, Mr. Perez preferred Bernie Sanders. Health care for everyone and free tuition made sense to him. But he did not vote after Mr. Sanders lost the Democratic nomination. That year, he opened his empanada shop in what used to be a pizza takeout place.

Now the Democrats' main pitch seems to be to get rid of Mr. Trump. But Mr. Perez, 45, did not feel very excited by that.

Democrats are too preoccupied with race, he said, and too negative on America.

''I didn't come from a great background, but for me to be where I am today, that's America,'' said Mr. Perez, who grew up in a ***working-class*** Puerto Rican family in Newark but said he sometimes felt that Democrats reduced him to his ethnic background.

He added, ''I mean is Biden really going to change anything?''

Few in town personally objected to Mr. Biden, even those who support Mr. Trump.

''It's not really even about Biden,'' said Eddie Franklin, who, together with other Trump supporters, was parked by the side of the road that led to Mr. Biden's event. What worried him was how weak Mr. Biden seemed, and how that might allow less moderate Democrats to take over.

Mr. Franklin, 68, who works in a car lot, said that he came from a long line of coal miners who were Democrats, but that the party had moved too far left. A sign saying, ''Democrat never again, my eyes are open,'' was taped to his back window.

He said he felt slightly sorry for Mr. Biden, stuck in a stadium parking lot.

Mr. Trump, on the other hand, was still exciting.

''Trump people really believe in him. They're not like, 'I'm voting for Trump because he's a Republican.'''

The largest concentration of Biden yard signs was in the Green Ridge neighborhood, where Mr. Biden grew up, which includes large stately houses with awnings and wide porches.

''Joe Biden is the best shot that Scranton has ever really had in my lifetime,'' said Joseph Corcoran, a former county commissioner who grew up in an Irish-American family about 12 blocks from Mr. Biden's house.

But liking Mr. Biden did not always translate into voting. A worker at Hank's Hoagies, a sandwich shop a few blocks from Mr. Biden's childhood house, said he liked Mr. Biden but had not voted for president since 2004 and did not think he would this time either. Politicians ''are just so corrupt,'' he said. That cynicism has settled deeply in Scranton. This month, the former mayor, a Democrat, was sentenced to seven years for extorting contractors, part of a long line of public corruption scandals in the area.

Turnout is what worried Michael McDermott, the business manager at International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local No. 81. Not enough union members voted in 2016 to keep Mr. Trump from winning Pennsylvania.

''Trump's numbers aren't going to change that much,'' he said. ''What we need is for our numbers to change.''

He predicted that many who did not turn out in 2016 would show up for Mr. Biden this year. Still, he is worried.

''I'm not sleeping peacefully,'' he said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/18/us/scranton-biden-democrats.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/18/us/scranton-biden-democrats.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Scranton, Pa., is a blue city, but many ***working-class*** voters abandoned the Democrats in 2016. Observers say turnout will be key. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK MAKELA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. has made his Scranton roots part of his political image, but President Trump is enjoying enthusiasm among many former Democrats in the area. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES

MARK MAKELA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***West Virginia Is Increasingly Hostile Turf For Democrats***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62W1-7201-JBG3-6503-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 8, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 10; NEWS ANALYSIS

**Length:** 992 words

**Byline:** By Nate Cohn

**Body**

Mr. Manchin stands in the way of the Biden administration's expansive agenda. But in his home state, progressive Democrats with far-reaching policy goals are not his base -- and he knows it.

With the fate of the progressive agenda depending on the support of Senator Joe Manchin III, who said again on Sunday that he would not abandon the filibuster to pass an expansive voting rights bill, interest groups and activists are gearing up for a full push to try to sway the moderate Democrat. It would be enough to make almost any Democratic politician in the country squirm.

But probably not a Democrat from West Virginia.

None of the demographic groups that animate today's Democratic coalition are well-represented in the state. Black, Hispanic, college-educated, young, urban and professional voters all represent a much smaller share of the electorate in West Virginia than just about anywhere else.

White voters without a four-year degree, Donald Trump's demographic base, made up 69 percent of voters there in 2020, according to census data, the highest in the country. Mr. Trump won West Virginia with 69 percent of the vote in 2020, more than in every state but Wyoming.

With those sorts of numbers, it's hard to understand how Mr. Manchin is a Democratic senator at all in today's polarized era. His state voted for Mr. Trump by 39 points last November; no other member of the House or Senate represents constituents, in either their state or district, who voted for the other party's presidential candidate by more than 16 points.

Yet Mr. Manchin's unique ability to survive in West Virginia is the last vestige of the state's once-reliable New Deal Democratic tradition, dating to old industrial-era fights over workers' wages, rights and safety. It was one of the most reliably Democratic states of the second half of the 20th century, voting in defeat for Adlai Stevenson in 1952, Hubert Humphrey, Jimmy Carter in 1980 and Michael Dukakis. The so-called Republican ''Southern strategy'' yielded no inroads there.

But Democrats began to lose their grip on the state during the 1990s, at least at the presidential level. In a way, West Virginia voters have been thwarting progressive hopes ever since. The promise of a new progressive, governing majority always rested on the assumption that the Democrats would retain enough support among white, ***working-class*** voters, especially in the places where New Deal labor liberalism ran the strongest. They did not.

By the late 1990s, the old New Deal labor Democrats no longer defined the party nationally. And when in conflict, the party's growing left-liberal wing prevailed over ***working-class*** interests: New environmental regulations hurt West Virginia's already faltering coal industry; new gun control laws put Democrat at odds with an electorate where most voting households own a gun (in the 2018 exit polls, 78 percent of voters said someone in their household owned a gun).

In 2000, George W. Bush won the state. If Al Gore had captured its six electoral votes instead, he would have been the president. Most analysts, however, saw the Bush win as an anomaly. In ''The Emerging Democratic Majority,'' a book arguing that Democrats were on the cusp of an enduring advantage despite their defeat in the 2000 election, the authors projected West Virginia as a ''Lean Democratic'' state.

In retrospect, the loss of West Virginia was no anomaly. Democrats lost ground in every presidential election from 1996 until 2016, by which point the state had shifted nearly a net 60 points toward the Republicans over 20 years. It's part of a broader pattern, not only in the United States but also across the world: The old bastions of the industrial-era left have chosen the populist right over the new progressive left.

Nearly two decades later, Mr. Manchin is the only Democrat who holds statewide office in West Virginia. He might not have won the seat at all if he wasn't a popular governor when he ran for the Senate in 2010. To win, he ran an advertisement promising to take ''dead-aim'' at the Obama-era ''cap and trade'' bill, which hobbled the party throughout coal country. The ad showed him shooting a copy of the legislation, which aimed to set limits on greenhouse gas emissions but created a market for companies that cut pollution quickly to sell allowances to high polluters.

In 2018, Mr. Manchin may have only won re-election because of the favorable national environment that helped Democrats retake the House.

Today Republicans have the registration advantage in West Virginia for the first time since 1932, when Franklin D. Roosevelt won the presidency. Democrats had a 14-point voter registration advantage in West Virginia in 2016, when Mr. Trump won by 42 points -- the best showing of any presidential candidate from either party in the history of the state. They still had a 9-point advantage in 2018, when Mr. Manchin won re-election by 3 percentage points.

It is far too soon to evaluate Mr. Manchin's chances in 2024, but early indications are not promising.

Mr. Manchin voted to convict Mr. Trump at his impeachment trial in February, and he has been front and center in major legislative debates over enacting President Biden's agenda.

According to the Cooperative Election Study, a prominent academic survey, Mr. Manchin had just a 33 percent approval rating in October 2020, while 51 percent disapprove of his performance.

Mr. Manchin's departure, whether in 2024 or thereafter, will mark the end of an era. There will be no Senate Democrat whose electoral history and coalition are so completely at odds with the new activist base of the party. Progressives will be free from the burden of trying to lure a senator with such a conservative voting base.

But Democrats will also be weaker, at least in their numbers in the Senate, for not having found a way to forge a durable alliance with some of the most reliable Democratic voters of the 20th century.

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Supporters of Senator Joe Manchin III in Marmet, W.Va., in 2018. The state was a solid New Deal Democratic stronghold for decades. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 12, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Behind the Story: The Bridge Los Angeles Loves Too Much; California Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:661R-SYG1-DXY4-X4M5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 29, 2022 Friday 08:50 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1035 words

**Byline:** Soumya Karlamangla

**Highlight:** The new Sixth Street Viaduct in Los Angeles has become a target for graffiti artists and exhibitionist drivers.

**Body**

The new Sixth Street Viaduct in Los Angeles has become a target for graffiti artists and exhibitionist drivers.

LOS ANGELES — A couple grinned at each other as they glided on bicycles across this city’s newest landmark, a glistening concrete bridge that connects the downtown arts district to the ***working class*** neighborhood of Boyle Heights.

A man wearing a suit rode an electric scooter down its length. Drivers reached out of their car windows to snap photos of the arches that form the Sixth Street Viaduct, as the bridge is officially known.

Six years after [*demolition began*](https://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-0207-bridge-demolition-20160207-story.html) on its seismically unstable predecessor, the new Sixth Street Bridge opened earlier this month, and Angelenos love it. Maybe a little too much.

As my colleague Shawn Hubler and I [*reported this week*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/28/us/los-angeles-bridge-viaduct.html), the long-awaited $588 million bridge has proved irresistible to Los Angeles residents, including all kinds of troublemakers.

Within 24 hours of the bridge’s [*celebratory opening*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-07-09/the-6th-street-viaduct-opens-delivering-a-love-letter-to-los-angeles), graffiti artists had tagged concrete surfaces. Illegal street takeovers have covered the bridge’s pristine lanes in skid marks. Skateboarders and climbers are trying to scale the arches. A barber even commandeered the median to give haircuts one evening.

The mischief has led Los Angeles police to repeatedly shut down the bridge. The city is now considering installing speed bumps, a concrete median barrier and climbing deterrents.

“Look, unlike the Brooklyn Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge, this is the first major bridge to be built in the social media era,” said Councilman Kevin de León, whose district includes both the bridge and the communities that bookend it. “Folks are trying to get their virtual fame and go viral.”

On an afternoon in Boyle Heights this week, four police cars parked at the entrance to the bridge and officers poured out into the sidewalk. Nearby, customers buying cut mango and pineapple from a fruit vendor gossiped about problems at the new viaduct, drawing arches in the air with their fingers.

Darcy Gomez, who works at a 7-Eleven in Boyle Heights next to the bridge, told me that its opening had transformed the block. From her storefront window, we spotted teenagers skating the bridge and pedestrians with cameras embarking across the sun-drenched expanse.

Gomez, 25, said the officers circling here were no longer novel. And crowds of pedestrians and cars typically begin gathering around sundown to flood the bridge, sometimes making it hard for her to leave at the end of her shift, she said.

The problems with the bridge have chipped away at her initial impression of the project: that it’s a perfect, beautiful expanse to traverse, especially with your car windows rolled down.

“It’s nice to drive on and relax, but once you think about all the things that go on there when you’re not there, it’s like, ‘Ouch,’” she said.

The rest of the news

* Los Angeles mask mandate: Amid a drop in Covid infections and hospitalizations, Los Angeles County officials announced on Thursday that they would not instate an indoor mask mandate that had been planned to start this week, [*The Los Angeles Times reports.*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-07-28/l-a-county-presses-pause-button-on-mask-mandate)

1. Drought official quits: Max Gomberg, an official on the California State Water Resources Control Board, is resigning because he thinks Gov. Gavin Newsom isn’t doing enough to address the worsening drought, [*The Los Angeles Times reports*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-07-28/california-drought-official-blasts-newsom-administration).
2. Kavanaugh plot: A California man who’s accused of plotting to kill Justice Brett Kavanaugh had an expansive goal to change the makeup of the Supreme Court “for decades to come,” [*The Associated Press reports.*](https://apnews.com/article/us-supreme-court-california-brett-kavanaugh-government-and-politics-92d85658f9d6c0402108645877fa5c5a)

* Scandal at the Los Angeles Times: A book by a Los Angeles Times reporter has ignited debate about the way [*editors dealt with an explosive article about U.S.C. in 2017.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/28/business/media/los-angeles-times-bad-city-usc.html)

1. Gun laws: Burbank set a 45-day moratorium on new gun retailers while the city considers new restrictions on firearm sellers, [*The Los Angeles Times reports*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-07-27/burbank-moratorium-on-new-gun-dealers).
2. Councilman: Mark Ridley-Thomas, a Los Angeles city councilman, is suing City Hall to get his salary reinstated, [*The Los Angeles Times reports*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-07-28/ridley-thomas-sues-to-get-his-salary-reinstated).
3. Oil spill: The Orange County Board of Supervisors has accepted a nearly $1 million settlement to cover the costs of cleaning up an oil spill in Huntington Beach, [*The Los Angeles Times reports*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-07-28/orange-county-supervisors-approve-settlement-in-huntington-beach-oil-spill).

* Wildfire: At least 116 homes and other structures have been destroyed by the Oak fire near Yosemite National Park, [*The Associated Press reports*](https://apnews.com/article/wildfires-fires-california-13508b6eb90064badd97039f27fdb87f).
* Housing crisis: Fremont saw a 63 percent increase in its homeless population in the last three years, exacerbated by the pandemic and the increase of housing costs in the East Bay, [*The San Francisco Chronicle reports*](https://www.sfchronicle.com/eastbay/article/This-quiet-Bay-Area-suburb-saw-explosive-growth-17333139.php).

1. Monkeypox: San Francisco officials declared a state of emergency as monkeypox spreads, [*The San Francisco Chronicle*](https://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/monkeypox-sf-state-of-emergency-17335483.php) reports.

What we’re eating

[*Caramelized-scallion noodles.*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1019309-caramelized-scallion-noodles)

Where we’re traveling

Today’s tip comes from Mona Patel: “My favorite place to visit in California is Encinitas — lovely beaches, gorgeous gardens and less touristy than other coastal parts of San Diego County.”

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.

Tell us

What California stories, big or small, do you want us to cover? Send your tips to [*CAToday@nytimes.com*](mailto:CAToday@nytimes.com)

And before you go, some good news

Step into Video Wave, in San Francisco’s Noe Valley neighborhood, and you’ll find stacks of DVDs and VHS tapes piled high. Around since 1983, the business is the city’s last full-service video rental store.

Its owner, Colin Hutton, offers personalized film recommendations that outdo the algorithms of streaming services, [*The San Francisco Standard reports.*](https://sfstandard.com/video/the-holdouts-inside-sfs-sole-remaining-video-rental-store/) He has 27,000 films in his collection.

“I’ve been able to stay around and I probably shouldn’t have been,” Hutton said. “It’s really the community and their support that are why I’m still here.”

Thanks for reading. I’ll be back on Monday. — Soumya

P.S. Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: \_\_\_ firma (5 letters).

Isabella Grullón Paz and Briana Scalia 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: A person posed for a photo on the bridge earlier this month. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Mario Tama/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Meet the Candidates***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62VK-WPN1-DXY4-X2XN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 6, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1059 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Katie Glueck, Jeffery C. Mays, Dana Rubinstein, Umi Syam and Eden Weingart

**Body**

Eric Adams, 60, Democrat

Brooklyn borough president; former New York City police officer

Mr. Adams is running as a blue-collar New Yorker with deep ties to the city and experience in government. As a police officer, he was an advocate for reform from within the force, and he is a sharp critic of police brutality but does not embrace the ''defund the police'' movement. He has proposed that schools be open year-round. His outspoken manner sometimes gets him into trouble, as it did last year when he told gentrifiers to ''go back to Iowa.''

Art Chang, 58, Democrat

Former managing director at JPMorgan Chase

He ran a voter outreach program and wants to create universal day care for all children from age 1, to serve ''a city of people who primarily live on the edge.''

Shaun Donovan, 55, Democrat

Former federal housing secretary; former White House budget director

Mr. Donovan is a veteran of the Obama administration and the Bloomberg administration in New York City, and he has made his ties to the federal government a centerpiece of his campaign. He has released several policy proposals, including one to create ''15-minute neighborhoods'' to make sure every New Yorker has access to a good school, fresh food, transit and a park within 15 minutes of home.

Aaron Foldenauer, 45, Democrat

Lawyer

He previously ran for City Council in Lower Manhattan and has several ideas to improve the environment, including a ''Bicycle Superhighway'' that would run down Third Avenue in Manhattan.

Kathryn Garcia, 51, Democrat

Former city sanitation commissioner

Ms. Garcia is running as an experienced manager who could lead the city during a crisis. She oversaw the city's huge trash operation and is respected among many in city government. As part of the de Blasio administration, she helped distribute millions of meals to hungry New Yorkers during the pandemic.

Fernando Mateo, 63, Republican

Restaurant operator; former leader of a trade group for cabdrivers

Mr. Mateo has led groups representing livery drivers and bodega workers and runs a restaurant in the Bronx. He was born in the Dominican Republic and has ties to the city's Latino community. He has been involved in politics for years and was linked to a scandal over Mayor Bill de Blasio's fund-raising but was never charged.

Raymond J. McGuire, 64, Democrat

Former vice chairman at Citigroup

Mr. McGuire was recruited to run by members of the city's business community who feel they have not had a voice at City Hall since Michael R. Bloomberg was mayor from 2002 to 2013; they want someone with a financial background to guide the city's fiscal recovery. His first major proposal during his campaign was to create 500,000 good-paying jobs, but progressive voters may be wary of any candidate linked to Wall Street.

Dianne Morales, 53, Democrat

Former nonprofit executive

Ms. Morales has focused her campaign on improving life for poor and ***working-class*** New Yorkers. She has called for providing many of those residents with a guaranteed minimum income; cutting half of the $6 billion annual police budget to fund social services; and desegregating public schools.

Paperboy Prince, 28, Democrat

Former candidate for Congress; rapper

Paperboy Prince, from Brooklyn, is running on a platform of creating a universal basic income, abolishing the police and canceling rent -- a campaign to forgive unpaid rent for those who cannot afford it. Last year, the rapper ran to be the first nonbinary member of Congress but lost to Representative Nydia Velázquez.

Curtis Sliwa, 67, Republican

Radio talk show host; founder of the Guardian Angels

Mr. Sliwa said his campaign is about law and order, public safety and quality of life, specifically returning all three to the city's streets and subways. Calls by some to defund the Police Department have depleted morale, Mr. Sliwa said. He also criticized proposals by some Democratic candidates to provide a form of universal basic income for the city's poorest residents but wants to overhaul the property tax system to make it more equitable.

Scott M. Stringer, 61, Democrat

City comptroller; former Manhattan borough president

Mr. Stringer has worked in government for years and has suggested that his brand of capable, experienced manager is what New York needs. He is a public school parent, focusing his campaign on affordable housing and early childhood education. He has secured endorsements from a diverse set of progressive leaders and is the only candidate who has won citywide office before, but he is also a white man at a time when many Black, Latino and female candidates have been elected in the New York area.

Joycelyn Taylor, 55, Democrat

Chief executive of a general contracting firm

She is running as a ***working-class*** New Yorker who grew up in public housing. She wants to cancel rent for New Yorkers who cannot afford it and convert vacant office buildings into housing for the homeless.

Maya Wiley, 57, Democrat

Former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio; former chairwoman of the Civilian Complaint Review Board; former MSNBC analyst

Ms. Wiley says it is time for the city to elect its first mayor who is a Black woman. An expert on criminal justice issues and a favorite among progressives from her appearances on MSNBC, she wants to reform the Police Department and focus on inequality. She proposed a ''New Deal'' for New York that would create 100,000 jobs. Her work in the de Blasio administration may counter her image as an outsider.

Isaac Wright Jr., 59, Democrat

Lawyer

Mr. Wright was wrongfully convicted on drug charges in 1991. His story is the basis for the ABC television show ''For Life,'' where he is a producer, along with the rapper 50 Cent. He is calling for city control of the subway and desegregating public schools.

Andrew Yang, 46, Democrat

Former presidential candidate; former nonprofit executive

Mr. Yang has distinguished his campaign with bold, if unorthodox, ideas. He wants to give 500,000 low-income New Yorkers $2,000 per year -- a version of his universal basic income proposal from the 2020 presidential race -- and he has proposed building a casino on Governors Island. He has strong name recognition but has faced scrutiny over moving his family out of the city during the pandemic and over the workplace culture at his presidential campaign and businesses.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/nyregion/06nymayor-candidates.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/nyregion/06nymayor-candidates.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** June 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How Joe Manchin Survives as a Democrat in West Virginia; News Analysis***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62VW-K8V1-JBG3-64RJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 7, 2021 Monday 16:56 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1016 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Mr. Manchin stands in the way of the Biden administration’s expansive agenda. But in his home state, progressive Democrats with far-reaching policy goals are not his base — and he knows it.

**Body**

Mr. Manchin stands in the way of the Biden administration’s expansive agenda. But in his home state, progressive Democrats with far-reaching policy goals are not his base — and he knows it.

With the fate of the progressive agenda depending on the support of Senator Joe [*Manchin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/11/us/politics/joe-manchin-west-virginia.html) III, who said again on Sunday that he would not abandon the filibuster to pass an expansive voting rights bill, interest groups and activists are gearing up for a full push to try to sway the moderate Democrat. It would be enough to make almost any Democratic politician in the country squirm.

But probably not a Democrat from West Virginia.

None of the demographic groups that animate today’s Democratic coalition are well-represented in the state. Black, Hispanic, college-educated, young, urban and professional voters all represent a much smaller share of the electorate in West Virginia than just about anywhere else.

White voters without a four-year degree, Donald Trump’s demographic base, made up 69 percent of voters there in 2020, according to census data, the highest in the country. Mr. Trump won West Virginia with 69 percent of the vote in 2020, more than in every state but Wyoming.

With those sorts of numbers, it’s hard to understand how Mr. [*Manchin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/11/us/politics/joe-manchin-west-virginia.html) is a Democratic senator at all in today’s polarized era. His state voted for Mr. Trump by 39 points last November; no other member of the House or Senate represents constituents, in either their state or district, who voted for the other party’s presidential candidate by more than 16 points.

Yet [*Mr. Manchin’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/11/us/politics/joe-manchin-west-virginia.html) unique ability to survive in West Virginia is the last vestige of the state’s once-reliable New Deal Democratic tradition, dating to old industrial-era fights over workers’ wages, rights and safety. It was one of the most reliably Democratic states of the second half of the 20th century, voting in defeat for Adlai Stevenson in 1952, Hubert Humphrey, Jimmy Carter in 1980 and Michael Dukakis. The so-called Republican “Southern strategy” yielded no inroads there.

But Democrats began to lose their grip on the state during the 1990s, at least at the presidential level. In a way, West Virginia voters have been thwarting progressive hopes ever since. The promise of a new progressive, governing majority always rested on the assumption that the Democrats would retain enough support among white, ***working-class*** voters, especially in the places where New Deal labor liberalism ran the strongest. They did not.

By the late 1990s, the old New Deal labor Democrats no longer defined the party nationally. And when in conflict, the party’s growing left-liberal wing prevailed over ***working-class*** interests: New environmental regulations hurt West Virginia’s already faltering coal industry; new gun control laws put Democrat at odds with an electorate where most voting households own a gun (in the 2018 exit polls, 78 percent of voters said someone in their household owned a gun).

In 2000, George W. Bush won the state. If Al Gore had captured its six electoral votes instead, he would have been the president. Most analysts, however, saw the Bush win as an anomaly. In [*“The Emerging Democratic Majority,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/11/us/politics/joe-manchin-west-virginia.html) a book arguing that Democrats were on the cusp of an enduring advantage despite their defeat in the 2000 election, the authors projected West Virginia as a “Lean Democratic” state.

In retrospect, the loss of West Virginia was no anomaly. Democrats lost ground in every presidential election from 1996 until 2016, by which point the state had shifted nearly a net 60 points toward the Republicans over 20 years. It’s part of a broader pattern, not only in the United States but also across the world: The old bastions of the industrial-era left have chosen the populist right over the new progressive left.

Nearly two decades later, Mr. Manchin is the only Democrat who holds statewide office in West Virginia. He might not have won the seat at all if he wasn’t a popular governor when he ran for the Senate in 2010. To win, he ran an advertisement promising to take “dead-aim” at the Obama-era “cap and trade” bill, which hobbled the party throughout coal country. The ad showed him shooting a copy of the legislation, [*which aimed to set limits on greenhouse gas emissions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/11/us/politics/joe-manchin-west-virginia.html) but created a market for companies that cut pollution quickly to sell allowances to high polluters.

In 2018, Mr. Manchin may have only won re-election because of the favorable national environment that helped Democrats retake the House.

Today Republicans have the registration advantage in West Virginia for the first time since 1932, when Franklin D. Roosevelt won the presidency. Democrats had a 14-point voter registration advantage in West Virginia in 2016, when Mr. Trump won by 42 points — the best showing of any presidential candidate from either party in the history of the state. They still had a 9-point advantage in 2018, when Mr. Manchin won re-election by 3 percentage points.

It is far too soon to evaluate Mr. Manchin’s chances in 2024, but early indications are not promising.

Mr. Manchin voted to convict Mr. Trump at his impeachment trial in February, and he has been front and center in major legislative debates over enacting President Biden’s agenda.

According to the Cooperative Election Study, a prominent academic survey, Mr. Manchin had just a 33 percent approval rating in October 2020, while 51 percent disapprove of his performance.

Mr. Manchin’s departure, whether in 2024 or thereafter, will mark the end of an era. There will be no Senate Democrat whose electoral history and coalition are so completely at odds with the new activist base of the party. Progressives will be free from the burden of trying to lure a senator with such a conservative voting base.

But Democrats will also be weaker, at least in their numbers in the Senate, for not having found a way to forge a durable alliance with some of the most reliable Democratic voters of the 20th century.

PHOTO: Supporters of Senator Joe Manchin III in Marmet, W.Va., in 2018. The state was a solid New Deal Democratic stronghold for decades. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 18, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Macron Faces No-Shows at Meeting Intended to Bring France Together***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66BN-K161-DXY4-X4GN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 9, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 1275 words

**Byline:** By Catherine Porter and Constant Méheut

**Body**

The inaugural meeting of a council to examine France's most pressing problems had an issue of its own: boycotts.

PARIS -- Seemingly humbled by the fractures in French society exposed during the election that ultimately led to his second term as France's president, Emmanuel Macron promised to rule in a new way -- fewer dictates from above and more collaborating.

So he announced the creation of a council with members from all parts of French political and civil society, holding regular meetings all across the country, to find answers to some of the country's most pressing problems and restitch the broken connections of democracy.

To underline its importance, he called it the National Council for Reconstruction -- an obvious echo of the country's venerated multiparty resistance committee that fought against France's occupiers during World War II and re-envisioned the country literally from rubble.

Except that on Thursday, there were many notable no-shows for the council's inaugural meeting, set in the national rugby team's training center just south of Paris. All opposition political parties boycotted the meeting, as did many of the country's powerful unions and the head of the country's Senate. They denounced the council as a publicity stunt at best and a hastily constructed ramp to bypass democracy at worst.

The scene offered a foreshadowing of the headwinds that Mr. Macron, who no longer controls Parliament, will face during his second term governing a country facing a looming energy crisis, growing inflation, the daunting effects of climate change and clear democratic disillusionment.

''We don't wish to participate'' in a ''substitute Parliament or a fake consultation,'' the leaders of the Socialist Party said in a public letter to the president.

Mr. Macron won his second term in April, in a runoff against the far-right leader Marine Le Pen. But in the legislative elections that followed shortly afterward, his centrist coalition lost an absolute majority in the National Assembly, the lower and more powerful house of Parliament, and Ms. Le Pen's anti-immigrant National Rally party won a record 89 seats.

Voter turnout in the first round of voting was the lowest on record, reflecting a widespread disillusionment with politics.

Known during his first term as ''Jupiter,'' for governing like a god hurling down thunderbolt orders from above while sidelining even the parliamentarians from his own party, the president realized he needed to change his style of governing for practical reasons -- to push his agenda through Parliament -- as well as philosophical ones.

On the night of his re-election, he delivered a sober acceptance speech, promising a ''new era'' that ''will not be the continuation of the five years now ending but the collective invention of a new method for five better years.''

Soon after, Mr. Macron announced the reconstruction commission.

''He is craving political legitimacy,'' explained Vincent Martigny, a professor of political science at the University of Nice. He added, ''The real question that everyone is asking themselves is, will he be able to change after five years?''

Since the announcement, the council's mission, structure and mandate have remained vague. Last week, Prime Minister Élisabeth Borne clarified that the group would dig into five voluminous issues, including the country's strained public health and education systems, a planned green transition of the economy and Mr. Macron's campaign promise to reduce the country's unemployment rate to zero. Opposition politicians took to simply calling it the ''thingy.''

''It seems a complete improvisation,'' said Yves Sintomer, a professor of political science at the Paris University of Vincennes Saint-Denis. ''The rules of the game are unclear. It's very probable that it won't be a success -- which is a pity.''

Mr. Macron waxed poetic from the rugby field where Thursday's meeting took place, saying the new committee would help ''rebuild consensus'' and change France in a profound way.

''I want to put our compatriots back at the heart of the nation's major choices,'' he said. To those boycotting, he responded defiantly: ''There is a common sense saying, 'Those who are absent are always wrong.'''

But, he added, the door would remain open should they change their minds.

The skepticism is well earned. This isn't Mr. Macron's first attempt to reinvigorate democracy.

After the Yellow Vest protests -- a series of violent demonstrations by ***working-class*** people in 2018 and 2019 over the rise in gasoline and diesel taxes -- Mr. Macron attempted to defuse the anger by setting up the ''Great National Debate.'' The two-month national consultation in which 1.5 million citizens weighed in on what they wanted and filled out ''grievance notebooks'' didn't lead to any major reforms, and Mr. Macron often did most of the talking.

Later, he set up the Citizen's Climate Convention, a panel of randomly selected people from across France who formulated more than 100 ambitious proposals to tackle climate change, which Mr. Macron vowed to submit ''unfiltered'' to a parliamentary vote.

But when the legislation largely inspired by the convention was finally passed, critics said many of the measures were watered down to the point of absurdity, and protesting activists pointed out that France would be unable to meet its commitments to the Paris climate agreement.

''It's a bit harmful for democracy,'' said Cyril Dion, an environmental activist who oversaw the work of the convention, adding that ''launching ambitious projects, creating expectations but then failing to keep promises fuels distrust.''

To the French, Mr. Macron's new venture is an obvious allusion to the cherished National Resistance Council -- an underground group formed during World War II. That council brought together disparate factions under the leadership of Charles de Gaulle to coordinate tactics against the occupying Nazis and, later, to prepare for the country's hopeful reconstruction. Much of France's generous social safety net is its legacy.

Though many French mocked and contested the comparison, few would dismiss the great challenges the country faces.

There is the threat of blackouts this winter, rising living costs, an insecure climate -- which caused vast wildfires and a damaging drought this summer -- and Russia's enduring invasion of Ukraine. The country, Mr. Macron said in a speech last month, has entered ''the end of abundance.''

Facing these problems is a population increasingly distrustful of politics and greatly divided along ideological lines, noted Jean Garrigues, a leading historian on France's political culture.

Different communities ''talk to one another less and less,'' Mr. Garrigues said. ''The interests of Bourgeois-Bohemian Parisiens aren't those of farmers from Lozère, and the interests of the farmers from Lozère aren't those of the youth from the suburbs. France is fractured and needs more than ever to recreate a form of dialogue.''

Already, some of the country's opposition parties have vowed to block the government's budget in the National Assembly next month, even before debating it.

In part, that reflects the uncompromising nature of French politics, said Chloé Morin, a political scientist at the Jean-Jaurès Foundation. But it also underlined the need for Mr. Macron's new democracy re-engagement project to succeed and prevent another potential social uprising in the country.

''The government is aware of the fragility of social harmony,'' she said. ''There is, in the background, the threat of a new kind of Yellow Vest protest hanging in the air.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/08/world/europe/france-macron-national-council-for-reconstruction.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/08/world/europe/france-macron-national-council-for-reconstruction.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: President Emmanuel Macron said the national committee would bring profound change to France.

Opposition parties boycotted the National Council for Reconstruction's first meeting on Thursday. (POOL PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHEL EULER)

**Load-Date:** September 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***George Michael Preferred Music to Fame. The Doc He Made Does, Too.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65RN-68S1-JBG3-642Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 21, 2022 Tuesday 09:44 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; music

**Length:** 2144 words

**Byline:** Rob Tannenbaum

**Highlight:** “George Michael: Freedom Uncut,” a film the musician worked on with his longtime collaborator David Austin, tells the story of his professional life via interviews and previously unseen footage.

**Body**

“George Michael: Freedom Uncut,” a film the musician worked on with his longtime collaborator David Austin, tells the story of his professional life via interviews and previously unseen footage.

George Michael and David Austin were best friends who met because their mothers were best friends. Austin’s family lived at 67 Redhill Drive in the ***working class*** Edgware area of North London, and Michael’s family was at 57. The two wrote songs together and remained close even as one became a global superstar and the other didn’t.

Michael was a gifted and determined musical dynamo who became a star at the age of 19, first as a member of the British duo Wham! He won two Grammys in the solo career that followed, and collaborated with some of the greatest stars of the previous generation, including Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, Paul McCartney and Elton John. He was a gifted writer, producer, arranger and musician, sometimes playing all the instruments on his songs. And as a singer, he moved fluidly from Motown pop to hard funk to Brazilian bossa nova, with a voice that was sure, expressive and flush with poignancy and drama.

Neither Michael nor Austin had significant movie directing experience, but neither lacked confidence, so around 2014 they began directing a documentary detailing the vicissitudes of Michael’s career and life, including pop supremacy and international scandal, euphoric love and lacerating deaths.

In December 2016, they’d picture-locked the film and planned a screening for their families, who’d gathered, as they often did, to celebrate Christmas together. “We were going to show it to our parents on Boxing Day,” Austin said. “George was immensely proud of it.” But [*Michael died in his sleep*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/25/arts/music/george-michael-dead.html) at 53 and was found by a lover, Fadi Fawaz, on Christmas morning. The cause was [*a heart condition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/07/arts/music/george-michael-death-heart.html).

Austin trimmed Michael’s final cut to fit a TV time slot on Channel Four in England, where it aired in October 2017 as “George Michael: Freedom.” But he was dissatisfied with the edit because it didn’t tell the full story as Michael saw it. So in the following years, while resolving some worldwide rights issues, Austin restored the final cut and added an introduction by Kate Moss and tribute performances by Adele as well as Chris Martin of Coldplay. The film, now called “George Michael: Freedom Uncut,” made its debut in theaters worldwide on June 22.

“Freedom Uncut” was preceded in 2004 by the BBC’s “A Different Story,” which included interviews with Michael’s close friends as well as his father, a Greek immigrant who’d viewed his son’s dreams of stardom as juvenile and foolhardy. Throughout “A Different Story,” Michael discusses his private life with self-mocking candor, which was one of his most charming traits: “Oh my God, I’m a massive star and I think I may be a poof,” he says at one point, describing a time when he began coming to grips with being gay. “What am I going to do?”

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/diYAc7gB-0A)]

So for “Freedom Uncut,” Michael wanted to focus on his professional life. “He said, ‘This is a different film. This is about me and about the people I work with,’” Austin recalled in a phone call from his office in London. The documentary includes interviews with fellow music stars, including Elton John, Stevie Wonder and Mary J. Blige, the comedians Ricky Gervais and James Corden, the producer Mark Ronson and the supermodels Naomi Campbell, Linda Evangelista, and others who starred in his “Freedom! ’90” video. The film includes recently discovered 35 mm footage shot by the director David Fincher, who directed “Freedom! ’90” before his successful career in Hollywood, and unseen home videos Michael made of Anselmo Feleppa, his longtime boyfriend, who died in March 1993 of an AIDS-related illness.

Michael was a self-described homebody who was happiest playing with his dogs at his country house, but his career brought him into contact with music and fashion’s biggest stars. “What struck me instantly was how down to earth and what a sweet, beautiful soul he was,” the supermodel Naomi Campbell wrote in an email. “He was unique, a one-of-a-kind divine personality of our time.”

IN THE RAPID-ASCENT stage of his career, Michael was a remarkably prolific songwriter: Starting in 1982, Wham! (the duo he formed with Andrew Ridgeley) had four Top 10 U.K. singles in a row. The pair’s second album, “Make It Big,” gave them three No. 1 songs in the United States: “Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go,” “Careless Whisper” and “Everything She Wants.” When I interviewed Michael following the breakup of Wham!, he described the duo as a carefully plotted return to pop escapism. “I can understand why people wanted to punch me out,” he admitted.

Everything Michael learned about craft and marketing conjoined on his first solo album, “Faith” (1987), which made him a star on the magnitude of Michael Jackson or Madonna. But the celebrity he’d desired and attained “had taken me to the edge of madness,” he says in “Freedom Uncut.”

For the release of his next album, “Listen Without Prejudice Vol. 1,” he insisted his name and face not appear on the cover. He refused to promote the record or appear in his own videos. And in his song “Freedom! ’90,” he deconstructed pop stardom and exploded the foundational illusion of fandom: “I don’t belong to you, and you don’t belong to me.” It was, regardless of its message, a massive hit.

Michael felt that his record company, Sony, was not promoting his new album avidly enough, and in [*1992*](https://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/fl-xpm-1992-11-12-9202290200-story.html), he sued in the hope of terminating his contract. By then, he’d met Feleppa and felt loved for the first time in a sexual relationship. “I was happier than I’d ever been in my entire life,” he says in a “Freedom Uncut” voice-over.

His disenchantment with stardom collapsed into depression over the following years. In June 1994, a little more than a year after Feleppa died, Michael lost the Sony case. In 1997, his beloved mother, Lesley, died of cancer. And in [*1998*](https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1998-apr-09-me-37715-story.html), he was arrested in a Beverly Hills park for committing a “lewd act” with an undercover policeman, which is when he came out as gay and declared, “I don’t feel any shame whatsoever.”

In the midst of these troubles, he released a 1996 album, “Older,” which included the Top 10 hits “Jesus to a Child,” written in tribute to Feleppa, and “Fastlove.” (Michael called “Older” “my greatest moment,” and an expanded edition will be reissued on July 8.) But he made only one more album of original songs in the following 20 years before his death.

“Freedom Uncut” vivifies Michael for younger generations that didn’t live through the Pop Star Wars of the ’80s. He loved and emulated Black music, which created controversy in the moment — George Benson’s eyes nearly rolled back into his head when he announced Michael’s [*1989 American Music Award win*](https://youtu.be/acapoQAoHaI?t=7) in the favorite soul/R&amp;B album category. But time often engenders empathy, and the singer is now viewed as an ally. “Michael’s journey as a ***working-class*** gay white man from London who loved Black music and Black culture gave him an intersectional legacy that few artists (save Prince) will ever achieve,” [*Jason Johnson wrote in The Root*](https://www.theroot.com/5-times-george-michael-showed-his-blue-eyed-soul-to-b-1790858294), a website that focuses on African American issues, two days after the singer died.

The fact that Michael was able to write, arrange and produce at such a high level places him in “the rarefied air of Sly Stone, Prince or Shuggie Otis,” Mark Ronson added in a phone interview. “It’s crazy, because he made incredible R&amp;B music, but he didn’t go to America to record it” with Black musicians, he noted. “There wasn’t the insecurity of being a white soul boy from England.”

Ronson also hears melancholic or even mournful qualities in Michael’s music: “A lot of our favorite artists sound catchy and peppy, but when you peel back one or two layers, you see somebody who’s dealing with serious inner demons.”

IN 1984, WHEN Michael was already a gleaming pop phenom in England, he [*went on TV*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gusIVyLwVFA) and introduced David Austin, who was singing his debut single, “Turn to Gold,” which Michael wrote with Austin and produced. “I’ve known this young man since he was 2 years old,” Michael said, before declaring his pal “the biggest star of 1984.”

Austin recalled, “He was telling a porky pie,” and laughed, using Cockney rhyming slang for a lie. “We’d known each other since he was the grand old age of 6 months, and I was 11 months older. From early childhood, right through to our late teens, we were together all the time.”

David Austin is a stage name; he was born David Mortimer, to Irish parents. George Michael was born Georgios Panayiotou, to an English mother and an industrious Greek Cypriot father who worked in a fish and chips shop and became a restaurateur.

Austin doesn’t often give interviews. Although he’s sometimes described as Michael’s manager, he wasn’t — he was a collaborator, an adviser, a deputy and since his friend’s death, he’s been in charge of the estate’s artistic decisions. In the course of a 70-minute phone call, he talked warmly about Michael, sometimes referring to him in the present tense, and joked about his own modest recording career. (“What career?”)

His father made trumpets and other instruments for the British music company Boosey &amp; Hawkes. Their home was full of instruments, and Austin learned clarinet and guitar, while Michael played drums. “We both aspired to be pop stars,” he said.

By age 6, Austin had learned to use a Revox recording machine, and he recorded four or five songs with Michael, including “Crocodile Rock” by Elton John, “Wig Wam Bam” by the Sweet, who were Michael’s favorite band, and their first co-written original, called “The Music Maker of the World.” (“I’m never going to tell you what the lyrics are, because I’m going red talking about it,” he said, and chuckled.)

The two friends had a band called Stainless Steel, and they decorated Michael’s bass drum with the band’s initials. “But they were slanted S’s,” Austin recalled, which made them look like the Nazi Schutzstaffel logo. “One of the parents came up — ‘Right, off with that!’ We were like, ‘What?’ We hadn’t been taught about World War II yet.”

After that, Michael and Austin played in a five-piece ska band called the Executive, with their pal Andrew Ridgeley. “We were terrible, but everyone loved us,” Michael had told me years ago.

But when the Executive broke up, Michael and Ridgeley kept working together, finding almost immediate success as Wham! while Austin chased a solo career. “It was very hard at the time, watching my two best friends have enormous success,” Austin admitted. “It took me a few years to accept.”

The success of Wham! “opened the door to the industry for me,” Austin continued. But he turned out not to be the biggest star of 1984. After Wham! broke up in 1986, he and Michael went to the south of France and tried to write Austin’s next single. Michael wrote “I Want Your Sex,” which Austin demoed, and the two wrote “Look at Your Hands” together. But Austin’s label didn’t love the songs, so Michael held on to them and released them on “Faith.” (That album has gone 10 times platinum, giving Austin considerable publishing royalties.)

As a director, Austin’s strength was his rapport with Michael, and his inside understanding of the singer’s feelings and fears, going all the way back to Redhill Drive. He even knew Michael during his awkward phase: “People have no comprehension of what I looked like as a kid,” the singer had told me, laughing wildly. “I was such an ugly little bastard.”

Austin confirmed his friend’s self-effacing analysis: “George didn’t feel attractive as a child,” he said. “People who go on to have extraordinary careers, quite often there’s something lacking in their life. The career is filling a void, and that’s what the extra drive is about.

“When you initially get there, it’s everything you want.” he added. “Then when it becomes huge, you realize fame will never, ever fill that void.”

Rather than repairing anyone’s bad feelings, fame is more likely to exacerbate them. Michael figured this out, Austin said, which is why he spent his last two decades among friends and family, more than in front of fans. “Now I’m gonna get myself happy,” he sang, and he did.

“George and I used to fight as kids, and even as adults,” Austin said. “But we were incredibly close. Music, family, close friendships — those are the things in life that fill the void.”

PHOTOS: George Michael, top, onstage during his Faith Tour in 1988, and, above, accepting an American Music Award in 1989. The documentary “Freedom Uncut” vivifies Michael for younger generations. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES; ALAN GRETH/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (AR14); Andrew Ridgeley, left, and George Michael performing as Wham! in 1985. Starting in 1982, the duo had four Top 10 British singles in a row, then three No. 1 songs in the United States. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES) (AR17)

**Load-Date:** June 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Great Podcast, a Worthy Memoir and a Curdled Take on Clarence Thomas; John McWhorter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66BR-MHW1-DXY4-X0VW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1155 words

**Byline:** John McWhorter

**Highlight:** A fall syllabus.

**Body**

I spent the summer away from New York City and this week am back into the swing of my real life. Already, I’ve been gobsmacked by things relating to the three topics I cover here the most.

On music, I’ve had the opportunity to see 14-year-old Charles Kirsch carry off M.C.-ing a [*cabaret show*](https://54below.com/events/charles-kirschs-backstage-babble-live/) that gathered a dozen seasoned performers. It took place this week at the famed 54 Below, where the featured names on the bill rendered songs from shows they once starred in, sometimes decades ago.

Charles, frankly, reminds me of myself. You might be surprised to know that I didn’t grow up immersed in Broadway music. Rather, as I’ve [*written about previously*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/opinion/stephen-sondheim-musical.html) in this newsletter, near the end of college, a local production of Stephen Sondheim’s “A Little Night Music” blew me away to the extent that I first just had to collect everything Sondheim, and then everything musicals. Charles got the bug much earlier than me. A few years ago, he was at a party at my house. Walking in, he got right to the point and asked whether I had a CD of an obscure musical. (Cole Porter’s “Something for the Boys,” for those who might care!) Later I was at the piano, and I will never forget him coming up and politely asking if we could do “The Secret Service” from Irving Berlin’s “Mr. President,” another deeply (and deservedly) obscure musical. He was probably all of 10 or 11, and indeed sang that song.

And now he’s more than 120 episodes into his podcast, “[*Backstage Babble*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/backstage-babble/id1526353692).” I highly recommend it — the guy is a savant in an utterly charming way. I’m often told I should switch from doing my language podcast, “Lexicon Valley,” to a Broadway podcast. But why should I when Charles is already doing the job?

When you get home after being away awhile, you have a nice pile of printed matter waiting for you, and mine included a memoir, “[*Speaking My Soul: Race, Life and Language*](https://www.routledge.com/Speaking-my-Soul-Race-Life-and-Language/Rickford/p/book/9781032068831),” by the linguist John Rickford, a Stanford University emeritus professor who built a sterling career studying Englishes of Black people in both the Caribbean and the United States. John was my dissertation adviser and remains a friend. He produced what is still the handiest primer on Black English ever, “[*Spoken Soul*](https://www.amazon.com/Spoken-Soul-Story-Black-English/dp/0471399574),” co-authored with his son, the Cornell University historian Russell Rickford, and his memoir complements that book perfectly.

Many years ago, John and I were part of a group of linguists following up on a claim that there was a Black community in Mississippi speaking a dialect that contained elements of Jamaican Patois and elements of an undetermined African language. We never found it. (If anyone in Mississippi knows anything, do let me know!) But along the way we had some interesting conversations. I recall, when asked whether she knew of anyone who spoke in this dialect, an elderly Black woman in a small town saying something to the effect of, “Most people speak pretty good English, but it seems like some people just talk!” As the conversation went on, it dawned on me that she held the very common and understandable — but incorrect — view that Black English is just a collection of errors.

John’s career has been devoted to carefully countering that misimpression, showing the richness and legitimacy of nonstandard ways of talking. In the Guyanese creole that John grew up speaking, for instance, there is a [*plethora of ways*](http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~haroldfs/messeas/handouts/pjcreol/continuum.html) to say “I gave him,” ranging from speaking that sentence with a Guyanese accent to saying “Mi bin gi am,” which a standard English speaker might barely follow. To some this might suggest a kind of chaos, but the forms are used according to a subtle complex of factors involving socioeconomic class, level of formal education, intended tone and so on. John has endless things to teach about that and a great deal more.

As it happens, I just came upon an Esquire [*article*](https://www.esquire.com/news-politics/a40798777/looking-for-clarence-thomas/) that opens with generous passages in Gullah creole, a dialect similar to Guyanese created by enslaved Black people in and around the Sea Islands of the American Southeast. Its author, Mitchell Jackson, has written a piece on Justice Clarence Thomas that begins in the small Black Georgia town Thomas grew up in, with narration rendered in the Gullah that some locals speak among themselves.

This is intended as a way of shivving Thomas — to point up a contrast between Thomas’s modest Black ***working-class*** roots and his life now, circulating happily in largely affluent, white circles, supposedly unconcerned with the welfare of the people he was raised among.

Jackson argues that Thomas’s conservative jurisprudence is fundamentally anti-Black and that therefore Thomas is a broken, sinister figure sabotaging his own people out of disgust with his own Blackness. “We’ve never seen a Black man this powerful this bent on harming other Black folks,” writes Jackson. “He’s alien to me because I love my people and I can see in his hardened heart he’s against us.”

This presumptuous — cartoonish, really — presentation is questionable as analysis. Among other things, it elides the nuance offered fairly recently by the Brooklyn College political scientist Corey Robin, the author of “[*The Enigma of Clarence Thomas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/23/books/review-enigma-clarence-thomas-corey-robin.html).” Robin, certainly no acolyte of Thomas’s, explains how Thomas’s jurisprudence, whether one agrees with it, is rooted in a coherent and by no means malevolent philosophy compatible in many ways with Black nationalism. As Robin writes, “Thomas is not a conservative man who happens to be Black. Thomas is a Black man whose conservatism is overwhelmingly defined by and oriented toward the interests of Black people, as he understands them.” Jackson’s take, on the other hand, is not only crude and hasty but also written as if the shopworn Thomas-as-race-traitor thesis is something new.

In our moment, we talk a lot about the dismaying degree of partisanship in our nation. We declare fealty to the ideal of being open to the ideas of others. Yet Jackson exemplifies a sense that when it comes to Thomas, none of this interest in comity applies and that it qualifies as insight to discuss him as a horrid, pathetic figure. Once again, apparently, there is a single Black way to think, with Black conservatism valuable only as a demonstration of what Black opinion is not supposed to be.

It’s worthwhile, one would think, to assume first that people’s intentions are good ones. Writing someone off as monstrous should be a matter of last resort. To go with that immediately makes for good theater, but it’s also a kind of ritualistic hostility.

Kirsch’s podcast is a joy. Rickford’s memoir is an education. Jackson’s article is bile. All, for different reasons, are worth taking in.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com).

John McWhorter ([*@JohnHMcWhorter*](https://twitter.com/JohnHMcWhorter)) is an associate professor of linguistics at Columbia University. He hosts the podcast “[*Lexicon Valley*](https://www.booksmartstudios.org/s/lexicon-valley)” and is the author, most recently, of “[*Woke Racism*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/696856/woke-racism-by-john-mcwhorter/): How a New Religion Has Betrayed Black America.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Delcan and Co FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***After Roe's Defeat, Crossroad for Abortion Foes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67C1-W4K1-DXY4-X3W4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 20, 2023 Friday

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**Byline:** By Ruth Graham

**Body**

The March for Life, held each year for a half-century, should be a celebration now that Roe v. Wade has fallen. Instead, anti-abortion activists are split over what comes next.

For the past 20 years, Eric Scheidler, the executive director of the Pro-Life Action League, has traveled to Washington for the March for Life, the anti-abortion rally that marks the anniversary of Roe v. Wade and is held every year to urge its end.

The January march has long served as a dependable ''shot in the arm'' for activists around the country, Mr. Scheidler said. ''For people who go every year, it's like a family reunion.''

On the brink of the 50th anniversary of the Roe decision, however, the family is divided about where to go next.

Months after the Supreme Court overturned Roe, a major victory that anti-abortion activists fought to achieve, many want to focus on pushing more stringent restrictions. Others want to focus on bolstering the social safety net for parents and families. To that end, prominent anti-abortion leaders have signed onto a new statement urging ''significant changes in public policy.''

The divergent agendas coincide with an already precarious time for the movement that was once unified around ending Roe.

Abortion battles have largely returned to the states; thirteen have nearly eliminated abortion access while others have expanded it and enshrined protections into law. In November, voters affirmed abortion rights in every state where the issue was on the ballot, including in conservative states like Montana and Kentucky. Activists and politicians disagree on post-Roe strategies and emphases. The march's own website asks the question, ''Will we keep marching?''

The answer is yes, at least this year.

''What I hear from people is we're not yet done,'' said Jeanne Mancini, the president of the organization that puts on the event, adding, ''I certainly hear from people that we're in a different stage.''

That shift is reflected in plans for this year's events. The organization's ''Capitol Hill 101'' training session for activists on Thursday -- the day before the march itself on Friday -- will be devoted to explaining the role of the federal legislature in abortion policy. Last week, House Republicans passed a bill that would threaten criminal penalties for a doctor who fails to resuscitate a baby born alive during an attempted abortion. (The bill has no chance of passing the Democratic-controlled Senate.)

Many anti-abortion activists are now more focused on legislative wrangling and legal battles playing out in the states, and the internal conflicts to contend with there: Those opposed to abortion disagree on things like whether to settle for a ban at 12 or 15 weeks, and whether to carve out exceptions for rape, incest and to save the life of the mother.

The March for Life is ramping up its network of state events. And the march has a new route, ending not at the Supreme Court as it has for 49 years, but between the court and the U.S. Capitol, symbolizing that ''the judiciary is still critically important,'' Ms. Mancini said, but now, so is Congress.

Many groups, including the Catholic high schools that send busloads of students to the event, are still planning to make the trek to Washington. This will be the first occasion for the entire movement to gather since its triumph in the high court last summer.

Historically, the march has been ''the place everybody had to be if they were anybody in the pro-life movement,'' said Mary Ziegler, a law professor at the University of California, Davis, the author of several books on abortion law and politics.

But the end of Roe compounded existing fractures in the movement and upended its hierarchy, Ms. Ziegler said. (She has written opinion pieces in support of abortion rights.)

The movement's ultimate aim is the same as it ever was: to end the practice of abortion. But, Ms. Ziegler said, ''the problem now is that the goal is harder to define and harder to attain.''

The Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., canceled its annual Youth Rally and Mass for Life, events it had hosted close to the march for a quarter-century. In a statement, the archdiocese said it had heard from many dioceses that they were focusing on local events this year.

The end of Roe ''really quickly has become something very dangerous for the movement, and we need to do something to counteract it,'' said Charles Camosy, a professor of medical humanities at the Creighton University School of Medicine who writes often about abortion. ''It's not clear that a big march in Washington is what's going to do it.''

Mr. Camosy said he had accepted a speaking engagement near his home in New Jersey that falls on the same day as the march, following the instinct that local activism should take precedence over a national gathering this year.

Abortion rights supporters are also focused on local action: They've planned marches and rallies in cities across the country on Sunday, the day of the Roe anniversary. Vice President Kamala Harris plans to speak in Florida.

Mr. Camosy and Mr. Scheidler are two of the four abortion opponents who led a statement made public on Thursday that offers one path forward for the movement. The statement ''on building a post-Roe future'' endorses expanded child tax credits, paid parental leave, affordable child-care options and ''expanded Medicaid funding for prenatal care, delivery and postpartum expenses,'' among other policies it says will work to reduce the economic and social pressures behind some abortion decisions.

The anti-abortion movement often emphasizes support for pregnant women and families, but serious efforts have been largely limited to private foundations and nonprofits. Increasing public spending to care for families is often opposed by lawmakers on the right.

''Support from nonprofits will not be enough,'' the statement says, answering a claim from many abortion opponents that pregnancy resource centers and other anti-abortion charities can meet the vast needs of poor pregnant women.

Notable signatories include Lila Rose, the founder and president of Live Action; Russell Moore, the editor in chief of Christianity Today; and Abby Johnson, a former Planned Parenthood clinic director who is now a high-profile anti-abortion activist. They also include Catherine Glenn Foster, the president and chief executive of American United for Life, and Kristen Day, executive director of Democrats for Life of America, who jointly released a separate proposal on Wednesday to ''make birth free'' via congressional legislation.

''Just as it's not clear what the Republican Party is going to be, it's not clear what the pro-life movement is going to be,'' Mr. Camosy said. He sees an opening for the anti-abortion movement to support a robust social safety net, finding common ground with Democrats and helping to position Republicans as ''the party of the family-friendly ***working class***.'' (Mr. Camosy is a former board member for Democrats for Life of America, but he quit in 2020 over what he described as the party's increasing extremism on abortion.)

The post-Roe moment means ''the pro-life movement is more diffuse, more free to be diverse and interesting and attack local problems,'' he said.

Other leaders agree that this is an opportunity for a fresh start.

''This is Year 1 for the pro-life movement,'' said Marilyn Musgrave, vice president of government affairs for Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America. ''We want to everyone to know this is the year where the work really begins.''

For a movement that is effectively in brainstorming mode, any idea -- from travel restrictions to corporate pressure to a full federal ban -- could be the one that sticks.

This is ''a moment of reorientation and regrouping,'' said Kristan Hawkins, president of Students for Life of America, which will co-host the National Pro-Life Summit at a Washington hotel the day after the march.

Ms. Hawkins signed the statement on a ''post-Roe future.'' But her organization has other priorities, too. Students for Life is among those emphasizing the need to crack down on abortion pills, which have taken on increased importance as conservative states have enacted bans on the procedure.

For some observers, it's an open question whether a movement that has caught its white whale can maintain the focus and intensity required to sustain the activism of the last half-century.

''In the short term we'll continue to see it as a salient political issue, but at some point people will have to recognize there's no national consensus'' among those opposed to abortion, said Daniel K. Williams, a historian.

That raises the question of whether abortion will become, for many who oppose it, something more like an ''intractable problem,'' comparable to drug abuse or child abuse -- serious issues, but ones ''that don't lead to an annual march and a political litmus test,'' Mr. Williams said. (Mr. Williams, too, signed the ''post-Roe future'' statement from Mr. Camosy and Mr. Scheidler.)

For young people against abortion who plan to attend the march in Washington this week, the emergence of a more diffuse movement is not necessarily a bad thing, they say.

Jesse Muehler, a recent college graduate who teaches middle school English at a private school in northeast Indiana, is traveling to Washington with Lutherans for Life, an organization based in Indiana that opposes abortion.

Mr. Muehler is aware of the protracted legal tug of war that has unfolded across the country since last summer. But in his view, localizing the abortion debate is ultimately good for the anti-abortion cause.

''Having those conversations with the people who disagree with you that live across the street from you, or that live across town from you are more valuable and more meaningful,'' he said. ''It wasn't just about Roe.''

Mr. Scheidler, of the Pro-Life Action League, is a second-generation activist. Over the years, he has attended the March for Life with his father, Joe, and his six daughters. He has passed out fliers, bought T-shirts and chanted slogans like, ''Hey, hey, ho, ho, Roe v. Wade has got to go!'' with an exuberant crowd of thousands.

This year, however, may be his last. ''I'm going this year but I'm not sure I'll go again,'' Mr. Scheidler said last week. ''I'm not sure why we'd go to D.C. in the dead of winter to call for the end of a precedent that was overturned.''

Ava Sasani contributed reporting.Ava Sasani contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/us/abortion-roe-v-wade-50th-anniversary.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/us/abortion-roe-v-wade-50th-anniversary.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The March for Life last year in Washington. Eric Scheidler, the executive director of the Pro-Life Action League, left, said the march had served as a dependable ''shot in the arm'' for activists. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KENNY HOLSTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

JAMIE KELTER DAVIS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14) This article appeared in print on page A1, A14.

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[***‘Will We Keep Marching?’ On Roe’s 50th Anniversary, Abortion Opponents Reach a Crossroads***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67BV-S3P1-DXY4-X2VG-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The March for Life, held each year for a half-century, should be a celebration now that Roe v. Wade has fallen. Instead, anti-abortion activists are split over what comes next.

**Body**

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The answer is yes, at least this year.

“What I hear from people is we’re not yet done,” said Jeanne Mancini, the president of the organization that puts on the event, adding, “I certainly hear from people that we’re in a different stage.”

That shift is reflected in plans for this year’s events. The organization’s “Capitol Hill 101” training session for activists on Thursday — the day before the march itself on Friday — will be devoted to explaining the role of the federal legislature in abortion policy. Last week, House Republicans passed a bill that would [*threaten criminal penalties*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/11/us/politics/house-passes-abortion-bill.html) for a doctor who fails to resuscitate a baby born alive during an attempted abortion. (The bill has no chance of passing the Democratic-controlled Senate.)

Many anti-abortion activists are now more focused on legislative wrangling and legal battles playing out in the states, and the internal conflicts to contend with there: Those opposed to abortion disagree on things like whether to settle for a ban at 12 or 15 weeks, and whether to carve out exceptions for rape, incest and to save the life of the mother.

The March for Life is ramping up its network of state events. And the march has a new route, ending not at the Supreme Court as it has for 49 years, but between the court and the U.S. Capitol, symbolizing that “the judiciary is still critically important,” Ms. Mancini said, but now, so is Congress.

Many groups, including the Catholic high schools that send busloads of students to the event, are still planning to make the trek to Washington. This will be the first occasion for the entire movement to gather since its triumph in the high court last summer.

Historically, the march has been “the place everybody had to be if they were anybody in the pro-life movement,” said Mary Ziegler, a law professor at the University of California, Davis, the author of several books on abortion law and politics.

But the end of Roe compounded existing fractures in the movement and upended its hierarchy, Ms. Ziegler said. (She has written opinion pieces in support of abortion rights.)

The movement’s ultimate aim is the same as it ever was: to end the practice of abortion. But, Ms. Ziegler said, “the problem now is that the goal is harder to define and harder to attain.”

The Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., canceled its annual Youth Rally and Mass for Life, events it had hosted close to the march for a quarter-century. In a statement, the archdiocese said it had heard from many dioceses that they were focusing on local events this year.

The end of Roe “really quickly has become something very dangerous for the movement, and we need to do something to counteract it,” said Charles Camosy, a professor of medical humanities at the Creighton University School of Medicine who writes often about abortion. “It’s not clear that a big march in Washington is what’s going to do it.”

Mr. Camosy said he had accepted a speaking engagement near his home in New Jersey that falls on the same day as the march, following the instinct that local activism should take precedence over a national gathering this year.

Abortion rights supporters are also focused on local action: They’ve planned marches and rallies in cities across the country on Sunday, the day of the Roe anniversary. [*Vice President Kamala Harris plans to speak in Florida.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/us/politics/kamala-harris-florida-speech-abortion.html)

Mr. Camosy and Mr. Scheidler are two of the four abortion opponents who led a [*statement*](https://postroefuture.com/) made public on Thursday that offers one path forward for the movement. The statement “on building a post-Roe future” endorses expanded child tax credits, paid parental leave, affordable child-care options and “expanded Medicaid funding for prenatal care, delivery and postpartum expenses,” among other policies it says will work to reduce the economic and social pressures behind some abortion decisions.

The anti-abortion movement often emphasizes support for pregnant women and families, but serious efforts have been largely limited to private foundations and nonprofits. Increasing public spending to care for families is often opposed by lawmakers on the right.

“Support from nonprofits will not be enough,” the statement says, answering a claim from many abortion opponents that pregnancy resource centers and other anti-abortion charities can meet the vast needs of poor pregnant women.

Notable signatories include Lila Rose, the founder and president of Live Action; Russell Moore, the editor in chief of Christianity Today; and Abby Johnson, a former Planned Parenthood clinic director who is now a high-profile anti-abortion activist. They also include Catherine Glenn Foster, the president and chief executive of American United for Life, and Kristen Day, executive director of Democrats for Life of America, who jointly released a separate [*proposal*](https://aul.org/law-and-policy/make-birth-free/) on Wednesday to “make birth free” via congressional legislation.

“Just as it’s not clear what the Republican Party is going to be, it’s not clear what the pro-life movement is going to be,” Mr. Camosy said. He sees an opening for the anti-abortion movement to support a robust social safety net, finding common ground with Democrats and helping to position Republicans as “the party of the family-friendly ***working class***.” (Mr. Camosy is a former board member for Democrats for Life of America, but he quit in 2020 over what he described as the party’s increasing extremism on abortion.)

The post-Roe moment means “the pro-life movement is more diffuse, more free to be diverse and interesting and attack local problems,” he said.

Other leaders agree that this is an opportunity for a fresh start.

“This is Year 1 for the pro-life movement,” said Marilyn Musgrave, vice president of government affairs for Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America. “We want to everyone to know this is the year where the work really begins.”

For a movement that is effectively in brainstorming mode, any idea — from [*travel restrictions*](https://www.texastribune.org/2022/05/23/texas-companies-pay-abortions/) to corporate pressure to a [*full federal ban*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/21/us/abortion-anti-fetus-person.html) — could be the one that sticks.

This is “a moment of reorientation and regrouping,” said Kristan Hawkins, president of Students for Life of America, which will co-host the National Pro-Life Summit at a Washington hotel the day after the march.

Ms. Hawkins signed the statement on a “post-Roe future.” But her organization has other priorities, too. Students for Life is among those emphasizing the need to crack down on abortion pills, which have taken on increased importance as conservative states have enacted bans on the procedure.

For some observers, it’s an open question whether a movement that has caught its white whale can maintain the focus and intensity required to sustain the activism of the last half-century.

“In the short term we’ll continue to see it as a salient political issue, but at some point people will have to recognize there’s no national consensus” among those opposed to abortion, said Daniel K. Williams, a historian.

That raises the question of whether abortion will become, for many who oppose it, something more like an “intractable problem,” comparable to drug abuse or child abuse — serious issues, but ones “that don’t lead to an annual march and a political litmus test,” Mr. Williams said. (Mr. Williams, too, signed the “post-Roe future” statement from Mr. Camosy and Mr. Scheidler.)

For young people against abortion who plan to attend the march in Washington this week, the emergence of a more diffuse movement is not necessarily a bad thing, they say.

Jesse Muehler, a recent college graduate who teaches middle school English at a private school in northeast Indiana, is traveling to Washington with Lutherans for Life, an organization based in Indiana that opposes abortion.

Mr. Muehler is aware of the protracted legal tug of war that has unfolded across the country since last summer. But in his view, localizing the abortion debate is ultimately good for the anti-abortion cause.

“Having those conversations with the people who disagree with you that live across the street from you, or that live across town from you are more valuable and more meaningful,” he said. “It wasn’t just about Roe.”

Mr. Scheidler, of the Pro-Life Action League, is a second-generation activist. Over the years, he has attended the March for Life with his father, Joe, and his six daughters. He has passed out fliers, bought T-shirts and chanted slogans like, “Hey, hey, ho, ho, Roe v. Wade has got to go!” with an exuberant crowd of thousands.

This year, however, may be his last. “I’m going this year but I’m not sure I’ll go again,” Mr. Scheidler said last week. “I’m not sure why we’d go to D.C. in the dead of winter to call for the end of a precedent that was overturned.”

Ava Sasani contributed reporting.

Ava Sasani contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: The March for Life last year in Washington. Eric Scheidler, the executive director of the Pro-Life Action League, left, said the march had served as a dependable “shot in the arm” for activists. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KENNY HOLSTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; JAMIE KELTER DAVIS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14) This article appeared in print on page A1, A14.

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[***Sliwa Ties His Mayoral Rival to 'Elites.' Adams Sees 'Buffoonery.'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63WT-0P61-JBG3-64R4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 21, 2021 Thursday

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**Length:** 1233 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck

**Body**

Eric Adams, the Democratic nominee in the New York City mayor's race, and Curtis Sliwa, his Republican opponent, clashed on vaccine mandates and congestion pricing.

For the better part of an hour on Wednesday, Eric Adams was accused of spending too much time with ''elites,'' losing touch with ***working-class*** New Yorkers and being a carbon copy of Mayor Bill de Blasio, whose popularity has steadily waned during his tenure.

Yet when he was given openings to respond during the first general election debate of the New York City mayoral contest, Mr. Adams -- the typically voluble Democratic nominee for mayor -- often flashed a placid smile instead.

Mr. Adams, the overwhelming favorite in the race, seemed to approach the matchup against his Republican foe, Curtis Sliwa, as if it were an infomercial for a mayoralty he had already secured.

''I'm speaking to New Yorkers,'' Mr. Adams said. ''Not speaking to buffoonery.''

Mr. Sliwa, the founder of the Guardian Angels and an animated orator, worked to knock the front-runner off balance and strained to sow the kind of doubts about his opponent that could alter the trajectory of the race. There was little evidence he succeeded.

Mr. Adams cast himself as a steady former police captain who is preparing to move past Mr. de Blasio and his divisive eight years in power and sought to chart a vision for a city still reeling from the pandemic and its consequences. He relied heavily on his biography as a blue-collar New Yorker with firsthand experience grappling with some of the most significant challenges facing the city.

The debate, hosted by WNBC-TV and unfolding three days before early voting is to begin, marked the most direct engagement to date between the candidates as they vie to lead the nation's largest city.

For an hour, Mr. Adams and Mr. Sliwa -- both longtime New York public figures with colorful pasts -- clashed over wide-ranging issues that the city confronts, from a new vaccine mandate for city workers (Mr. Adams backs the mandate, Mr. Sliwa does not) to a congestion pricing plan (again largely backed by Mr. Adams, with Mr. Sliwa expressing strong concerns) to whether outdoor dining structures should stay. (Mr. Adams said yes, Mr. Sliwa said they should be reduced in size.)

At every turn, Mr. Sliwa sought to undercut Mr. Adams's ***working-class*** credentials, criticizing his opponent's support from real estate developers and the endorsement he has earned from former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, even as he also tried to link Mr. Adams to Mr. de Blasio, casting them both as career politicians.

''How about we do something novel and stop trusting these politicians, like Eric Adams and de Blasio?'' Mr. Sliwa said, as he expressed his objections to congestion pricing.

Mr. Adams, for his part, noted his differences with Mr. de Blasio in his first answer to a question, suggesting that while he supported the mayor's new vaccination mandate for municipal workers, he would have taken a more collaborative approach to implementing it.

Mr. Adams, who has a meditation routine, appeared keenly focused on rising above many of Mr. Sliwa's attacks. But he also sought to define his Republican opponent early in the evening as an untrustworthy public figure who does not have a significant record of accomplishments. He repeatedly referenced Mr. Sliwa's own admission that he had fabricated crimes for publicity.

''New Yorkers are going to make a determination of a person that wore a bulletproof vest, protected the children and families of the city and fought crime, against a person who made up crimes so that he can be popular,'' Mr. Adams said. ''He made up crime, New Yorkers. That in itself is a crime.''

Given New York's overwhelmingly Democratic tilt and Mr. Sliwa's reputation as something of a celebrity gadfly, Mr. Adams is seen as far more likely to prevail in the Nov. 2 election, and he is poised to be New York's second Black mayor. He has spent much of his time since winning the Democratic nomination in July focused on fund-raising and transition-planning and has only begun to accelerate his public events schedule in the last week, reflecting his front-runner status.

Mr. Sliwa worked at every turn of the debate to goad Mr. Adams into a confrontation. At best, he managed to coax an occasional complaint from Mr. Adams that Mr. Sliwa was breaking the rules of the debate by speaking for too long.

But while Mr. Adams tried to avoid engaging extensively with Mr. Sliwa, he found himself on the defensive at other times, especially when pressed on questions of his residency. He has said that his primary residence is an apartment in a multiunit townhouse he owns in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn -- but he has had to refile his tax returns in part because of irregularities concerning his residency, among other issues, the news outlet The City reported.

Mr. Adams said, as he has in the past, that he takes responsibility for omissions on his tax returns, even as he faulted his accountant, who he said was homeless.

''He went through some real trauma,'' Mr. Adams said of his accountant. ''And I'm not a hypocrite, I wanted to still give him the support that he needed.''

He pledged that the mistake would not be repeated.

Mr. Adams also co-owns a co-op in Fort Lee, N.J., with his partner, and he has said that he moved into Brooklyn Borough Hall for a time after the pandemic arrived. Mr. Sliwa recently led a journey from Manhattan to Fort Lee ''to find out where Eric Adams really lives.''

Mr. Adams declined to specify how many nights he has spent at the Brooklyn apartment in the last six months, but did say again that it was his primary residence.

Mr. Sliwa was also pressed on issues of transparency and trustworthiness.

''I made mistakes,'' he said, when asked about faking crimes -- a practice he cast as a youthful folly. ''I'll continue to apologize for it, but I've earned the trust of New Yorkers. Just follow me in the streets and subways, I'm there, I'm the people's choice. Eric Adams is with the elites in the suites.''

For all of the stark differences between their candidacies, Mr. Sliwa and Mr. Adams have some political commonalities, reflecting Mr. Adams's position as a relatively center-left Democrat and Mr. Sliwa's more populist instincts. Indeed, the debate was far more civil than the matchup Mr. Sliwa had during the Republican primary. It was also less of a brawl than some of the multicandidate debate stage clashes that defined the crowded Democratic primary earlier this year, where Mr. Adams often found himself under fire on several fronts.

Mr. Sliwa and Mr. Adams are both keenly focused on issues of public safety and support expanding access to the gifted and talented program in New York City schools, though they did not offer clear prescriptions for the fate of the controversial admissions test that governs the initiative.

But they did not appear eager to dwell on any common ground. Mr. Sliwa even turned a prompt designed to elicit a positive response -- to pitch those New Yorkers who left during the pandemic to return -- into an attack on Mr. Adams, questioning whether he really intended to fly to Florida and collect wayward New Yorkers as he has pledged.

Mr. Adams, in contrast, promised a safe, exciting and diverse city.

''You will be bored in Florida,'' he warned. ''You will never be bored in New York.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Eric Adams, left, worked to rise above frequent attacks from his opponent, Curtis Sliwa, right, in Wednesday night's debate. (PHOTOGRAPH BY WNBC-TV AND THE NEW YORK CITY CAMPAIGN FINANCE BOARD)

**Load-Date:** October 21, 2021

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[***Madame Wu's Garden Revised Chinese Food***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66KP-M441-DXY4-X567-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 12, 2022 Wednesday

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Dining In, Dining Out / Style Desk; Pg. 1; CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

**Length:** 1163 words

**Byline:** By Tejal Rao

**Body**

In the mid 1970s, as the Pritikin diet drifted over the Westside of Los Angeles like a bland and joyless cloud, Sylvia Wu strategized. How could she keep big-ticket dishes like Peking duck on the menu at Madame Wu's Garden when A-listers wanted more low-fat, low-salt, low-sugar foods?

Ms. Wu devised a plan: Air-dry the ducks as usual, but render off as much fat as possible in the roasting process. Leave nothing but meat, wrapped in the finest, thinnest, crispiest shell of burnished skin, with no chewy fat underneath. She called this version, pretty honestly, ''lower-fat'' Peking duck.

Ms. Wu, who died last month at the age of 106, had a knack for culinary improvisation. At Madame Wu's Garden, which she opened in 1959 and ran for nearly 40 years, her menus were constantly evolving, but peppered with regional deep cuts and then-hard-to-find dishes. To diners who'd never had Peking duck, the restaurant represented an imagined ideal of tradition and authenticity, but that image obscured her more complex work: Ms. Wu's approach as a restaurateur was kinetic, profound and always strategic.

Her enthusiasm for the new was as strong as her reverence for the old, and she was always landing on another way to please her audience, grow her business and show off the finesse and beauty of Chinese cooking. She had moves.

At the height of her career, she appeared on television, taught sold-out cooking classes and wrote several books. She was a celebrity herself, more glamorous than many of the Westside power diners who came in. With her hair up in a glossy, braided bun, driving a Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud (vanity plates: ''MMEWU''), she wore impeccably tailored clothing, with a preference for silk, oversize tinted glasses and several huge, almost incandescent cocktail rings.

''Chinese friends would criticize the food, saying it wasn't authentic,'' she told The Los Angeles Times in 1998. ''But I told them, 'Look around. Do you see any Chinese dining here?'''

Ms. Wu was an immigrant from China who spoke fluent, accented English, and while authenticity was projected onto her, over and over again, she never seemed to chase it or measure herself by it.

Her regulars included Frank Sinatra and Mia Farrow, Elizabeth Taylor, Robert Redford and Cary Grant. When Mr. Grant asked her for a ''Chinese chicken salad'' one night, she made a dish of fried won ton skins, rice noodles and shredded chicken, packed with scallions and dressed in mustard, soy sauce and sesame oil, loosely based on a banquet dish she remembered eating as a child.

It was so popular, she added it to the menu, published the recipe in local newspapers and included it in her first cookbook. Ms. Wu helped write the blueprint for American Chinese chicken salad as we know it, more than a decade before Wolfgang Puck put his own version on the menu at Chinois, his French-Chinese restaurant still open in Santa Monica.

When Madame Wu's first opened, chop suey houses still ruled. Ms. Wu was a part of a wave of restaurateurs, including Joyce Chen, who opened Joyce Chen Restaurant in Boston in 1958, and Cecilia Chiang, who opened the Mandarin in San Francisco in 1962, who worked to expand ideas of their cuisine. And while it was powerful to shift the perception of Chinese food as strictly ***working-class*** fare, it could be frustrating.

''I am pleased that journalists from the Western world were impressed by the excellence of Chinese cuisine,'' she wrote in her 1973 cookbook, just after President Nixon's visit to China, and I hear the words between gritted teeth. ''But at the same time I am confused and just a little indignant over the 'discovery' that the Chinese are excellent chefs.''

Fifty years later, and that feeling Ms. Wu identified is more prevalent than it should be, still driving conversations around food and media, where cuisines are easily flattened and misrepresented -- even through praise.

Sylvia Wu was born in Jiujiang, China, and raised in a wealthy family. As a child, she wasn't allowed into the kitchen, where a wood-burning stove spat flames and ash under a wok the size of a card table. The kitchen was run by the family's two cooks, who were managed by her grandfather. Ms. Wu lit a stove for the first time as an adult in New York, where she attended Columbia University and met King Yan Wu, who she would go on to marry.

She learned to cook a deeper repertoire of Chinese dishes after her mother-in-law sent her back from a trip to Hong Kong with one of the family's cooks, who taught her how to plan menus, shop and prep. Most of Ms. Wu's wealthy Chinese friends in Southern California already employed Chinese cooks in their homes -- they didn't go out to restaurants for Chinese food.

Ms. Wu didn't either. She was appalled by the food at American Chinese restaurants, and had the idea to build something closer to the places she went to dinner in Hong Kong -- extravagant, fun, a little bit flashy. In 1959, her husband reluctantly gave her $10,000 to give it a go.

It was modest at first, with very little décor and no liquor license. But after a few years, she expanded Madame Wu's Garden into a 11,000-square-foot space on Wilshire Boulevard that could seat 300 people. She made it dazzle with pagoda-style architectural details, stone waterfalls, imported art and a sculpture on the ceiling that rippled with gold. The aesthetic was quickly imitated, and co-opted by white restaurateurs.

The cooking classes she hosted at the restaurant doubled as testing sessions for her first cookbook. Some recipes were complex and demanding. Others had a decidedly semi-homemade feel to them. Many were a bit of both.

To make Ms. Wu's Peking duck, for example, you needed to find a whole, freshly killed bird and clean it inside and out, then sew it shut with wire, creating a handle around the neck so it could be strung up and air-dried. A project! But there was no need to make bao from scratch. Ms. Wu suggested a tube of oven-ready biscuits, such as Pillsbury's Butterfly Dinner Rolls. Split in two, cooked in a steamer, they were her shortcut to soft, pillowy buns.

''Chinese people do not show affection by kissing and hugging,'' she wrote, ''but rather by preparing special dishes for those they want to please.''

She might have been explaining her own work, pointing to the more tender, imperceptible mechanics behind her generous sense of hospitality. She might have been remembering how in Jiujiang, as a little girl, the moment her grandfather got word that freshwater crabs were in season, he headed to the market to pick some out, and prepared them himself.

At the family dinner, he set the platter of crab directly in front of Ms. Wu. Fresh water crabs were her favorite, so she recognized this for what it was: a universal gesture of love.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/07/dining/madame-wus-chinese-food-garden-restaurant.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/07/dining/madame-wus-chinese-food-garden-restaurant.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Sylvia Wu in 1997. Her restaurant, Madame Wu's Garden, drew regulars including Frank Sinatra and Mia Farrow, Elizabeth Taylor, Robert Redford and Cary Grant. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BOB RIHA JR./GETTY IMAGES) (D1)

Sylvia Wu with the Hollywood agent Irving Lazar, who went by Swifty, at a Beverly Hills book party in 1988. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RON GALELLA, LTD./RON GALELLA COLLECTION, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (D6) This article appeared in print on page D1, D6.

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[***Spotlighting the Workers Behind Produce Labels***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66V3-X7F1-DXY4-X2HH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1332 words

**Byline:** By Jori Finkel

**Body**

Narsiso Martinez's portraits honor the immigrants behind big American agribusiness.

LONG BEACH, Calif. -- For his most ambitious artwork to date, Narsiso Martinez has made a painting that looks like an enormous dollar bill issued by an imaginary country that actually values its ***working class***. Filling most of a wall of his current show at the Museum of Latin American Art, it has roughly the same proportions as U.S. paper currency and some of the same symbols, with decorative medallions in the corners and a framed portrait in the center.

Only the subject of this portrait is not an American founding father but a hero of another kind: a California farmworker from Mexico, shown in semi-profile with her thick, black hair tied back and her gaze strong and direct. At either side are farmworkers in full gear: masks to protect them from pesticides, hats to shield them from the sun, and goggles or sunglasses for both.

Other scenes complete the artwork, which draws on the Mexican muralist tradition in its narrative scope and celebration of physical labor and on Dada collage and assemblage in its use of found objects. The entire painting, done in gouache, ink, charcoal and gold leaf, was made not on canvas but on flattened produce boxes -- the kind used for oranges, strawberries, watermelons and the like -- which come with punchy corporate logos and sunny illustrations that add color to the scene. The produce boxes point to the big business of American agriculture, which depends so heavily on -- and often exploits -- undocumented Mexican immigrants who have little leverage when the work is dangerous or wages too low.

Martinez, 45, who was born in Mexico and lives in Long Beach, titled his artwork ''Legal Tender.'' ''I liked the word 'tender' as a reminder that people can be fragile, people can be hurt,'' the artist said at his studio in Long Beach, a small, street-level space between a bodega and a liquor store. ''I also wanted to ask questions about what it means to be legal. Is your food illegal if it's picked by someone who is so-called illegal?'' He said the central figure in ''Legal Tender'' is based on an undocumented California farmworker from Guerrero, Mexico, whom he met and photographed -- and paid for her time.

Gilbert Vicario, the chief curator of the PÃ©rez Art Museum in Miami and a guest curator who included Martinez in the new Orange County Biennial, ''Pacific Gold,'' said the artist ''is meeting the current moment -- with our desire for inclusivity and diversity -- head-on.''

He sees Martinez as part of a new generation of Chicano artists responding to the issue of cultural invisibility. ''It's a common refrain in Chicanx art that we are invisible as a community, certainly with little representation in Hollywood,'' said Vicario, who said he was raised in San Diego by Mexican parents.

''What interests me about Narsiso is how he is making visible a group of people who have been overlooked or behind the scenes in the agricultural economy,'' Vicario said.

Gabriela Urtiaga, the curator who organized the Martinez show, ''Rethinking Essential,'' for â€Œthe Museum of Latin American Art, praised the sensitivity of his portraits in the exhibition, which also include delicate black-and-white ''Ghost Portrait'' prints he made on transparency paper. ''He treats the people he depicts with such gratitude and respect,'' she said, noting that his rendering of their eyes is especially expressive, communicating ''pain and loss but also hopefulness.''

These portraits of farmworkers are also self-portraits, in a sense: Martinez worked the fields himself, on and off for nearly a decade, before landing solo shows at the Los Angeles gallery Charlie James and at local museums. He picked asparagus, cherries and apples in eastern Washington to pay his way through art school.

Born in 1977, Martinez was raised in Santa Cruz Papalutla, 16 miles from Oaxaca ''but more than an hour away when I was growing up because there were no roads,'' said the artist, who hung a knockoff van Gogh with farmworkers asleep in a field on the studio wall behind him.

He is one of six siblings; his family grew its own food, like corn, beans and squash, on a small plot of land. He liked sketching comical figures and learned to weld from his father, a musician who also had a metal shop.

He moved to Los Angeles when he was 20, where a much-older brother lived. He took classes to learn English and earned his G.E.D. at age 29 and an associate degree from Los Angeles City College when he was 32. Along the way, he held a mix of jobs, working at a carwash or loading trucks for a produce warehouse, where one of his tasks involved sorting good fruit from the rotted.

It was his first glimpse of big agribusiness, and its wastefulness, up close. ''It was horrible because there was a lot of produce thrown out that they could have donated -- potatoes, tomatoes, limes,'' he said. ''Sometimes there were entire pallets full of boxes that ended up in the trash.''

By that time, he knew that he wanted to study art and transferred to California State University, Long Beach, where he ultimately earned his M.F.A. in 2018. But it wasn't easy. By the end of his first undergraduate semester, he had run out of money. He took his other brother up on an invitation to join them picking crops in eastern Washington. ''They were like: Come to the fields and you can save all your money. We'll give you a place to stay and we'll feed you.''

He started by picking asparagus. ''It was backbreaking work because we bent over all day, and I was not very good at the beginning. Also I was afraid of the knife. We had to hold a bundle in one hand and use a long knife in the other to at one stroke make it all the same length. We started working at midnight or 1 a.m. with a miner's lamp on our hats. So it was dark and kind of scary at first.'' The pace was also relentless, as you can see from his video in the Long Beach show where farmworkers move so quickly it looks like the video was sped up.

He went back to the fields over summers and for three years straight before graduate school, often taking his sketchbook to work. Sometimes he would use the short breaks to make a quick sketch of the landscape or of people resting or lying on the ground. Or at night he would make portraits on whatever material was at hand, whether a cheap canvas or plain cardboard.

About halfway through his M.F.A. program, he stumbled across a new medium that would give him a powerful way of exploring class conflict. At a Costco near Los Angeles on a pizza run, he noticed a purple and green box from the company One Banana in a big pile and asked to take it home. After flattening the box, he left the ultra-vivid corporate logos and illustrations intact, drawing over them the figure of a man who carries a huge load of bananas on his head and grimaces slightly under the weight.

''My earlier paintings brought together scenes of the very rich and the very poor,'' Martinez said, referring to one showing a lavish dinner party and chandelier in the foreground, set against farm workers in the background. ''But they were too literal. Instead of making so much noise, sometimes it's important to have a conversation.''

In addition to large compositions like ''Legal Tender,'' he has stacked and altered boxes to create mixed-media sculptures. The Orange County biennial curators took their exhibition's title ''Pacific Gold'' after one of Martinez's sculptures, which contains a russet potato box with that name.

''The Pacific Gold logo made me think about the history of California and all the beautiful things about the Golden State,'' Martinez said, adding, ''and the ugly history we don't speak about as much.''

Rethinking Essential

Through Jan. 8 at the Museum of Latin American Art, 628 Alamitos Avenue, Long Beach, Calif., 562-437-1689, molaa.org.Rethinking EssentialThrough Jan. 8 at the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach, Calif.; 562-437-1689, molaa.org.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/10/arts/design/narsiso-martinez-farmworkers-artist-california.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/10/arts/design/narsiso-martinez-farmworkers-artist-california.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Narsiso Martinez, above, in his studio in Long Beach, Calif., with a painting in progress. Works on view at the Museum of Latin American Art include, top, ''Legal Tender''

a detail, above right, shows farmworkers in full gear. At right is his black-and-white series ''Ghost Portraits.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NOLWEN CIFUENTES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page C18.

**Load-Date:** November 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***In Debate, Adams Acts Like Front-Runner, While Sliwa Goes on Attack***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63WS-4NB1-JBG3-64HN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 20, 2021 Wednesday 20:15 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1259 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** Eric Adams, the Democratic nominee in the New York City mayor’s race, and Curtis Sliwa, his Republican opponent, clashed on vaccine mandates and congestion pricing.

**Body**

Eric Adams, the Democratic nominee in the New York City mayor’s race, and Curtis Sliwa, his Republican opponent, clashed on vaccine mandates and congestion pricing.

[Follow our live coverage of [*N.Y.C. elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/02/nyregion/nyc-election-live-updates).]

For the better part of an hour on Wednesday, [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/23/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html) was accused of spending too much time with “elites,” losing touch with ***working-class*** New Yorkers and being a carbon copy of Mayor Bill de Blasio, whose popularity [*has steadily waned*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/new-york-elections-government/ny-nyc-de-blasio-siena-college-poll-numbers-for-governor-six-percent-20211019-y4ylg2zslbfbfp4vc6knch7me4-story.html) during his tenure.

Yet when he was given openings to respond during the first general election debate of the [*New York City mayoral contest*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/29/nyregion/nyc-mayoral-race-adams-sliwa.html), Mr. Adams — the typically voluble Democratic nominee for mayor — often flashed a placid smile instead.

Mr. Adams, the overwhelming favorite in the race, seemed to approach the matchup against his Republican foe, [*Curtis Sliwa*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/30/nyregion/curtis-sliwa-nyc-mayor.html), as if it were an infomercial for a mayoralty he had already secured.

“I’m speaking to New Yorkers,” Mr. Adams said. “Not speaking to buffoonery.”

Mr. Sliwa, the founder of the Guardian Angels and an animated orator, worked to knock the front-runner off balance and strained to sow the kind of doubts about his opponent that could alter the trajectory of the race. There was little evidence he succeeded.

Mr. Adams cast himself as a steady former police captain who is preparing to move past Mr. de Blasio and his divisive eight years in power and sought to chart a vision for a city still reeling from the pandemic and its consequences. He relied heavily on his biography as a blue-collar New Yorker with firsthand experience grappling with some of the most significant challenges facing the city.

The debate, hosted by ​​WNBC-TV and unfolding three days before [*early voting*](https://vote.nyc/page/upcoming-elections) is to begin, marked the most direct engagement to date between the candidates as they vie to lead the nation’s largest city.

For an hour, Mr. Adams and Mr. Sliwa — both [*longtime New York public figures*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html) with [*colorful pasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/22/nyregion/curtis-sliwa-mayor-cats.html) — clashed over wide-ranging issues that the city confronts, from a [*new vaccine mandate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/nyc-vaccine-mandate.html) for city workers (Mr. Adams backs the mandate, Mr. Sliwa does not) to a congestion pricing plan (again largely backed by Mr. Adams, with Mr. Sliwa expressing strong concerns) to whether outdoor dining structures should stay. (Mr. Adams said yes, Mr. Sliwa said they should be reduced in size.)

At every turn, Mr. Sliwa sought to undercut Mr. Adams’s ***working-class*** credentials, criticizing his opponent’s support from real estate developers and the endorsement he has earned from former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, even as he also tried to link Mr. Adams to Mr. de Blasio, casting them both as career politicians.

“How about we do something novel and stop trusting these politicians, like [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/nyregion/where-does-eric-adams-live.html) and de Blasio?” Mr. Sliwa said, as he expressed his objections to congestion pricing.

Mr. Adams, for his part, noted his differences with Mr. de Blasio in his first answer to a question, suggesting that while he supported the mayor’s new vaccination mandate for municipal workers, he would have taken a more collaborative approach to implementing it.

Mr. Adams, who has a [*meditation routine*](https://bklyner.com/coronavirus-anxiety-meditation-eric-adams/), appeared keenly focused on rising above many of Mr. Sliwa’s attacks. But he also sought to define his Republican opponent early in the evening as an untrustworthy public figure who does not have a significant record of accomplishments. He repeatedly referenced [*Mr. Sliwa’s own admission*](https://www.nytimes.com/1992/11/25/nyregion/sliwa-admits-faking-crimes-for-publicity.html) that he had fabricated crimes for publicity.

“New Yorkers are going to make a determination of a person that wore a bulletproof vest, protected the children and families of the city and fought crime, against a person who made up crimes so that he can be popular,” Mr. Adams said. “He made up crime, New Yorkers. That in itself is a crime.”

Given New York’s overwhelmingly Democratic tilt and Mr. Sliwa’s reputation as something of a celebrity gadfly, Mr. Adams is seen as far more likely to prevail in the Nov. 2 election, and he is poised to be New York’s [*second Black mayor.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/13/nyregion/black-power-eric-adams-nyc.html) He has spent much of his time since [*winning the Democratic nomination*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/06/nyregion/eric-adams-wins.html) in July focused on [*fund-raising*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/27/nyregion/eric-adams-donors-mayor.html) and [*transition-planning*](https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/albany/story/2021/10/03/eric-adams-sets-sights-on-governing-as-general-election-nears-1391600) and has only begun to accelerate his [*public events schedule*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/13/nyregion/eric-adams-public-schedule.html) in the last week, reflecting his front-runner status.

Mr. Sliwa worked at every turn of the debate to goad Mr. Adams into a confrontation. At best, he managed to coax an occasional complaint from Mr. Adams that Mr. Sliwa was breaking the rules of the debate by speaking for too long.

But while Mr. Adams tried to avoid engaging extensively with Mr. Sliwa, he found himself on the defensive at other times, especially when pressed on [*questions of his residency.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/09/nyregion/eric-adams-maya-wiley-endorsement-jumaane.html) He has said that his primary residence is an apartment in a multiunit townhouse he owns in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn — but he has had to refile his tax returns in part because of irregularities concerning his residency, among other issues, the news outlet[*The City reported*](https://www.thecity.nyc/2021/9/20/22685225/eric-adams-says-accountant-spawned-faulty-tax-filings).

Mr. Adams said, as he has in the past, that he takes responsibility for omissions on his tax returns, even as he faulted his accountant, who he said was homeless.

“He went through some real trauma,” Mr. Adams said of his accountant. “And I’m not a hypocrite, I wanted to still give him the support that he needed.”

He pledged that the mistake would not be repeated.

Mr. Adams also co-owns a co-op in Fort Lee, N.J., with his partner, and he has said that he[*moved into Brooklyn Borough Hall*](https://www.ny1.com/nyc/brooklyn/coronavirus-blog/2020/05/20/borough-president-turns-borough-hall-into-a-residence) for a time after the pandemic arrived. Mr. Sliwa recently led a journey from Manhattan to Fort Lee “to find out where Eric Adams really lives.”

Mr. Adams declined to specify how many nights he has spent at the Brooklyn apartment in the last six months, but did say again that it was his primary residence.

Mr. Sliwa was also pressed on issues of transparency and trustworthiness.

“I made mistakes,” he said, when asked about faking crimes — a practice he cast as a youthful folly. “I’ll continue to apologize for it, but I’ve earned the trust of New Yorkers. Just follow me in the streets and subways, I’m there, I’m the people’s choice. Eric Adams is with the elites in the suites.”

For all of the stark differences between their candidacies, Mr. Sliwa and Mr. Adams have some political commonalities, reflecting Mr. Adams’s position as a relatively center-left Democrat and Mr. Sliwa’s more populist instincts. Indeed, the debate was far more civil than the matchup Mr. Sliwa had during the Republican primary. It was also less of a brawl than some of the multicandidate debate stage clashes that defined the crowded Democratic primary earlier this year, where Mr. Adams often found himself under fire on several fronts.

Mr. Sliwa and Mr. Adams are both keenly focused on issues of public safety and support [*expanding access*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/10/20/nyregion/eric-adams-sliwa-nyc-mayor-debate/both-candidates-say-they-support-expanding-the-gifted-and-talented-education-program)to the gifted and talented program in New York City schools, though they did not offer clear prescriptions for the fate of the controversial admissions test that governs the initiative.

But they did not appear eager to dwell on any common ground. Mr. Sliwa even turned a prompt designed to elicit a positive response — to pitch those New Yorkers who left during the pandemic to return — into an attack on Mr. Adams, questioning whether he really intended to fly to Florida and collect wayward New Yorkers as he has pledged.

Mr. Adams, in contrast, promised a safe, exciting and diverse city.

“You will be bored in Florida,” he warned. “You will never be bored in New York.”

PHOTOS: Eric Adams, left, worked to rise above frequent attacks from his opponent, Curtis Sliwa, right, in Wednesday night’s debate. (PHOTOGRAPH BY WNBC-TV AND THE NEW YORK CITY CAMPAIGN FINANCE BOARD)

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***New Oakland Mayor Signals Political Rise of Hmong Americans***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:676B-H561-DXY4-X12D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 29, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1652 words

**Byline:** By Amy Qin

**Body**

Over platters of fried rice, egg rolls and crab rangoon, Sheng Thao took the microphone and asked for support in June from several dozen people gathered at a Hmong restaurant in Wisconsin.

Ms. Thao, 37, was running to become the mayor of Oakland, Calif., but she took a detour to the Upper Midwest because it has some of the nation's largest communities of Hmong Americans.

When Ms. Thao spoke, Zongcheng Moua, 60, found himself nodding along, never mind that he lived 2,000 miles away from California. Like Ms. Thao's parents, Mr. Moua landed in a refugee camp in Thailand after fleeing the war in Laos nearly 50 years ago. His siblings, like Ms. Thao's parents, struggled to adapt to life in the United States after arriving with no money, formal education or language skills.

''Our Hmong community for the longest time did not have a voice,'' Mr. Moua, one of the organizers of the event, said. ''So regardless of where Sheng lives, her success is our success.''

In November, Ms. Thao, 37, narrowly edged out Loren Taylor, her fellow Oakland council member, by a few hundred votes thanks to support from progressive groups and labor unions, but also from a tightly knit Hmong network that contributed about one-fifth of her campaign funds.

When she is sworn into office in January, Ms. Thao will become Oakland's first Hmong mayor and the most prominent Hmong American officeholder in the United States to date. She will lead a major city of 440,000 residents that is grappling with a rise in violent crime and homelessness but remains a vibrant counterweight to the city across the bay, San Francisco.

Ms. Thao was part of a wave of Hmong Americans to triumph this year in state and local elections across the country. In Minnesota, home to the nation's second-largest concentration of Hmong residents, a record nine Hmong candidates won their races for the State Legislature. In Wisconsin and California's Central Valley, Hmong Americans also won local seats.

''I didn't do this on my own -- I did it with the help and support of Oaklanders and the Hmong community far and wide throughout the whole nation,'' Ms. Thao said in a recent interview.

It is a remarkable feat for a small contingent that arrived in the United States about 40 years ago from Laos as refugees of the ''secret war'' backed by the C.I.A. against Communists there during the Vietnam War. While Hmong immigrants have come to the United States from various nations, most came as refugees from Laos during the post-Vietnam era.

After settling in the United States, Hmong immigrants as a group struggled socioeconomically. In the face of language and cultural barriers, and lacking transferable skills, many Hmong lived in low-income neighborhoods and worked in low-skilled factory jobs, like food processing and textiles manufacturing.

Hmong Americans have improved their standing over the years as some members of the first generation saved money and bought homes in the suburbs and the second generation earned degrees and entered higher-paying professions. But all told, they still fare worse than most ethnic groups on multiple measures of income: 60 percent of Hmong Americans remained low-income, and more than one in four lived in poverty, based on a 2020 report.

''We have definitely advanced much faster than some other groups, but we're still struggling,'' said Samantha Vang, a Minnesota state representative and a second-generation Hmong American who was first elected to her seat in 2018.

An ethnic minority in Laos, Hmong people were secretly recruited by the United States to help disrupt supply lines and rescue downed American pilots in the fight against Communists in Southeast Asia, an effort first confirmed by a congressional report. After the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, they were targeted by the Communist-run government in Laos, and many fled to refugee camps in Thailand before eventually resettling in the United States in the Twin Cities in Minnesota and Milwaukee, as well as Fresno and Sacramento in California.

Unlike the Vietnamese refugees, who came from diverse backgrounds, the Hmong people who came to the United States were mostly farmers, said Carolyn Wong, a research associate at the Institute for Asian American Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Because of the clandestine nature of the conflict in Laos, few Americans knew about how Hmong people had helped the United States as allies during the war.

Undeterred, and with no homeland to go back to, Hmong refugees embraced the United States as their home. Experts suggest that because Hmong Americans generally came to the United States in the same post-Vietnam era, they have more cohesion than larger Asian American groups that attained earlier political prominence.

''Perhaps that's been our strength -- we're hungrier for that sense of visibility,'' said Mee Moua, a former Minnesota state legislator and an early political pioneer in the community.

In 1991, Choua Lee was elected to the school board in St. Paul, Minn., becoming the first Hmong to hold public office in the United States. In 2000, Hmong lobbied for a bill that helped make it easier for many former Hmong servicemen to gain citizenship. As of 2019, 81 percent of foreign-born Hmong people in the United States had become naturalized citizens, the highest rate among Asian American communities, according to the Pew Research Center.

In Minnesota, especially, the growing number of naturalized citizens and the state's already-strong tradition of political participation created fertile ground for the emergence in the early 2000s of a young generation of Hmong American leaders like Ms. Moua and Cy Thao, a former state representative.

''In those early days, they didn't necessarily understand what a political party was, or a party slate, so all of these things had to be learned through experience,'' Ms. Wong, the research associate, said. ''But very quickly those ways of running and building the support of the community became a time-tested path to success.''

Roughly 300,000 Hmong Americans now live in the United States, still largely concentrated in California, Minnesota and Wisconsin. California has about one-third of the nation's Hmong residents, the most in the nation, and relatively few of them live in the San Francisco Bay Area or Los Angeles. Many have remained in the Fresno and Sacramento regions where immigrants first settled, and some have moved to the far northern reaches of the state to grow marijuana.

Fewer than 1,000 live in Alameda County, where Oakland is the county seat. While Ms. Thao did not have a sizable Hmong voter base to draw from, she benefited from the nationwide Hmong clan system, which has been key to the success of some Hmong American political campaigns.

Organized around the 18 main surnames within the Hmong community, the system has been largely preserved by Hmong in the United States, and it remains an important source of identity, social support and, increasingly, political backing.

In Ms. Thao's race for the Oakland City Council in 2018, her father, in accordance with the clan system's patriarchal traditions, approached local Thao clan leaders to seek help.

The leaders were not familiar with Ms. Thao, said Louansee Moua, a longtime campaign consultant to Ms. Thao and other Hmong political candidates. Born and raised in Stockton, Calif., to parents who met in a refugee camp in Thailand, Ms. Thao had grown up at a relative distance from the Hmong community, in part because of her parents' concerns that their sons might get trapped in the Hmong street gang culture that was active at the time, Ms. Thao said.

The Thaos still held tight to Hmong traditions, including the Hmong language and the practice of shamanism, which made Ms. Thao feel self-conscious in the predominantly white, ***working-class*** neighborhood where she grew up.

''I remember growing up feeling like, why can't we just be like everyone else?'' she recalled. ''But it's such a beautiful culture that, in hindsight, I wish I was raised around other Hmong people so I could be proud of who I was a lot sooner.''

A self-described ''rebellious'' teenager, Ms. Thao left home at age 17 and soon found herself in an abusive relationship, she said. At 20, she spent several months alternating between living in a car and couch surfing with her son, then an infant.

Later, while working a full-time administrative job, she enrolled in a community college and then transferred to the University of California, Berkeley. After graduating, she started to work her way up in local politics in Oakland.

When Ms. Thao was ready to run for City Council, the clan elders swung into action, helping to mobilize a statewide network of Thaos and other Hmong residents to raise money and volunteer for her campaign, Louansee Moua said. When Ms. Thao won the race, the Thao clan threw a baci ceremony attended by more than 500 people for her in Merced, Calif., during which many in the community tied a blessing string around her wrists for good luck.

When it came to Ms. Thao's mayoral race this year, the clan was once again eager to help out.

''There's this strong cohesive network within the Hmong community and a sense that because she's a Thao and we're Thaos, of course we have to help her,'' Louansee Moua explained.

To win in Oakland, Ms. Thao relied on a broad coalition of voters who supported her progressive policies, as well as endorsements and funding from major labor unions that are influential in the heavily Democratic city.

But Ms. Thao said her narrow victory simply would not have been possible without the help of her nationwide family of Hmong elders, aunties, uncles, brothers and sisters.

''This wave of Hmong electeds across the nation -- they go out and they ask for support in the Hmong community,'' Ms. Thao said. ''Then the Hmong community shows up and they show up big time.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/28/us/elections/oakland-mayor-sheng-thao-hmong-american.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/28/us/elections/oakland-mayor-sheng-thao-hmong-american.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Sheng Thao, the incoming mayor of Oakland, Calif. Below, scenes from the Hmong Village shopping center in St. Paul, Minn., an area of the country where many Hmong Americans settled. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAROLYN FONG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

TIM GRUBER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

A refugee camp in Thailand in 1979 housed 11,000 people, 90 percent of them Hmong refugees. Top, Hmong students in a class in St. Paul in 1980. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDDIE ADAMS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

MICHAEL KIEGER/MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY) This article appeared in print on page A16.

**Load-Date:** December 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Staten Islander Departs Mayoral Field***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61P6-6TC1-JBG3-6203-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 5, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 11

**Length:** 794 words

**Byline:** By Dana Rubinstein

**Body**

Mr. Rose, a Democrat who lost re-election for his House seat in Staten Island, had said a mayoral bid would be an ''underdog campaign.''

Max Rose, the recently ousted Democratic congressman from Staten Island, will not run for mayor of New York City after all, upending the still-formative race to run the country's economic and cultural capital.

In a statement on Sunday, Mr. Rose did not offer reasons for withdrawing from the race, which has already grown crowded with more than a dozen other contenders. Reached by phone, Mr. Rose said, ''The statement certainly speaks for itself.''

In the statement, he urged other candidates to pay heed to the needs of the ''***working class***.''

He also indicated he and his wife had plans to adopt a baby. They are already the parents of a son.

The race from which he is withdrawing is poised to be one of the most important mayoral elections in modern New York City history. When the next mayor assumes office in 2022, he or she will preside over a city recovering from the ravages of the pandemic: the long-term health impacts, the rise in shootings, the shuttered stores, the lost jobs, the empty office buildings, the looming evictions.

''People are scared and unsure if the New York they love will still exist in the years to come,'' Mr. Rose said. ''The next mayor can't just balance the budget, he or she must build a social contract that leaves no one behind.''

Mr. Rose's abrupt decision comes after he had taken several steps aimed at mounting a bid for the mayoralty that he himself said would be an ''underdog campaign.''

In early December, he created a mayoral campaign committee with the city's campaign finance board, a step that allows candidates to raise money and spend it.

He also made a point of meeting with the Rev. Al Sharpton, who said Mr. Rose would ''add some excitement to the campaign.''

But it was never clear how Mr. Rose's record as a centrist Democrat from the relatively conservative bastion of Staten Island would play in a Democratic primary in New York City.

''Where is the base?'' asked Christina Greer, a Fordham University political science professor. ''What, you have middle-of-the-road Staten Islanders?''

Mr. Rose initially thought the field of mayoral candidates was weak and might create an opening for him, according to someone close to the former congressman, who requested anonymity so he could speak freely. But as time wore on, Mr. Rose decided it wasn't the right moment.

Mr. Rose's associate insisted that fund-raising was not the issue. In order to gain access to the city's matching funds program, a mayoral candidate has to raise at least $250,000 from at least 1,000 New York City-based small donors.

''We were confident we could raise the money,'' said the person close to Mr. Rose.

A decorated Army veteran, Mr. Rose represented a congressional district that encompassed Staten Island and a sliver of Brooklyn. In 2020, he lost his bid for re-election to Nicole Malliotakis, a Republican state assemblywoman and an ardent supporter of President Trump.

As a congressman, Mr. Rose sometimes took positions that suited his district but might not have played well in a citywide Democratic primary. He was slow to embrace the impeachment of Mr. Trump, and said last year that nothing would make him happier than seeing Mr. Trump beat back the pandemic, even if it meant the president's re-election.

''It's like, Max Rose, you can't play footsie with Trumpists and then try to run a campaign in the five boroughs,'' Ms. Greer said.

Mr. Rose had little experience with municipal government, something he argued would be an asset in a race against longtime city officials. Among the contenders are Eric L. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, and Scott M. Stringer, New York City's comptroller.

Conventional political wisdom had it that Mr. Rose would appeal to moderate white voters. But it was unclear how much name recognition he had outside his district. And other candidates are expected to compete for that slice of the electorate too, including Mr. Adams, a former police officer; Raymond J. McGuire, a former Wall Street banker; and perhaps even Andrew Yang, the former presidential candidate who is expected to announce his candidacy this month.

Mr. Yang raised funds for Mr. Rose's failed re-election campaign as recently as October. After Mr. Rose declared he would not run on Sunday, Mr. Yang texted with him, according to someone familiar with the exchange who was not authorized to speak on the matter.

In his statement, Mr. Rose suggested that this was not the end of his political story.

''While I won't be a candidate for mayor this cycle, I am not going anywhere in the fight to make our city and country live up to their promise,'' he said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/03/nyregion/nyc-mayor-max-rose.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/03/nyregion/nyc-mayor-max-rose.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Max Rose did not offer reasons for leaving the race for New York mayor. He urged others to heed the needs of the ''***working class***.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Kenji López-Alt Spent 5 Months Studying Chicago Thin-Crust Pizza. Here’s What He Learned.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67T2-8TY1-DXY4-X1DM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 17, 2023 Friday 10:29 EST

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**Section:** DINING

**Length:** 2234 words

**Byline:** J. Kenji López-Alt

**Highlight:** Among his many revelations: a game-changing technique for yielding that crisp crust at home.

**Body**

Among his many revelations: a game-changing technique for yielding that crisp crust at home.

Some family members may call it obsessive behavior. I call it a gripping intellectual and culinary pursuit.

For the past five months, I’ve been on a mission to dial-in a home cook-friendly recipe for a thin-crust pizza popular in the Midwest, Chicago in particular. It’s taken me through scores of iterations, furtive late-night pizza texts with other obsessives across the country, dozens of eating excursions (including a two-day, 12-stop tour of Chicago and Milwaukee), bags of flour, pounds of sausage and several gallons of tomato sauce.

Before we begin, it’s worth considering the definition of “Chicago pizza.” If you’re not from Chicago, chances are you think of a cheesy, sauce-topped, wading-pool-sized deep dish. But if you’re from Chicago, it is probably thin crust.

I’m talking thinner-than-a-saltine thin, with a shatteringly crisp crackle and just enough structure to hold its own weight against a heavily seasoned sauce and a caramelized layer of mozzarella. It’s probably topped with hand-torn nubs of sausage, maybe a sprinkle of hot giardiniera. Forget the puffy, handlebarlike crust of a New York pie: Thin crust has sauce and cheese all the way to the edge — an edge that comes out extra crisp with a frizzle of nearly blackened cheese overhanging it.

Most notably, the pizza is round but comes cut into small squares, no more than a bite or two apiece.

Recipe: [*Chicago Thin-Crust (Tavern-Style) Pizza*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera)

[*With Sausage and Giardiniera*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera)

Whether you call it party-cut, bar-style, tavern-style, Midwest thin crust, Chicago-thin or, if you’re from the Midwest, just plain “pizza,” with its small squares, it’s a dish that’s equally easy to share with a large group, or to polish off on your own. (“I’ll just have one more piece” is too easy to say when each piece is a bite.)

That square-cut shareability is no accident, said Steve Dolinsky, a journalist and the author of “[*Pizza City, USA: 101 Reasons Why Chicago Is America’s Greatest Pizza Town*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera).”

With its roots in the 1940s at ***working-class*** taverns like [*Vito &amp; Nick’s*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera) on the South Side of Chicago, the cheap-to-produce, thirst-inducing style was invented to encourage customers to linger long enough to order another beer.

“That’s my father and my uncle, the first day they started serving pizza,” said Rose Barraco George, the octogenarian third-generation owner of Vito &amp; Nick’s, as she points to one of the old family photos that line the dining room. By the pizza ovens, several of her grandchildren — the fifth generation to staff the kitchen — bustle about, rolling out dough based on her grandmother Mary’s original recipe, pinching raw sausage and cutting thin, charred pies served on aluminum trays. In the dining room, regulars grabbed squares of pizza under a ceiling trimmed with shag carpet; Old Style beer posters decorated the walls. The pizza at Vito &amp; Nick’s is excellent, but the atmosphere, tinged with history, is superb.

“Workers from the factories or the Union Stock Yards would stop at the tavern on their way home,” Mr. Dolinsky said.

The proximity to those stockyards led to cheap, plentiful sausage becoming a near integral part of the style, while the small square cuts made it easy to share among all patrons: No plates required — just a napkin would do. And best of all? “In the early days, tavern pizza was always free,” Mr. Dolinsky said.

Eventually, the free pizza became so popular that taverns started selling it to-go. From Chicago, it spread, becoming one of the dominant pizza styles throughout the Midwest.

What Makes This Crust So Thin

Recipe: [*Chicago Thin-Crust*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera)

[*(Tavern-Style) Pizza Dough*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera)

At home in Seattle, I started off working with a 2018 [*recipe, loosely inspired by Vito &amp; Nick’s, and published by my old colleague Bryan Roof, in Cook’s Country*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera). His recipe starts with flour, sugar, salt, yeast, water and oil combined in a food processor, which works well for two-pizza batches — any bigger and I use a stand mixer or knead by hand instead. It’s then rested for a couple hours; rolled out with a rolling pin (professional thin-crust pizzerias use industrial sheeters); topped with a sauce, shredded cheese and sausage; and then baked in a 500-degree oven on a pizza stone for 10 to 14 minutes. It was a great starting point, especially considering that his recipe can be made in a single afternoon.

My friend Dave Lichterman, a Chicago native who operates two pizzerias in Seattle, began work on his own recipe to serve at his [*Windy City Pie*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera). In one of the many tasting sessions at his restaurant, he turned me on to how dry thin-crust dough can be. Mr. Roof’s recipe calls for around 56 percent hydration — that is, for every 100 grams of flour in a batch of dough, you’d add 56 grams of water. This is already on the low end for pizza dough: Neapolitan-style doughs typically hover just north or south of 60 percent hydration. But Mr. Lichterman was making his dough even dryer, around 50 percent hydration, with the addition of 10 percent to 15 percent oil.

This made a huge difference in the texture of my crust, which, up until then, had been coming out crisp but a little too flexible and tough. This had to do with the way that water and oil interact with protein in flour. When water is kneaded with flour, proteins in the flour unravel and entangle, forming a chewy network of gluten. In general, a wetter dough will form more gluten and result in a stretchier, chewier crumb, the kind you’d find in the inside of a sourdough boule. Fat, on the other hand, coats flour proteins and prevents them from entangling, resulting in dough that’s more tender, like a soft brioche bun. Less water and more oil led to a lighter, crisper crust.

I tried using even less water but found that the dough became too difficult to roll out.

What Makes This Crust So Crunchy

My next breakthrough came when I accidentally overfermented a batch of pizza dough by leaving it on the counter for too long. Overfermentation severely weakens gluten structure, which can lead to dough that refuses to rise when baked. This is bad for bread but great for thin crust. I started intentionally incorporating a three- to five-day fermentation period in the fridge, which led to the thinnest, crispiest pies yet.

John Carruthers likes to overferment his dough as well. As the proprietor of [*Crust Fund Pizza*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera), he has no restaurant, but he’s made a name for himself delivering his tavern-style pizza in Chicago’s back alleys in exchange for donations to local organizations. From his home, he baked pizzas with crackling crusts made from dough that had rested in his fridge for five days for me and Mr. Lichterman. (Mr. Carruthers’s outstanding recipe can be found [*in my friend Andrew Janjigian’s baking newsletter.*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera))

Mr. Carruthers also employs a method called “curing” the dough, a technique I’d heard rumor of but had to see in person to fully understand. The idea is simple: Roll out the dough as if to top it, but then set it aside in the fridge for a day — completely uncovered — to dry out.

Billy and Cecily Federighi and their partner Brad Shorten cure the dough at [*Kim’s Uncle*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera), a thin-crust pizzeria that opened last year in the Chicago suburb of Westmont, Ill. Popping open a stack of dough proofing containers in their walk-in refrigerator, Mr. Federighi revealed an overlapping stack of pizza skins — what pizzamakers call dough that’s been stretched but not yet topped — that were dry to the touch, with the texture of cured leather. You can lift the dough with one hand, and it keeps its shape, flopping a little like an Acme portable hole from a Looney Tunes cartoon. The pizzas at Kim’s Uncle, baked in an antique [*Faulds oven*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera) with four decks that revolve like the cars in a Ferris wheel, are incredible: shatteringly, impossibly crisp and flavorful.

Neither Mr. Carruthers nor the team at Kim’s Uncle invented the curing technique. Mr. Dolinsky attributes it to Nick Pianetto Jr., who was the second-generation owner of [*Pat’s*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera) when he started employing it in the 1970s at his father’s Lincoln Park pizzeria. To this day, the pizza at Pat’s arrives with a wavy, blistered edge, a sign that the dough was leathery before baking.

Back home, I rolled out 14-inch rounds of pizza dough and let them sit uncovered overnight in my fridge on parchment-lined cutting boards. I was stunned at how much of a difference curing made to the finished pizza’s crispness, though, in retrospect, it makes sense. Dough becomes crisp as it dehydrates in the oven, and curing jump-starts that dehydration. By weighing dough before and after curing, I calculated that the skins end up with an effective hydration level of just 25 percent to 33 percent before baking.

Curing also has some wonderful side effects. The leathery disks of dough slide easily on and off a peel, making getting them into the oven a breeze. Cured dough doesn’t sag as easily as fresh, which allows the pizza to almost “float” on top of the stone as it bakes, making moisture loss easier and crisping more efficient. It can bake to a dark crunchy brown without burning.

The only difficulty was finding space in the fridge to cure several 14-inch rounds of dough. I wondered: Would a room-temperature cure work just as well? Thankfully, it does.

A Fine, Fat Finish

Recipe: [*Pizza Sauce*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera)

[*for Chicago Thin-Crust Pizza*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera)

With the crust handled, I turned my attention to the sauce. In Chicago, pizza sauce tends to have an intensely savory flavor that comes from cooking down canned tomatoes heavily seasoned with dried herbs, like marjoram and oregano, and garlic (I like to use a combination of punchy fresh garlic and sweeter granulated garlic). Some sauces are very sweet; others lean more vinegary. You can adjust those elements to your own taste. These days, I don’t bother simmering the sauce first: I find that it develops plenty of that cooked flavor during the pizza’s 10-minute bake time, especially with the addition of tomato paste.

The last components to address were the cheese, giardiniera and sausage. Cheese is simple: shredded low-moisture mozzarella (fresh shredded and full-fat if you can manage, preshredded and part-skim work fine if you can’t) and a sprinkle of Parmesan or Romano.

Giardiniera is the chopped mixture of pickled vegetables typically served on Chicago Italian beef sandwiches that has become a popular pizza topping. It pairs perfectly with sausage, and it’s easy to find online. Look for Chicago-style brands, such as [*Marconi*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera) or the excellent [*J.P. Graziano*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera), that pack the giardiniera in oil as opposed to vinegar or brine.

Milder than typical supermarket Italian sausage, Chicago-style Italian sausage is a true regional specialty, but it’s simple to make at home. I chatted with Rob Levitt, head butcher at [*Publican Quality Meats*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera) in Chicago, about what makes Chicago-style sausage unique.

“The only real common through line is black pepper and fennel,” he said. This rang true after tasting and soliciting tips from other Chicago pizzamakers.

Recipe: [*Chicago-Style Italian Sausage*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera)

My sausage uses whole fennel seeds that I toast in a skillet, then roughly crack with a mortar and pestle — a spice grinder, food processor, blender or the bottom of a heavy pan will work — before mixing into fatty ground pork seasoned with salt, black pepper, fresh and granulated garlic, a bit of dried herbs and a pinch of red pepper flakes. The key is to knead the mixture (by hand or in a stand mixture fitted with a paddle) until the proteins begin to unravel and cross-link, giving it a tacky texture that turns springy and juicy as the sausage cooks, releasing its flavorful fat to mingle with the sauce and cheese as the pizza bakes.

Fermenting and curing your dough takes a little planning, but your active time commitment is minimal. If you start today, just shy of a week from now, you will wait the longest 10 minutes of your life as the aroma of oregano and caramelized cheese wafts from your oven. Your reward will sizzle as it comes out and crackle as you cut it into squares, whether you plan to share it or not.

I grew up eating folded triangular slices in New York City, but these days at my house, it’s hip to be square, and thin is in. Of course, if you’re from the Midwest, thin was always in. The rest of us are just catching up.

Follow [*New York Times Cooking on Instagram*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera), [*Facebook*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera), [*YouTube*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera), [*TikTok*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera) and [*Pinterest*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera). [*Get regular updates from New York Times Cooking, with recipe suggestions, cooking tips and shopping advice*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023971-chicago-thin-crust-tavern-style-pizza-with-sausage-and-giardiniera).

PHOTOS: Tavern-style pizza, common in the Midwest, arrives cut into small squares to more easily be shared by a group. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID MALOSH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: SIMON ANDREWS) (D1); Clockwise from top: Rose Barraco George, the owner of Vito &amp; Nick’s in Chicago; from left, Cecily and Billy Federighi and their partner Brad Shorten of Kim’s Uncle in Westmont, Ill.; Mr. Shorten with one of the doughs, which can be lifted with one hand and still keep its shape. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUCY HEWETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (D4); The dining room at Vito &amp; Nick’s in Chicago is tinged with history, with old photos lining the walls. A fifth generation of family members staffs the kitchen, which turns out tavern-style pizzas made with recipes from the owner’s grandmother. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID MALOSH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: SIMON ANDREWS.) (D5) This article appeared in print on page D1, D4, D5.

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[***Learning to Love the Coal Miner's Daughter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66KG-N2C1-JBG3-6385-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1196 words

**Byline:** By Margaret Renkl

**Body**

NASHVILLE -- I didn't learn to love Loretta Lynn the way most children who grew up in Alabama in the 1960s and '70s did. My parents never listened to Grand Ole Opry broadcasts on Saturday nights. They'd courted to big band music in their youth, so they kept the radio tuned to the oldies station.

It's not like I didn't know who Loretta Lynn was. I'd heard her songs on other people's radios all my life but paid them no mind.

Then I went off to faraway Philadelphia for graduate school and started tuning the radio in my apartment to the country station, just to hear the sound of my own people. My roommate would walk in, hear country music and ask, ''Why are you punishing me?'' I wasn't punishing her. I was falling in love. Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, Rosanne Cash, the Judds -- they all made me feel as if home wasn't really a thousand miles away.

That's how I learned to love Loretta Lynn. But the way I learned to understand and respect her was the way I learn most things: by reading a book. I first read Ms. Lynn's memoir, ''Coal Miner's Daughter,'' at very nearly the same time as I was learning to sing along with ''Coal Miner's Daughter,'' the most famous of her many hit songs.

The South, the home I had stomped away from after college, convinced I could never spend my life in such a closed-minded place, was the same home I returned to, my tail between my legs, only four months after moving to Philadelphia.

Homesickness is what brought me back, but a growing understanding of the South and its true complexity is what has kept me here. And if there's anybody who embodies that complexity more richly than Loretta Lynn does, I don't know who it might be.

This mountain girl who had married as a teenager, a girl who had, by her own estimate, the equivalent of a fourth-grade education, who grew up so far from the rest of the developed world that she was 12 before she ever rode in an automobile -- that isolated little girl grew up to be a legend.

She used her influence to change the music industry. Warned that country fans would never accept her again if she hugged the Black artist Charley Pride onstage at an awards ceremony, she hugged him anyway, and kissed him, too. Warned that certain subjects were too risky for country radio, she wrote songs like ''The Pill'' and ''Don't Come Home a-Drinkin' (With Lovin' on Your Mind),'' singing about what it was really like to be a ***working-class*** woman. ''She broke down a lot of barriers for people that came after her,'' the rocker Jack White said last week.

Her best-selling 1976 memoir -- and, four years later, the film version that won Sissy Spacek an Academy Award for best actress -- brought Ms. Lynn to the attention of a much wider audience. In 2004, her collaboration with Mr. White on the album ''Van Lear Rose'' brought her before a wider audience still. That year they went on David Letterman's show and absolutely killed it.

Ms. Lynn never considered herself a feminist, and she in fact expressly rejected the label, but in her songs she advocated the very empowerment the women's movement sought to achieve. In her memoir, she is even more direct, defending abortion rights, standing up for her lesbian fans and arguing for greater choice and opportunity in every context. Throughout her career in an industry that remains dominated by men, she was a great champion of new female artists.

All of which is why I jumped -- literally jumped up and down -- at the chance to interview Ms. Lynn in 2010, and it's why that interview remains one of the highlights of my professional life. I loved her songs and her life story, but an hour of talking with her was all it took for me to love Ms. Lynn herself. It was also all it took for me to feel, remarkably, unbelievably, loved in return. How can you not feel loved by someone who offers to take you to the Grammys on her tour bus? Someone who ends the conversation by saying, ''Well, I love you''?

In 2014, I got to hear Loretta Lynn in concert at the Ryman Auditorium, the mother church of country music. That night, the patter of the warm-up act made me deeply uneasy -- drunk-guy jokes that could've gotten ugly, elliptical references to President Barack Obama that came very close to open racism. But Loretta herself said nothing of the kind, and Mr. Obama had just given her the Presidential Medal of Freedom, after all. Well, I thought, these people don't speak for Loretta anyway.

When Ms. Lynn announced in 2016 that she was supporting Donald Trump for president, I almost cried. What I didn't know then was how often this experience would be played out in the following months and years for me and for so many other liberals down here, and in much more personal contexts.

Many a white liberal in the South has a granny -- or a mother, or an aunt, or a sister, or a neighbor -- just like Loretta Lynn, someone they admire and adore, someone who has earned their love and admiration. Their love is complicated, not obviated, by the fact that the people they love routinely walk into the voting booth and pull the lever for chaos.

''It is easy to simplify all this into contradictions,'' is how Marissa R. Moss, the author of ''Her Country: How the Women of Country Music Became the Success They Were Never Supposed to Be,'' put it in New York magazine, ''but it was only a contradiction if you thought you knew and understood women, specifically rural, Appalachian, or Southern women. Lynn was complex, not a contradiction.''

Human complexity is surely why the singer-songwriter Rissi Palmer, host of the ''Color Me Country'' radio show, wrote on Twitter, ''The Morgan Wades, Carly Pierces, and Mickey Guytons of the world (all of us really) would not have been possible without Loretta. She said things that were unthinkable coming from women artists. Her honesty made it possible for ALL of us to be honest fearlessly.''

In the end, it comes down to love. Whatever the vitriol online might suggest, we are still capable of loving one another through profound differences and irreconcilable disagreements. And when we manage to keep on loving, and keep on listening, we can sometimes, maybe, bring our loved ones around to a new way of thinking.

No one knew that power better than Loretta Lynn, who spoke the truth of her own life so other women wouldn't feel so alone. She helped make the world better for them, and she brought at least one homesick Alabama girl home to stay.

Godspeed, Miss Loretta. I love you, too.

Margaret Renkl, a contributing Opinion writer, is the author of the books ''Graceland, at Last: Notes on Hope and Heartache From the American South'' and ''Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/opinion/loretta-lynn-trump-feminism-love.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/opinion/loretta-lynn-trump-feminism-love.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES) This article appeared in print on page A22.

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[***Five Takeaways From the Midterms (So Far)***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66TW-Y6J1-DXY4-X16F-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Blake Hounshell

**Body**

Democrats showed up, Trump-backed candidates underperformed and inflation wasn't the whole story: Here are last night's lessons.

Democrats tried to outrun history -- and the lead weight of a wounded president who made his final political appearance of the campaign in deep-blue Maryland, in a county he won two years ago by an overwhelming margin.

They had help from a surprising quarter: Republican voters. A base still in thrall to Donald J. Trump chose candidates in the primaries who threw out plenty of red meat, but on Election Day, many failed to translate their frustrations into victory.

So far, the results appear well short of the ''red tsunami'' of Republican dreams. Republicans may yet win back the House, but hardly in commanding fashion, while the Senate remained too close to call early Wednesday morning.

Across the East Coast, in Virginia's northern suburbs and mixed areas of Rhode Island and New Hampshire, embattled Democrats managed to hang on. They even knocked off a few Republicans here and there. In many tight races, abortion and Mr. Trump's looming presence may have been the G.O.P.'s undoing.

''The Democratic Party post-Trump is a much tougher, fighting party,'' said Representative Jamie Raskin, Democrat of Maryland, attributing to sheer grit the victories eked out by colleagues like Abigail Spanberger of Virginia. ''These are battle-hardened veterans who know exactly why they're in politics.''

Tuesday was by no means an unalloyed victory for either side, however. There were signs of Republican gains in ***working-class*** communities of color. And some battleground states, like North Carolina, moved further out of Democrats' reach. Gov. Ron DeSantis, Republican of Florida, even flipped the Democratic stronghold of Miami-Dade County on his way to a rout of Representative Charlie Crist.

It will be days before the full results are clear, and possibly weeks. Here are the lessons of the 2022 midterms so far:

The Democratic base showed up.

The biggest question hanging over Democrats all year was just who, exactly, would show up to vote for them. In a typical midterm election, like 2010 and 2014, turnout drops by about 20 percentage points fr4om a presidential year.

But turnout smashed all records in 2018, when voters repudiated Mr. Trump and Democrats retook the House. So far, preliminary research by the Democratic data firm Catalist suggests that this year looks much more like 2018 than it does the sleepy affairs that took place under former President Barack Obama. Many analysts now think the United States may have reached a new plateau of permanently high participation, stoked by each party's fear of the other side.

That might help explain why polling failed to capture the widespread feeling among Democrats, which grew after the Supreme Court's reversal of Roe v. Wade and the Jan. 6 hearings over the summer, that their core democratic rights were increasingly at risk.

''I think that pundits sometimes project onto the public a crude materialism, where all people care about is pocketbook issues in the narrowest sense,'' Mr. Raskin said. ''People understand how precarious and precious a thing constitutional democracy is, and they don't want to lose it.''

Abortion put Democrats in the fight.

Throughout much of 2021 and the first half of 2022, Republicans appeared poised for shellacking-level gains in Congress and beyond. Then came the Supreme Court's bombshell decision in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, overturning a 50-year precedent that many Americans had taken for granted.

Suddenly, Democrats had found an issue to rally their base around. Two months later, when voters in conservative Kansas emphatically rejected a ballot measure to ban abortion, many saw a potential game-changer in the making. Democratic governors like Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan positioned themselves as bulwarks of abortion rights, while liberal groups poured hundreds of millions of dollars into ads highlighting the far-right positions many Republicans took to win their primaries.

Some on the left, notably Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, have questioned whether Democrats expended too much energy on abortion. The unintended effect, these critics argued, was to reinforce the impression that Democrats were ignoring the most pressing concern on voters' minds: inflation.

Few Democratic strategists agree. ''I do think Dobbs transformed this election,'' said Anna Greenberg, a Democratic pollster. ''There's pretty good evidence that it shook things up.''

Trump saddled Republicans with weak candidates.

Often, Democrats got the opponents they desired. And the Republican Party leadership was just as often confounded and frustrated by the choices its own voters made.

G.O.P. leaders aggressively courted centrist governors like Doug Ducey of Arizona, Larry Hogan of Maryland and Chris Sununu of New Hampshire to run for Senate -- to little avail. Mr. Trump played kingmaker from Mar-a-Lago, demanding that candidates pay fealty to his lies about the 2020 election being stolen. Republican primary voters sided overwhelmingly with Mr. Trump, leading Mitch McConnell, the Senate minority leader, to fret about the ''quality'' of his party's nominees.

In some races, Democrats even tried steering Republican voters away from more moderate candidates and lifted Trump-aligned conservatives who denied the legitimacy of Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s 2020 win. Once these nominees were cemented, Democrats bombarded voters with messages that portrayed Republicans as too extreme on issues like abortion rights or as opponents of democracy itself.

The Democrats' scorched-earth approach worked in many cases. Josh Shapiro, the attorney general of Pennsylvania, ran ads bolstering State Senator Doug Mastriano in the Republican primary, then steamrollered him in the election on Tuesday.

Don Bolduc, a Republican challenger who likewise played up Trump's stolen-election lies, lost a Senate race in New Hampshire that Republicans in Washington once thought winnable. Gov. Tony Evers of Wisconsin, wryly assessing his victory over Tim Michels, a flame-throwing Republican who allied himself with Mr. Trump, remarked that ''boring wins.''

Inflation dominated, as Democrats grasped for a response.

Again and again, voters told pollsters that soaring prices for gasoline, groceries and housing were their No. 1 concern by far. And Democrats grasped for a clear, consistent response to Republican attacks.

The White House first tried denial: Administration officials argued that inflation was a ''transitory'' phenomenon, a word that would come to haunt many a Democrat months later. Then blame: When Russia's invasion of Ukraine sent oil prices rocketing upward, Mr. Biden and other Democrats tried to brand inflation as ''Putin's price hike.''

Acceptance proved harder. Some Democrats were more adept than others at feeling voters' pain; in February, a group of vulnerable senators, for instance, urged Mr. Biden to freeze the federal gas tax. But, on the whole, the public held Democrats responsible for their pinched wallets, regardless of what the party said or did.

Even the Inflation Reduction Act, the product of 18 months of messy talks on Capitol Hill, landed with a whisper. Relatively few Americans were aware of provisions to cap the price of insulin and allow Medicare to negotiate the price of prescription drugs, even though they were individually popular. As Sean McElwee of the progressive polling group Data for Progress put it, ''Voters don't know a ton about the bill or what was in it.''

The country is as closely divided as ever.

The chief force in American politics remains its deep partisan divide. There were indeed some ticket-splitters on Tuesday, but in general Democrats turned out en masse for Democrats, and Republicans for Republicans. In years past, Mr. Biden's low approval ratings and inflation stuck at 40-year-highs might have augured a convincing drubbing for his party. Harry Truman lost 55 House seats in his first midterms; Bill Clinton lost 53; Barack Obama lost 63.

That kind of rebuke didn't happen to Mr. Biden. It is rarely how American politics works anymore. There are fewer true swing voters than ever -- and a dwindling number of swingable races.

Most of the country's 435 House seats were not in contention anyway, leaving the two sides to scrap over a battlefield shrunken by gerrymandering and sorted into polarized geographic enclaves. Fewer than a third of this year's Senate races were ever competitive. Representative Tim Ryan could not escape Ohio's rightward march despite a campaign Democrats hailed as ''phenomenal''; nor could moderate Republicans like Joe O'Dea and Tiffany Smiley pull off upsets in Colorado and Washington State.

Voters re-elected Republican governors in Florida, Georgia and Texas. They returned Democrats to power in Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. And for all the record-shattering sums spent on campaigns and TV ads in the 2022 midterms -- as much as $16.7 billion, by one estimate -- the country is likely waking up on Nov. 9 much as it did on Nov. 8: split roughly in two.

''Nothing really worked this cycle,'' said Ms. Greenberg, the Democratic pollster. ''There are much larger issues at stake.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/09/us/politics/midterm-elections-takeaways.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/09/us/politics/midterm-elections-takeaways.html)

**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page P6, P7.

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2022

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[***Oakland’s Next Mayor Highlights Political Rise of Hmong Americans***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6766-2DK1-DXY4-X07M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 28, 2022 Wednesday 23:50 EST

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**Section:** US; elections

**Length:** 1729 words

**Byline:** Amy Qin

**Highlight:** Sheng Thao, the daughter of refugees, will become the most prominent Hmong American politician when she leads the California city of 440,000 residents.

**Body**

Over platters of fried rice, egg rolls and crab rangoon, Sheng Thao took the microphone and asked for support in June from several dozen people gathered at a Hmong restaurant in Wisconsin.

Ms. Thao, 37, was running to become the mayor of Oakland, Calif., but she took a detour to the Upper Midwest because it has some of the nation’s largest communities of Hmong Americans.

When Ms. Thao spoke, Zongcheng Moua, 60, found himself nodding along, never mind that he lived 2,000 miles away from California. Like Ms. Thao’s parents, Mr. Moua landed in a refugee camp in Thailand after fleeing the war in Laos nearly 50 years ago. His siblings, like Ms. Thao’s parents, struggled to adapt to life in the United States after arriving with no money, formal education or language skills.

“Our Hmong community for the longest time did not have a voice,” Mr. Moua, one of the organizers of the event, said. “So regardless of where Sheng lives, her success is our success.”

In November, Ms. Thao, 37, narrowly edged out Loren Taylor, her fellow Oakland council member, by a few hundred votes thanks to support from progressive groups and labor unions, but also from a tightly knit Hmong network that contributed about one-fifth of her campaign funds.

When she is sworn into office in January, Ms. Thao will become Oakland’s first Hmong mayor and the most prominent Hmong American officeholder in the United States to date. She will lead a major city of 440,000 residents that is grappling with a rise in violent crime and homelessness but remains a vibrant counterweight to the city across the bay, San Francisco.

Ms. Thao was part of a wave of Hmong Americans to triumph this year in state and local elections across the country. In Minnesota, home to the nation’s second-largest concentration of Hmong residents, a record nine Hmong candidates won their races for the State Legislature. In Wisconsin and California’s Central Valley, Hmong Americans also won local seats.

“I didn’t do this on my own — I did it with the help and support of Oaklanders and the Hmong community far and wide throughout the whole nation,” Ms. Thao said in a recent interview.

It is a remarkable feat for a small contingent that arrived in the United States about 40 years ago from Laos as refugees of the “secret war” backed by the C.I.A. against Communists there during the Vietnam War. While Hmong immigrants have come to the United States from various nations, most came as refugees from Laos during the post-Vietnam era.

After settling in the United States, Hmong immigrants as a group struggled socioeconomically. In the face of language and cultural barriers, and lacking transferable skills, many Hmong lived in low-income neighborhoods and worked in low-skilled factory jobs, like food processing and textiles manufacturing.

Hmong Americans have improved their standing over the years as some members of the first generation saved money and bought homes in the suburbs and the second generation earned degrees and entered higher-paying professions. But all told, they still fare worse than most ethnic groups on multiple measures of income: 60 percent of Hmong Americans remained low-income, and more than one in four lived in poverty, based on [*a 2020 report*](https://www.searac.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/SEARAC_NationalSnapshot_PrinterFriendly.pdf).

“We have definitely advanced much faster than some other groups, but we’re still struggling,” said Samantha Vang, a Minnesota state representative and a second-generation Hmong American who was first elected to her seat in 2018.

An ethnic minority in Laos, Hmong people were [*secretly recruited*](https://www.nytimes.com/1971/08/03/archives/cia-says-it-maintains-army-in-laos-cia-confirms-it-maintains-a.html) by the United States to help disrupt supply lines and rescue downed American pilots in the fight against Communists in Southeast Asia, an effort first confirmed by a congressional report. After the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, they were targeted by the Communist-run government in Laos, and many fled to refugee camps in Thailand before eventually resettling in the United States in the Twin Cities in Minnesota and Milwaukee, as well as Fresno and Sacramento in California.

Unlike the Vietnamese refugees, who came from diverse backgrounds, the Hmong people who came to the United States were mostly farmers, said Carolyn Wong, a research associate at the Institute for Asian American Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Because of the clandestine nature of the conflict in Laos, few Americans knew about how Hmong people had helped the United States as allies during the war.

Undeterred, and with no homeland to go back to, Hmong refugees embraced the United States as their home. Experts suggest that because Hmong Americans generally came to the United States in the same post-Vietnam era, they have more cohesion than larger Asian American groups that attained earlier political prominence.

“Perhaps that’s been our strength — we’re hungrier for that sense of visibility,” said Mee Moua, a former Minnesota state legislator and an [*early political pioneer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2002/02/02/us/the-soul-of-a-new-political-machine-is-hmong.html) in the community.

In 1991, Choua Lee was elected to the school board in St. Paul, Minn., becoming the first Hmong to hold public office in the United States. In 2000, Hmong lobbied for a bill that helped make it easier for many former Hmong servicemen to gain citizenship. As of 2019, 81 percent of foreign-born Hmong people in the United States had become naturalized citizens, the highest rate among Asian American communities, according to the Pew Research Center.

In Minnesota, especially, the growing number of naturalized citizens and the state’s already-strong tradition of political participation created fertile ground for the emergence in the early 2000s of a young generation of Hmong American leaders like Ms. Moua and Cy Thao, a former state representative.

“In those early days, they didn’t necessarily understand what a political party was, or a party slate, so all of these things had to be learned through experience,” Ms. Wong, the research associate, said. “But very quickly those ways of running and building the support of the community became a time-tested path to success.”

Roughly 300,000 Hmong Americans now live in the United States, still largely concentrated in California, Minnesota and Wisconsin. California has about one-third of the nation’s Hmong residents, the most in the nation, and relatively few of them live in the San Francisco Bay Area or Los Angeles. Many have remained in the Fresno and Sacramento regions where immigrants first settled, and some have moved to the far northern reaches of the state [*to grow marijuana*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/03/us/hmong-marijuana-california.html).

Fewer than 1,000 live in Alameda County, where Oakland is the county seat. While Ms. Thao did not have a sizable Hmong voter base to draw from, she benefited from the nationwide Hmong clan system, which has been key to the success of some Hmong American political campaigns.

Organized around the 18 main surnames within the Hmong community, the system has been largely preserved by Hmong in the United States, and it remains an important source of identity, social support and, increasingly, political backing.

In Ms. Thao’s race for the Oakland City Council in 2018, her father, in accordance with the clan system’s patriarchal traditions, approached local Thao clan leaders to seek help.

The leaders were not familiar with Ms. Thao, said Louansee Moua, a longtime campaign consultant to Ms. Thao and other Hmong political candidates. Born and raised in Stockton, Calif., to parents who met in a refugee camp in Thailand, Ms. Thao had grown up at a relative distance from the Hmong community, in part because of her parents’ concerns that their sons might get trapped in the Hmong street gang culture that was active at the time, Ms. Thao said.

The Thaos still held tight to Hmong traditions, including the Hmong language and the practice of shamanism, which made Ms. Thao feel self-conscious in the predominantly white, ***working-class*** neighborhood where she grew up.

“I remember growing up feeling like, why can’t we just be like everyone else?” she recalled. “But it’s such a beautiful culture that, in hindsight, I wish I was raised around other Hmong people so I could be proud of who I was a lot sooner.”

A self-described “rebellious” teenager, Ms. Thao left home at age 17 and soon found herself in an abusive relationship, she said. At 20, she spent several months alternating between living in a car and couch surfing with her son, then an infant.

Later, while working a full-time administrative job, she enrolled in a community college and then transferred to the University of California, Berkeley. After graduating, she started to work her way up in local politics in Oakland.

When Ms. Thao was ready to run for City Council, the clan elders swung into action, helping to mobilize a statewide network of Thaos and other Hmong residents to raise money and volunteer for her campaign, Louansee Moua said. When Ms. Thao won the race, the Thao clan threw a baci ceremony attended by more than 500 people for her in Merced, Calif., during which many in the community tied a blessing string around her wrists for good luck.

When it came to Ms. Thao’s mayoral race this year, the clan was once again eager to help out.

“There’s this strong cohesive network within the Hmong community and a sense that because she’s a Thao and we’re Thaos, of course we have to help her,” Louansee Moua explained.

To win in Oakland, Ms. Thao relied on a broad coalition of voters who supported her progressive policies, as well as endorsements and funding from major labor unions that are influential in the heavily Democratic city.

But Ms. Thao said her narrow victory simply would not have been possible without the help of her nationwide family of Hmong elders, aunties, uncles, brothers and sisters.

“This wave of Hmong electeds across the nation — they go out and they ask for support in the Hmong community,” Ms. Thao said. “Then the Hmong community shows up and they show up big time.”

PHOTOS: Sheng Thao, the incoming mayor of Oakland, Calif. Below, scenes from the Hmong Village shopping center in St. Paul, Minn., an area of the country where many Hmong Americans settled. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAROLYN FONG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; TIM GRUBER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); A refugee camp in Thailand in 1979 housed 11,000 people, 90 percent of them Hmong refugees. Top, Hmong students in a class in St. Paul in 1980. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDDIE ADAMS/ASSOCIATED PRESS; MICHAEL KIEGER/MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY) This article appeared in print on page A16.

**Load-Date:** December 29, 2022

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[***‘Un Film Dramatique’ Review: Students Record the Paris Suburbs; Critic’s Pick***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6232-S2N1-JBG3-636H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 25, 2021 Thursday 23:35 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 351 words

**Byline:** Teo Bugbee

**Highlight:** This documentary gives middle school children a chance to show their experiences.

**Body**

This documentary gives middle school children a chance to show their experiences.

In the documentary “Un Film Dramatique,” the artist Éric Baudelaire fulfills a commission to make a dedicated artwork for Dora Maar, a newly constructed middle school in the Saint-Denis suburb of Paris. For the project, Baudelaire filmed 21 students across four years, and he encouraged them to take up the camera themselves. The finished film demonstrates the liveliness and generosity that can come from civic-minded art.

The movie passes by in informal episodes. The filmmakers set up games and debates, encouraging classmates to discuss what they think the movie will be about. The students consider what it means to be the subjects and creators of a documentary, and in turn, they reckon with how their school fits into the world around them.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/Fi9KWOJGWtI)]

These adolescents are ***working class***, often the children of immigrants, and they scoff at the rough reputation that Saint-Denis carries in Paris. With cameras in their hands, they build their own records about what life is like in the suburbs. They dance, they sing, they offer house tours. Each child is confident, curious and collaborative.

The movie has a patchwork quality that comes from jumping in and out of different people’s vantage points. Some scenes are riveting, as when the French-Romanian student Gabriel-David debates his French-Ivorian classmate, Guy-Yanis, over what it means to have a country of origin if you’ve never lived there. But just as many sequences are banal — kids filming themselves watching TV as if they were streaming on Instagram Live.

It’s the cumulative effect of seeing the world through the eyes of these children that makes this movie so deeply joyful. This is a heartening project, a philosophical excavation of a school that abounds with playful optimism.

Un Film Dramatique

Not rated. In French, with subtitles. Running time: 1 hour 54 minutes. Watch through [*virtual cinemas*](http://youtube.com/embed/Fi9KWOJGWtI).

PHOTO: Mohammed Samassa, left, and Fatimata Sarr in the documentary “Un Film Dramatique.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY Cinema Guild FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 25, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How I Fell in Love With the Coal Miner’s Daughter; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66K9-2821-DXY4-X2M8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 10, 2022 Monday 15:25 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1198 words

**Byline:** Margaret Renkl

**Highlight:** Loretta Lynn was complicated. Love is, too.

**Body**

NASHVILLE — I didn’t learn to love Loretta Lynn the way most children who grew up in Alabama in the 1960s and ’70s did. My parents never listened to Grand Ole Opry broadcasts on Saturday nights. They’d courted to big band music in their youth, so they kept the radio tuned to the oldies station.

It’s not like I didn’t know who Loretta Lynn was. I’d heard her songs on other people’s radios all my life but paid them no mind.

Then I went off to faraway Philadelphia for graduate school and started tuning the radio in my apartment to the country station, just to hear the sound of my own people. My roommate would walk in, hear country music and ask, “Why are you punishing me?” I wasn’t punishing her. I was falling in love. Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, Rosanne Cash, the Judds — they all made me feel as if home wasn’t really a thousand miles away.

That’s how I learned to love Loretta Lynn. But the way I learned to understand and respect her was the way I learn most things: by reading a book. I first read Ms. Lynn’s memoir, “[*Coal Miner’s Daughter*](https://www.grandcentralpublishing.com/titles/loretta-lynn/coal-miners-daughter/9781538701713/),” at very nearly the same time as I was learning to sing along with “[*Coal Miner’s Daughter*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9eHp7JJgq8),” the most famous of her many hit songs.

The South, the home I had stomped away from after college, convinced I could never spend my life in such a closed-minded place, was the same home I returned to, my tail between my legs, only four months after moving to Philadelphia.

Homesickness is what brought me back, but a growing understanding of the South and its true complexity is what has kept me here. And if there’s anybody who embodies that complexity more richly than Loretta Lynn does, I don’t know who it might be.

This mountain girl who had married as a teenager, a girl who had, by her own estimate, the equivalent of a fourth-grade education, who grew up so far from the rest of the developed world that she was 12 before she ever rode in an automobile — that isolated little girl grew up to be a legend.

She used her influence to change the music industry. Warned that country fans would never accept her again if she hugged the Black artist Charley Pride onstage at an awards ceremony, she [*hugged him anyway, and kissed him, too*](https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/what-country-music-owes-to-charley-pride#_blank). Warned that certain subjects were too risky for country radio, she wrote songs like “The Pill” and “Don’t Come Home a-Drinkin’ (With Lovin’ on Your Mind),” singing about what it was really like to be a ***working-class*** woman. “She broke down a lot of barriers for people that came after her,” the rocker [*Jack White said*](https://pitchfork.com/news/jack-white-pays-tribute-to-loretta-lynn-she-was-like-a-mother-figure-to-me/#_blank) last week.

Her best-selling 1976 memoir — and, four years later, the film version that won Sissy Spacek an Academy Award for best actress — brought Ms. Lynn to the attention of a much wider audience. In 2004, her collaboration with Mr. White on the album “Van Lear Rose” brought her before a wider audience still. That year they went on David Letterman’s show [*and absolutely killed it*](https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/flashback-loretta-lynn-jack-white-portland-oregon-letterman-780218/).

Ms. Lynn never considered herself a feminist, and she in fact expressly rejected the label, but in her songs she advocated the very empowerment the women’s movement sought to achieve. In her memoir, she is even more direct, defending abortion rights, standing up for her lesbian fans and arguing for greater choice and opportunity in every context. Throughout her career in an industry that remains dominated by men, she was a great champion of new female artists.

All of which is why I jumped — literally jumped up and down — at the chance to interview Ms. Lynn in 2010, and it’s why [*that interview*](https://chapter16.org/still-proud-to-be-a-coal-miners-daughter/) remains one of the highlights of my professional life. I loved her songs and her life story, but an hour of talking with her was all it took for me to love Ms. Lynn herself. It was also all it took for me to feel, remarkably, unbelievably, loved in return. How can you not feel loved by someone who offers to take you to the Grammys on her tour bus? Someone who ends the conversation by saying, “Well, I love you”?

In 2014, I got to hear Loretta Lynn in concert at the Ryman Auditorium, the mother church of country music. That night, the patter of the warm-up act made me deeply uneasy — drunk-guy jokes that could’ve gotten ugly, elliptical references to President Barack Obama that came very close to open racism. But Loretta herself said nothing of the kind, and Mr. Obama had just [*given her the Presidential Medal of Freedom*](https://twitter.com/ObamaFoundation/status/1577428821590282242), after all. Well, I thought, these people don’t speak for Loretta anyway.

When Ms. Lynn announced in 2016 that she was supporting Donald Trump for president, I almost cried. What I didn’t know then was how often this experience would be played out in the following months and years for me and for so many other liberals down here, and in much more personal contexts.

Many a white liberal in the South has a granny — or a mother, or an aunt, or a sister, or a neighbor — just like Loretta Lynn, someone they admire and adore, someone who has earned their love and admiration. Their love is complicated, not obviated, by the fact that the people they love routinely walk into the voting booth and pull the lever for chaos.

“It is easy to simplify all this into contradictions,” is how Marissa R. Moss, the author of “[*Her Country: How the Women of Country Music Became the Success They Were Never Supposed to Be*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9781250793591/hercountry),” [*put it in New York magazine*](https://www.vulture.com/2022/10/loretta-lynn-remembrance.html), “but it was only a contradiction if you thought you knew and understood women, specifically rural, Appalachian, or Southern women. Lynn was complex, not a contradiction.”

Human complexity is surely why the singer-songwriter Rissi Palmer, host of the “[*Color Me Country” radio*](https://colormecountry.com/) show, wrote [*on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/RissiPalmer/status/1577318410740027394), “The Morgan Wades, Carly Pierces, and Mickey Guytons of the world (all of us really) would not have been possible without Loretta. She said things that were unthinkable coming from women artists. Her honesty made it possible for ALL of us to be honest fearlessly.”

In the end, it comes down to love. Whatever the vitriol online might suggest, we are still capable of loving one another through profound differences and irreconcilable disagreements. And when we manage to keep on loving, and keep on listening, we can sometimes, maybe, bring our loved ones around to a new way of thinking.

No one knew that power better than Loretta Lynn, who spoke the truth of her own life so other women wouldn’t feel so alone. She helped make the world better for them, and she brought at least one homesick Alabama girl home to stay.

Godspeed, Miss Loretta. I love you, too.

Margaret Renkl, a contributing Opinion writer, is the author of the books “[*Graceland, at Last: Notes on Hope and Heartache From the American South*](https://milkweed.org/book/graceland-at-last)” and “[*Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss*](https://milkweed.org/book/late-migrations).”

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A contributing Opinion writer and the author of the books “Graceland, at Last: Notes on Hope and Heartache From the American South” and “Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss.”

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES) This article appeared in print on page A22.

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[***Five Takeaways From a Red Wave That Didn’t Reach the Shore***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66TP-B7H1-DXY4-X0D8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 9, 2022 Wednesday 09:46 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1543 words

**Byline:** Blake Hounshell

**Highlight:** Democrats showed up, Trump-backed candidates underperformed and inflation wasn’t the whole story: Here are last night’s lessons.

**Body**

Democrats showed up, Trump-backed candidates underperformed and inflation wasn’t the whole story: Here are last night’s lessons.

Democrats tried to outrun history — and the lead weight of a wounded president who made his final political appearance of the campaign in deep-blue Maryland, in a county he won two years ago by an overwhelming margin.

They had help from a surprising quarter: Republican voters. A base still in thrall to Donald J. Trump chose candidates in the primaries who threw out plenty of red meat, but on Election Day, many failed to translate their frustrations into victory.

So far, the results appear well short of the “red tsunami” of Republican dreams. Republicans may yet win back the House, but hardly in commanding fashion, while the Senate remained too close to call early Wednesday morning.

Across the East Coast, in Virginia’s northern suburbs and mixed areas of Rhode Island and New Hampshire, embattled Democrats managed to hang on. They even knocked off a few Republicans here and there. In many tight races, abortion and Mr. Trump’s looming presence may have been the G.O.P.’s undoing.

“The Democratic Party post-Trump is a much tougher, fighting party,” said Representative Jamie Raskin, Democrat of Maryland, attributing to sheer grit the victories eked out by colleagues like Abigail Spanberger of Virginia. “These are battle-hardened veterans who know exactly why they’re in politics.”

Tuesday was by no means an unalloyed victory for either side, however. There were signs of [*Republican gains in* ***working-class*** *communities of color*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/08/us/election-midterms/monica-de-la-cruz-michelle-vallejo-south-texas?smid=url-share). And some battleground states, like North Carolina, moved further out of Democrats’ reach. Gov. Ron DeSantis, Republican of Florida, even flipped the Democratic stronghold of Miami-Dade County on his way to a rout of Representative Charlie Crist.

It will be days before the full results are clear, and possibly weeks. Here are the lessons of the 2022 midterms so far:

The Democratic base showed up.

The biggest question hanging over Democrats all year was just who, exactly, would show up to vote for them. In a typical midterm election, like 2010 and 2014, turnout drops by about 20 percentage points from a presidential year.

But turnout smashed all records in 2018, when voters repudiated Mr. Trump and Democrats retook the House. So far, [*preliminary research by the Democratic data firm Catalist suggests*](https://catalist.us/election-day-2022/) that this year looks much more like 2018 than it does the sleepy affairs that took place under former President Barack Obama. Many analysts now think the United States may have reached a new plateau of permanently high participation, stoked by each party’s fear of the other side.

That might help explain why [*polling failed to capture*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/18/us/politics/midterm-election-voters-democracy-poll.html) the widespread feeling among Democrats, which grew after the Supreme Court’s reversal of Roe v. Wade and the Jan. 6 hearings over the summer, that their core democratic rights were increasingly at risk.

“I think that pundits sometimes project onto the public a crude materialism, where all people care about is pocketbook issues in the narrowest sense,” Mr. Raskin said. “People understand how precarious and precious a thing constitutional democracy is, and they don’t want to lose it.”

Abortion put Democrats in the fight.

Throughout much of 2021 and the first half of 2022, Republicans appeared poised for shellacking-level gains in Congress and beyond. Then came [*the Supreme Court’s bombshell decision in Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/24/us/roe-wade-overturned-supreme-court.html), overturning a 50-year precedent that many Americans had taken for granted.

Suddenly, Democrats had found an issue to rally their base around. Two months later, when voters in conservative Kansas [*emphatically rejected a ballot measure to ban abortion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/02/us/kansas-abortion-rights-vote.html), many saw a potential game-changer in the making. Democratic governors like Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan positioned themselves as bulwarks of abortion rights, while liberal groups poured hundreds of millions of dollars into ads highlighting the far-right positions many Republicans took to win their primaries.

Some on the left, [*notably Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont*](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/commentisfree/2022/oct/10/democrats-midterms-victory-economy-bernie-sanders), have questioned whether Democrats expended too much energy on abortion. The unintended effect, these critics argued, was to reinforce the impression that Democrats were ignoring the most pressing concern on voters’ minds: inflation.

Few Democratic strategists agree. “I do think Dobbs transformed this election,” said Anna Greenberg, a Democratic pollster. “There’s pretty good evidence that it shook things up.”

Trump saddled Republicans with weak candidates.

Often, Democrats got the opponents they desired. And the Republican Party leadership was just as often confounded and frustrated by the choices its own voters made.

G.O.P. leaders aggressively courted centrist governors like Doug Ducey of Arizona, Larry Hogan of Maryland and Chris Sununu of New Hampshire to run for Senate — to little avail. [*Mr. Trump played kingmaker from Mar-a-Lago*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/17/us/politics/trump-mar-a-lago.html), demanding that candidates pay fealty to his lies about the 2020 election being stolen. Republican primary voters sided overwhelmingly with Mr. Trump, leading Mitch McConnell, the Senate minority leader, to fret about the “quality” of his party’s nominees.

In some races, Democrats even tried steering Republican voters away from more moderate candidates and lifted Trump-aligned conservatives who denied the legitimacy of Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s 2020 win. Once these nominees were cemented, Democrats bombarded voters with messages that portrayed Republicans as too extreme on issues like abortion rights or as opponents of democracy itself.

The Democrats’ scorched-earth approach worked in many cases. Josh Shapiro, the attorney general of Pennsylvania, [*ran ads bolstering State Senator Doug Mastriano in the Republican primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/us/politics/josh-shapiro-mastriano-pennsylvania.html), then steamrollered him in the election on Tuesday.

Don Bolduc, a Republican challenger who likewise played up Trump’s stolen-election lies, lost a Senate race in New Hampshire that Republicans in Washington once thought winnable. Gov. Tony Evers of Wisconsin, wryly assessing his victory over Tim Michels, a flame-throwing Republican who allied himself with Mr. Trump, remarked that “boring wins.”

Inflation dominated, as Democrats grasped for a response.

Again and again, voters told pollsters that soaring prices for gasoline, groceries and housing were their No. 1 concern by far. And Democrats grasped for a clear, consistent response to Republican attacks.

[*The White House first tried denial*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/08/business/economy/inflation-biden-administration.html): Administration officials argued that inflation was a “transitory” phenomenon, a word that would come to haunt many a Democrat months later. Then blame: When Russia’s invasion of Ukraine sent oil prices rocketing upward, Mr. Biden and other Democrats tried to brand inflation as [*“Putin’s price hike.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/us/politics/biden-putin-inflation.html)

Acceptance proved harder. Some Democrats were more adept than others at feeling voters’ pain; in February, a group of vulnerable senators, for instance, urged Mr. Biden to freeze the federal gas tax. But, on the whole, the public held Democrats responsible for their pinched wallets, regardless of what the party said or did.

Even the Inflation Reduction Act, the product of 18 months of messy talks on Capitol Hill, landed with a whisper. Relatively few Americans were aware of provisions to cap the price of insulin and allow Medicare to negotiate the price of prescription drugs, even though they were individually popular. As Sean McElwee of the progressive polling group Data for Progress put it, “Voters don’t know a ton about the bill or what was in it.”

The country is as closely divided as ever.

The chief force in American politics remains its deep partisan divide. There were indeed some ticket-splitters on Tuesday, but in general Democrats turned out en masse for Democrats, and Republicans for Republicans. In years past, Mr. Biden’s low approval ratings and inflation stuck at 40-year-highs might have augured a convincing drubbing for his party. Harry Truman lost 55 House seats in his first midterms; Bill Clinton lost 53; Barack Obama lost 63.

That kind of rebuke didn’t happen to Mr. Biden. It is rarely how American politics works anymore. There are fewer true swing voters than ever — and a dwindling number of swingable races.

Most of the country’s 435 House seats were not in contention anyway, leaving the two sides to scrap over a battlefield [*shrunken by gerrymandering*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/30/upshot/midterms-gerrymandering-republicans.html) and sorted into polarized geographic enclaves. Fewer than a third of this year’s Senate races were ever competitive. Representative Tim Ryan [*could not escape Ohio’s rightward march*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/08/us/elections/results-ohio-us-senate.html) despite a campaign Democrats hailed as “phenomenal”; nor could moderate Republicans like Joe O’Dea and Tiffany Smiley pull off upsets in Colorado and Washington State.

Voters [*re-elected Republican governors*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/08/us/elections/results-governor.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=election-results&amp;context=election_recirc&amp;region=NavBar) in Florida, Georgia and Texas. They returned Democrats to power in Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. And for all the record-shattering sums spent on campaigns and TV ads in the 2022 midterms — [*as much as $16.7 billion, by one estimate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/03/us/politics/midterm-money-billionaires.html) — the country is likely waking up on Nov. 9 much as it did on Nov. 8: split roughly in two.

“Nothing really worked this cycle,” said Ms. Greenberg, the Democratic pollster. “There are much larger issues at stake.”

This article appeared in print on page P6, P7.

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2022

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[***Former Rep. Max Rose Says He Will Not Run for New York City Mayor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61NT-5DB1-DXY4-X0HG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 3, 2021 Sunday 15:16 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 822 words

**Byline:** Dana Rubinstein

**Highlight:** Mr. Rose, a Democrat who lost re-election for his House seat in Staten Island, had said a mayoral bid would be an “underdog campaign.”

**Body**

Mr. Rose, a Democrat who lost re-election for his House seat in Staten Island, had said a mayoral bid would be an “underdog campaign.”

[Live [*N.Y.C. mayoral race primary results.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)]

Max Rose, the recently ousted Democratic congressman from Staten Island, will not run for mayor of New York City after all, upending the still-formative race to run the country’s economic and cultural capital.

In a statement on Sunday, Mr. Rose did not offer reasons for withdrawing from the race, which has already grown crowded with more than a dozen other contenders. Reached by phone, Mr. Rose said, “The statement certainly speaks for itself.”

In the statement, he urged other candidates to pay heed to the needs of the “***working class***.”

He also indicated he and his wife had plans to adopt a baby. They are already the parents of a son.

The race from which he is withdrawing is poised to be one of the most important mayoral elections in modern New York City history. When the next mayor assumes office in 2022, he or she will preside over a city recovering from the ravages of the pandemic: the long-term health impacts, the rise in shootings, the shuttered stores, the lost jobs, the empty office buildings, the looming evictions.

“People are scared and unsure if the New York they love will still exist in the years to come,” Mr. Rose said. “The next mayor can’t just balance the budget, he or she must build a social contract that leaves no one behind.”

Mr. Rose’s abrupt decision comes after he had taken several steps aimed at mounting a bid for the mayoralty that [*he himself said would be an “underdog campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html).”

In early December, [*he created a mayoral campaign committee*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) with the city’s campaign finance board, a step that allows candidates to raise money and spend it.

He also made a point of meeting with the Rev. Al Sharpton, [*who said Mr. Rose would “add some excitement to the campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html).”

But it was never clear how Mr. Rose’s record as a centrist Democrat from the relatively conservative bastion of Staten Island would play in a Democratic primary in New York City.

“Where is the base?” asked Christina Greer, a Fordham University political science professor. “What, you have middle-of-the-road Staten Islanders?”

Mr. Rose initially thought the field of mayoral candidates was weak and might create an opening for him, according to someone close to the former congressman, who requested anonymity so he could speak freely. But as time wore on, Mr. Rose decided it wasn’t the right moment.

Mr. Rose’s associate insisted that fund-raising was not the issue. In order to gain access to the city’s matching funds program, a mayoral candidate has to raise at least $250,000 from at least 1,000 New York City-based small donors.

“We were confident we could raise the money,” said the person close to Mr. Rose.

A decorated Army veteran, Mr. Rose represented a congressional district that encompassed Staten Island and a sliver of Brooklyn. In 2020, he lost his bid for re-election to [*Nicole Malliotakis*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), a Republican state assemblywoman and an ardent supporter of President Trump.

As a congressman, Mr. Rose sometimes took positions that suited his district but might not have played well in a citywide Democratic primary. He was slow to embrace the impeachment of Mr. Trump, and [*said last year*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) that nothing would make him happier than seeing Mr. Trump beat back the pandemic, even if it meant the president’s re-election.

“It’s like, Max Rose, you can’t play footsie with Trumpists and then try to run a campaign in the five boroughs,” Ms. Greer said.

Mr. Rose had little experience with municipal government, something he argued would be an asset in a race against longtime city officials. Among the contenders are Eric L. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, and Scott M. Stringer, New York City’s comptroller.

Conventional political wisdom had it that Mr. Rose would appeal to moderate white voters. But it was unclear how much name recognition he had outside his district. And other candidates are expected to compete for that slice of the electorate too, including Mr. Adams, a former police officer; [*Raymond J. McGuire*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), a former Wall Street banker; and perhaps even Andrew Yang, the former presidential candidate who is expected to announce his candidacy this month.

Mr. Yang raised funds for Mr. Rose’s failed re-election campaign as recently as October. After Mr. Rose declared he would not run on Sunday, Mr. Yang texted with him, according to someone familiar with the exchange who was not authorized to speak on the matter.

In his statement, Mr. Rose suggested that this was not the end of his political story.

“While I won’t be a candidate for mayor this cycle, I am not going anywhere in the fight to make our city and country live up to their promise,” he said.

PHOTO: Max Rose did not offer reasons for leaving the race for New York mayor. He urged others to heed the needs of the “***working class***.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 29, 2021

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[***Your Tuesday Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66TF-PS91-JBG3-651W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 8, 2022 Tuesday 01:07 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1491 words

**Byline:** Natasha Frost

**Highlight:** European countries are backing Ukraine.

**Body**

European countries are backing Ukraine.

Despite troubles, Europeans stick by Ukraine

More than eight months into Russia’s war on Ukraine, Europe is [*holding firm on maintaining support*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/world/europe/europe-ukraine-war-support.html) for Ukraine and tough sanctions on Russia — even amid an escalating cost-of-living crisis that has precipitated strikes, protests and gloom. Most of those pushing for immediate peace or a re-embrace of Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, are for now sequestered in the political opposition.

In France, for instance, many people have accepted the depiction of the war by Emmanuel Macron, their president, as an existential battle that threatens peace and democracy. Some also worry that Russia’s targets will expand, bringing the war closer to their own doorsteps. It has helped that the French government, like Germany’s, has spent massively to blunt some of the effects of inflation and higher energy prices.

Analysts believe that commitment to Ukraine will last as long as the U.S. holds the line. Gains in today’s midterm elections by Republicans, some of whom have questioned the cost of the war, could alter those expectations. And doubts over whether that resolve can endure through a tough winter and beyond continue to linger, as Europeans face new security threats and economic uncertainty.

In other news from the war:

* Russian forces are stepping up efforts to [*make life unbearable for civilians*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/07/world/ukraine-war-news-russia-updates/russian-forces-make-life-gradually-more-unbearable-for-those-left-in-kherson?smid=url-share) in the occupied southern region of Kherson.

1. Why does Kherson matter so much to Russia and Ukraine? [*Here’s what we know*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/world/europe/kherson-ukraine-russia-explainer.html).

* Russia’s Parliament is poised to pass laws that [*intensify an L.G.B.T.Q. crackdown*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/06/world/ukraine-war-news-russia-updates/russias-parliament-is-poised-to-pass-laws-intensifying-an-lgbtq-crackdown).

‘A highway to climate hell’

World leaders are [*gathering this week in Egypt*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/climate/climate-change-crisis-cop27.html) for the 27th annual United Nations climate talks, known as COP27, to wrestle with the climate crisis, amid other pressing challenges that threaten to set back already inadequate steps to pivot the global economy away from fossil fuels.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, itself financed by the sale of Russian gas, has unsettled the global energy market and spurred inflation and calls for more oil and gas drilling. Poor countries suffering from climate effects are increasingly frustrated with wealthy countries whose emissions are driving global warming. And relations between the two biggest polluters, the U.S. and China, have fallen to a new low.

Rishi Sunak, Britain’s new prime minister, told delegates that the Russian invasion of Ukraine should prompt developed countries to invest more heavily in renewable energy. “Putin’s abhorrent war in Ukraine and rising energy prices across the world are not a reason to go slow on climate change,” he said. “They are a reason to act faster.”

Quotable: “We are on a highway to climate hell with our foot on the accelerator,” said António Guterres, the United Nations secretary general. He underscored that climate change was not a separate issue that could be deferred but one linked to the crises of war, unrest and hunger.

In other climate news:

* Many countries and companies have [*made only halting progress*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/climate/glasgow-climate-promises.html) toward the goals they set at last year’s conference.

1. Switzerland, one of the world’s richest nations, has promised to cut its greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030 — by [*paying poorer nations to reduce their emissions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/climate/switzerland-emissions-ghana-peru-ukraine-georgia.html), with Switzerland receiving credit toward its climate goals.
2. Many of the world’s most visited glaciers — including those in Yosemite and Yellowstone — [*may disappear by 2050*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/travel/glaciers-melting-unesco.html), the U.N. warned.

Election Day in the U.S.

Americans will vote today in consequential midterm elections that could change the balance of power in state and federal legislative bodies, influence foreign policy and foreshadow the 2024 presidential race. Republicans are expected to take control of the House and possibly the Senate. Here are [*four potential election outcomes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/upshot/election-night-scenarios-midterms.html).

Republican and Democratic candidates yesterday made their final pitches to voters, trying fervently to bring out their party faithful amid what looks like record-shattering turnout and remarkable uncertainty. With election conspiracy theorists running for key posts, the outcome could shape the nation’s representative democracy for years to come. Here’s [*when to expect results*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/07/us/elections/election-results-time.html).

Republican candidates stuck to their central campaign themes of inflation, crime and immigration. Democrats also nodded to rising prices, insisting they were the party that was trying to do something about inflation, but they also appealed to the rights of women to end a pregnancy and the fate of democracy itself.

Cost: These midterms have [*shattered all spending records*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/07/us/election-midterm-news/the-midterm-campaign-and-its-high-profile-races-are-shattering-spending-records?smid=url-share) for federal and state elections in a nonpresidential year, surpassing $16.7 billion.

THE LATEST NEWS

Around the World

* U.S. lawmakers’ objections to a Chinese semiconductor company and China’s Covid-19 restrictions are hurting Apple’s ability to [*make new iPhones in China*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/business/apple-china-ymtc.html).

1. Greece [*will ban the sale of spyware*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/world/europe/greece-spyware-ban.html) after Kyriakos Mitsotakis, the prime minister, was accused of directing the use of it against politicians and journalists.
2. Male migrants aboard a ship coming from Libya [*were stuck in an Italian port*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/world/europe/italy-immigrants-ship.html) after the new right-wing Italian government refused to allow them to set foot on shore.

Other Big Stories

* Israel’s lurch toward the far right in its most recent election [*reflects anxiety among voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/05/world/middleeast/israel-election-far-right.html) about terror attacks, unrest in southern Israel and fears about Jewish identity.

1. Facing an economic meltdown, Belize has followed a growing playbook among developing nations: [*cutting debt by investing in conservation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/world/americas/belize-coral-reef-preservation.html).
2. People who took Paxlovid within a few days of contracting Covid were [*less likely to experience long-term symptoms*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/health/paxlovid-long-covid.html), a new study found.

What Else Is Happening

* Under pressure and facing a wave of criticism, Elon Musk has [*increasingly turned to Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/technology/elon-musk-twitter-spree.html) to share his point of view. Some users have [*migrated to Mastodon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/technology/mastodon-twitter-elon-musk.html).

1. Airbnb will [*make cleaning fees more transparent for travelers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/business/airbnb-cleaning-fees.html).
2. Jimmy Kimmel will [*host the Oscars*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/movies/jimmy-kimmel-oscars-host.html) in March.

A Morning Read

The U.S. National Park Service has a request for visitors: [*Please don’t lick the toads*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/us/licking-toads-toxic.html).

Officials made the plea to help protect the Sonoran desert toad. It is found in the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico and secretes a toxin that some call the “God molecule,” a hallucinogenic so potent it is often compared to a religious experience.

SPORTS NEWS FROM THE ATHLETIC

How last weekend’s soccer affected the World Cup: Who’s now in contention? Whose chances are fading? What injury scares were there? [*Here’s what you need to know.*](https://theathletic.com/3768742/2022/11/07/world-cup-news-injuries/)

An intriguing rematch in the Champions League last-16 draw: Defending champion Real Madrid versus runner-up Liverpool stands out among [*some juicy matchups*](https://theathletic.com/3771014/2022/11/07/champions-league-last-16/).

From The Times: A group of American cryptocurrency investors is trying to [*turn the obscure English soccer club of Crawley Town*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/06/business/crypto-soccer-crawley.html) into “the internet’s team,” with a global following of crypto enthusiasts.

ARTS AND IDEAS

Bob Dylan on 66 classic songs

Bob Dylan’s new book, “The Philosophy of Modern Song,” riffs on 66 songs, from Bobby Darin’s “Mack the Knife” and Webb Pierce’s “There Stands the Glass” to Nina Simone’s “Don’t Let Me Be Misunderstood” and the Clash’s “London Calling.”

Of Mose Allison’s “Everybody Cryin’ Mercy,” for instance, he writes:

This song is all about hypocrisy. Hitting and running, butchering and exterminating, taking the grand prize and finishing in front. Then being big hearted, burying the hatchet, apologizing, kissing and making up. It’s about the hustle.

To Dwight Garner, who [*reviewed the book for The Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/books/bob-dylan-philosophy-of-modern-song.html), these riffs “sound a lot like his own song lyrics, so much so that part of me wanted this to be a new record instead, wanted to hear these lines come croaking up from Dylan’s 81-year-old lungs and past his buckshot, barb-wired uvula.”

The book, Dwight writes, is “sly,” “devious,” by turns “helplessly epigrammatic” and “completely great, except for when it isn’t.” He concludes: “This book is about a genius recognizing unfiltered genius in others, when he can find it. Often enough it’s an argument for simplicity.”

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Everything you need for [*this humble-but-satisfying vegetarian meal*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1019982-creamy-braised-white-beans) is probably already in your kitchen.

What to Read

In Lynn Steger Strong’s third novel, “Flight,” three siblings converge for [*their first Christmas without their mother*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/books/review/flight-lynn-steger-strong.html).

Travel

Spend the night (or at least several hours) inside [*underwater hotels, restaurants and even homes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/04/realestate/under-water-restaurants-vacations.html).

Now Time to Play

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Swelled heads (four letters).

And here are [*today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html) and [*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. See you on Wednesday. — Natasha

P.S. The Times’s Tracy Bennett will [*curate, program and test Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/crosswords/wordle-editor.html) as its dedicated puzzle editor.

The latest episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is on the fight for white ***working-class*** voters in Pennsylvania.

You can reach Natasha and the team at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing@nytimes.com?subject=Europe%20Briefing%20Feedback).

PHOTO: A funeral in Kharkiv for a Ukrainian soldier killed in an artillery strike. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Finbarr O’Reilly for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 8, 2022

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[***Why It's So Hard to Talk About Money***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67B0-XKV1-JBG3-623V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 15, 2023 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BU; Column 0; Money and Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1756 words

**Byline:** By Emma Goldberg

**Body**

The merits of talking candidly about salary are widely acknowledged. Actually doing it is more complicated.

Here is a small sampling of problems that were not anywhere near the scope of Emma Bushnell's job description as an executive assistant at a law firm, yet filled her daily conversations thanks to gossipy colleagues. One lawyer's difficulty finding a contractor for a second home. Another lawyer's stress over planning a vacation to Colombia. The partners at her white-shoe law firm -- whose salaries were at least five times her own -- seemed to feel entitled to vent. Yet when she raised her own issues, about financial insecurity, they squirmed.

''They were constantly getting these questionnaires to evaluate me and I was like, 'Any word you can put in? I'm making $55,000 a year,''' said Ms. Bushnell, 33, who left the firm last year. ''They would find it gauche or uncomfortable. And I was like, 'You know what, if you're uncomfortable it's because you're making too much more money than me. And that's your problem, not mine.'''

Ms. Bushnell's attempts to puncture her colleagues' silence about salary, including asking other assistants to share theirs, kept getting squelched.

That's what happened to Mary Lemmer, an entrepreneur who bounced between jobs in Silicon Valley and found some of her requests for raises were met with what she called something like ''adult temper tantrums.'' Being belittled has made it tougher for her to keep asking for the money she needs, creating a physiological response of flushed skin and a pit in her stomach when she has to negotiate.

''If every time I go for a run I stub my toe or twist my ankle, I'm probably not going to be excited to go for a run again,'' Ms. Lemmer said. ''To have those conversations go so poorly -- that really created a fear.''

Like going for a run, or drinking water and getting sleep, the merits of talking candidly about money are widely acknowledged. There are T-shirts emblazoned with ''pay the women.'' There are Beyoncé lyrics about getting paid (''Gimme my check''). There are wildly popular TikTok accounts devoted to asking strangers on the street to share how much they make.

Money talk is in vogue, theoretically. In practice, however, those who try to make it happen in their real lives -- over coffee with colleagues, over brunch with friends, over a friendly exchange on Slack -- often find themselves stymied. They face subtle or outright resistance from higher-ups.

But as salary transparency becomes the law in more states, including New York, California, Colorado and Washington State, where many employers now or will soon have to disclose the compensation or the salary range for a position on any job posting, and with legislators in at least a dozen more states planning to introduce bills this year, some are hoping that the legal shift will accelerate long-awaited social and cultural shifts, too.

Alice Lemmer, Mary's mother, has watched her daughter wrestle to get raises in recent years, and has looked back regretfully at all the moments in her own career when it didn't occur to her that she could ask colleagues, especially her male colleagues in software, about their compensation. ''I was never told 'Oh don't talk about your salary,' but somehow I knew that wasn't something you did,'' Ms. Lemmer, 65, said. ''It was rude. It was intrusive. I don't know why -- when you think about it logically, it shouldn't be. But that was the hidden message.''

It's a hidden and often not-so-hidden message, one cemented by broadly accepted rules of etiquette and Americans' financial anxieties. Middle class people are reticent to discuss money because their class status is precarious, and they are afraid that talking about debt will expose that fragility to their children or neighbors, according to Caitlin Zaloom, an anthropologist and the author of ''Indebted.'' Ms. Zaloom has found that her research subjects will divulge debts and budgeting worries with her that they haven't even shared with their children. This secrecy dates back to the 19th century, when Americans came to view a household budget as reflective of a family's moral worth.

Rachel Sherman, a sociologist who studies affluent and wealthy people, has found that people don't like to identify as well-off even if they have millions of dollars in family income or inherited wealth, send their children to private schools and own second homes.

Ms. Sherman, the author of the book ''Uneasy Street,'' once contacted a research subject with an annual household income of over $2 million who refused to label herself as affluent. Ms. Sherman traces this in part to an American upper class that has learned in elite school settings not to talk openly about excess. The 2008 financial crisis also contributed to people's desires to hide their wealth, along with the rise of the Occupy Wall Street movement and its criticism of the ''1 percent.''

What all this secrecy does, though, is place a curtain over economic inequality, these researchers said. People don't talk about money -- especially not with numbers attached -- so the scale of disparities is unclear, the chasms between millionaires and upper class and middle class and ***working class*** shrouded in ambiguities.

''Not talking about numbers allows us not to talk about inequality,'' Ms. Sherman said. ''It allows people to move through the world without having to openly acknowledge to themselves or others that they may have a lot more than other people.''

No other clunky topic rivals the money taboo, not even sex and death. ''People tell me about really profound intimate details of their lives -- they tell me about all kinds of fantasies, affairs, sexual escapades,'' said Matt Lundquist, 46, a psychotherapist in New York City who works with many wealthy clients. ''The one thing that has historically persisted as outside what people will open up about, even in the context of long-term therapy, has been mentioning salary.''

The pressures to keep quiet, and the stakes of doing so, are heightened for women of color, who are told in subtle and unsubtle ways that they will face consequences for breaking from social conventions. Kristen Egziabher, 41, for example, who works in financial technology and lives in Texas, recalled that her parents, who had both graduated from historically Black colleges in the 1970s, taught her to avoid asking questions in the workplace that might cause her to stick out. Get noticed for quality of work, they told her, not for stirring up trouble. As a result, Ms. Egziabher rarely talks about salary negotiations with her teammates.

On top of the stigma surrounding money conversations, there's the constant thrum of expectations to keep up with the Joneses or Kardashians -- expectations that people have the newest sneaker brands and are taking weekend trips with friends, all while juggling student loans and the strain of inflation.

Terrence Shulman, a therapist who runs a program for people with financial problems including overspending and compulsive theft, has seen the way shame, guilt and childhood trauma merge to form pernicious habits, such as hiding debt from family members. Mr. Shulman experienced this himself. Growing up, he watched his mother take on debt when his father stopped paying child support. As a teenager, he buckled under the weight of trying to be a good son, and he started rebelling by shoplifting. Mr. Shulman later sought therapeutic treatment for his financial anxieties, and he has now offered it to hundreds of patients.

Even as a person who thinks and talks about financial honesty all day, Mr. Shulman struggles to speak candidly to friends about his salary. Five years ago, a close friend asked him how much he made and he balked.

''He goes 'Do you mind my asking how much money you make?''' Mr. Shulman recalled. ''I didn't know what to say. If he'd asked me 'How's it going with your wife?,' I'd tell him all the details.''

Slowly, though, cracks in the social surface are appearing, which career coaches are eager to wedge open even further.

When graduate students visit one of the career counseling offices at the University of Colorado, Molly Thompson, 44, a counselor for the masters of the environment program, asks them to calculate their ''survival number'': the minimum amount of money they need to get by, taking into account rent, food and student loans. They account for inflation by adding 15 percent. Then they calculate 20 percent above that baseline number. That's the figure they use to anchor their salary negotiations, as they apply for their first jobs out of graduate school.

When Ms. Thompson first started offering salary negotiation workshops, she couldn't get students to show up. They told her they were too scared and would accept whatever compensation was offered to them.

Colorado's salary transparency law, which went into effect in 2021 and is similar to New York's enacted last year, has been a boon. Although the law requires companies to share a pay range with job candidates, not all companies are following it in good faith, Ms. Thompson said. Some employers are posting ranges as large as $25,000 to $200,000.

But at least students aren't feeling as if their negotiation process means bumping around in the dark, hoping they won't stub their toes.

Even in states without sweeping salary transparency laws, workers are learning from the model created by these laws and protecting themselves from being lowballed. Keren Gifford, 38, who works in health care analytics in Pennsylvania, said that when her previous employer asked her to share how much she had made in a prior role she refused to answer, sidestepping by saying how much she wanted to make in her next position. The human resources team chided her. She didn't care.

Other workers are ratcheting up their efforts by calling on friends, relatives and even strangers for information about how much money they should ask for at work. Alexis Kirton, 29, was recently on a date with a white man who worked in her industry -- gaming. Aware, as a Black woman, that in many industries, hers included, women of color are often paid the least, she shared her salary to see whether he thought she was making enough. They later called it off, but she still hopes to contact him for advice before her next salary negotiation meeting.

''We didn't end it on bad enough terms, so I will probably reach out,'' she said.

His response last time was instructive, after all: ''He told me I should be making so much more.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/13/business/money-salary-transparency-pay.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/13/business/money-salary-transparency-pay.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mary Lemmer says she has found it tough to negotiate her compensation. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MAGGIE SHANNON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BU4)

Alice Lemmer says she wishes that she had been able to discuss compensation more openly with her colleagues. ''I was never told, 'Oh don't talk about your salary,' but somehow I knew that wasn't something you did,'' she said. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ARIANA DREHSLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BU5) This article appeared in print on page BU4, BU5.

**Load-Date:** January 15, 2023

**End of Document**



[***What the Nobel Prize Winner Annie Ernaux Understands About the Past; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66JX-CC61-JBG3-61YV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 8, 2022 Saturday 12:19 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1252 words

**Byline:** Sheila Heti

**Highlight:** Ernaux’s work insists that nothing in life is simple. And it is from that complexity that her work — and, indeed, her very voice — emerges.

**Body**

This week Annie Ernaux was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Ms. Ernaux’s parents were shopkeepers in the small town of Yvetot, France. They owned a grocery store and cafe, where her mother served women on the grocery side and her father served coffee and alcohol to men in the cafe. The three of them lived in the rooms upstairs.

Her parents wanted her to receive a proper education, to surpass them, and she did. As she writes of her mother in an early book, “I was both certain of her love for me and aware of one blatant injustice: She spent all day selling milk and potatoes so that I could sit in a lecture hall and learn about Plato.”

Many writers pay a debt to their parents or to the world they left behind. But by making the past a theme, Ms. Ernaux takes homage further than that.

Consider, for instance, the apparent simplicity of her language. It emerged from an aesthetic decision to have her work remain “a cut below literature.” Ms. Ernaux has written that her aversion to playing with metaphors comes from an allegiance to her parents. She doesn’t want to write in a way that is different from how the people she grew up with speak.

Perhaps another indication of her loyalty is that she signs her books with a range of dates (“May-June &amp; September-October 2001,”) marking the period in which the book was written as if to emphasize: These words didn’t just appear on the page. Writing is a form of work, and it happens in time, much like running a cafe.

In 2020 her memoir “A Girl’s Story” was published in English. It tells the story of the summer she was essentially raped by the head counselor at her camp. But the book is less about what happened to her than the impossibility of returning to that time in her life at all.

Most memoirs operate as if the past were right there and can be looked at, like a painting on the wall. But Ms. Ernaux understands that one’s 18-year-old self is a stranger to one’s 70-year-old self. Even considering sex, she asks, “How to resuscitate the absolute ignorance and anticipation of what is considered the most unknown and wondrous thing in life …?”

Ms. Ernaux writes that in the days after the encounter with the head counselor, she felt “joy and peace prevail, the gift of self accomplished. … No words but those of a mystical variety can possibly transcribe.” Although a rumor about their encounter is passed around the camp and she is mocked, she remembers that her younger self is also convinced that, paradoxically, she is “living the most exalted days of her existence.”

Decades later, finding the man’s picture in a small-town paper, Ms. Ernaux examines it. What does this man — a patriarch celebrating his golden anniversary with his wife and his many children and grandchildren — have to do with the boy who assaulted her? There is a relationship between the past and present, but what?

In an important way, that summer forged the person she became: “I started to make a literary being of myself, someone who lives as if her experiences were to be written down someday.”

At the height of MeToo (a movement Ms. Ernaux publicly supported), who dared write a book like this? Yet she insists that we, as creatures, are bad at understanding ourselves. And it is from that frustration that her work and, indeed, her very voice emerges. It resolves into a radiant portrait, crafted over a lifetime, of a single human being in a single humble life.

In “The Years” — her most celebrated book, published in 2008 — the main character is no longer her or her family but time itself.

The book traces a white ***working-class*** Frenchwoman who, like Ms. Ernaux, was born in 1940 and lives out the decades of the 21st century, up through the 2010s. The book, which has a forward-rushing, fluid tempo, documents the strictly external objects, phrases and events this woman would have witnessed as part of a collective body: as a citizen of the world, of France, and as a member of a family. The tone is intimate, affectionate, yet deeply strange, for it is not an account of her actions but of “the time that courses through her, the world she has recorded merely by living.”

In the years after the war, she writes:

we were continually amazed by the amount of time we saved with instant powdered soup, Presto pressure cookers and mayonnaise in tubes. Canned was preferred to fresh, peas from tins instead of garden-picked. It was considered more chic to serve pears in syrup than ripe from the tree. … We marveled at inventions that erased centuries of gestures and effort. Soon would come a time, so it was said, when there’d be nothing left for us to do.

Ms. Ernaux presents time as something onto which, if just for a moment, the detritus of civilization attaches; it favors no one thing over anything else. Time leaves behind world wars as lightly as it leaves behind the greatest movie stars, sexual mores, one’s parents, grandparents, children.

“All the images will disappear,” reads the book’s opening sentence, which is followed by a list of the specific things that will disappear, including moments witnessed only by Ms. Ernaux (“the woman who squatted to urinate in broad daylight, behind the shack that served coffee”).

Her relationship to time — which demonstrates an almost holy respect for the authentic pastness of the past — developed slowly, patiently, over more than 20 books.

Ms. Ernaux is radically attuned to what it means to look backward. History will always resist our desire to lay our greedy hands on it. This brings a fascinating tension to her books. Despite the writer’s sincerest attempts, the past will always push us away, for it belongs not to us but to a world that was just as complicated as this one, coherent in itself and forever sealed off from the present.

The opening chapter of “The Years” concludes:

Everything will be erased in a second. The dictionary of words amassed between cradle and deathbed, eliminated. All there will be is silence and no words to say it. Nothing will come out of the open mouth, neither I nor me. … In conversation around a holiday table, we will be nothing but a first name, increasingly faceless, until we vanish into the vast anonymity of a distant generation.

The beautiful form of “The Years” is utterly its own, and I find it hard to think of a book more moving. She shows that humans are not their insides but their props and their settings. It is reassuring to imagine the self or the soul as something eternal, but it is harder to think that of a can of peas. It is a resolute — yet somehow euphoric — book about mortality, about how everything is always being lost to time, often without our even noticing it.

Although I don’t understand the need to declare winners in art, I was happy when I heard that Ms. Ernaux had been awarded the Nobel. All one wants for the writers one loves is for their names to never vanish into anonymity.

We can’t delude ourselves about what time does to books and civilizations, but with the help of this prize, hopefully an even more distant generation will remember the name of Annie Ernaux.

Sheila Heti is the author of 10 books, including “Motherhood,” “How Should a Person Be?” and “Pure Colour.”

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ed Alcock/Eyevine, via Redux FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 11, 2022

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[***Russian Bots And Trolls Reactivated For Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66T8-1N51-JBG3-63CT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 7, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1546 words

**Byline:** By Steven Lee Myers

**Body**

Researchers have identified a series of Russian information operations to influence American elections and, perhaps, erode support for Ukraine.

The user on Gab who identifies as Nora Berka resurfaced in August after a yearlong silence on the social media platform, reposting a handful of messages with sharply conservative political themes before writing a stream of original vitriol.

The posts mostly denigrated President Biden and other prominent Democrats, sometimes obscenely. They also lamented the use of taxpayer dollars to support Ukraine in its war against invading Russian forces, depicting Ukraine's president as a caricature straight out of Russian propaganda.

The fusion of political concerns was no coincidence.

The account was previously linked to the same secretive Russian agency that interfered in the 2016 presidential election and again in 2020, the Internet Research Agency in St. Petersburg, according to the cybersecurity group Recorded Future.

It is part of what the group and other researchers have identified as a new, though more narrowly targeted, Russian effort ahead of Tuesday's midterm elections. The goal, as before, is to stoke anger among conservative voters and to undermine trust in the American electoral system. This time, it also appears intended to undermine the Biden administration's extensive military assistance to Ukraine.

''It's clear they are trying to get them to cut off aid and money to Ukraine,'' said Alex Plitsas, a former Army soldier and Pentagon information operations official now with Providence Consulting Group, a business technology company.

The campaign -- using accounts that pose as enraged Americans like Nora Berka -- have added fuel to the most divisive political and cultural issues in the country today.

It has specifically targeted Democratic candidates in the most contested races, including the Senate seats up for grabs in Ohio, Arizona and Pennsylvania, calculating that a Republican majority in the Senate and the House of Representatives could help the Russian war effort.

The campaigns show not only how vulnerable the American political system remains to foreign manipulation but also how purveyors of disinformation have evolved and adapted to efforts by the major social media platforms to remove or play down false or deceptive content.

Last month, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency issued an alert warning of the threat of disinformation spread by ''dark web media channels, online journals, messaging applications, spoofed websites, emails, text messages and fake online personas.'' The disinformation could include claims that voting data or results had been hacked or compromised.

The agencies urged people not to like, discuss or share posts online from unknown or distrustful sources. They did not identify specific efforts, but social media platforms and researchers who track disinformation have recently uncovered a variety of campaigns by Russia, China and Iran.

Recorded Future and two other social media research companies, Graphika and Mandiant, found a number of Russian campaigns that have turned to Gab, Parler, Getter and other newer platforms that pride themselves on creating unmoderated spaces in the name of free speech.

These are much smaller campaigns than those in the 2016 election, where inauthentic accounts reached millions of voters across the political spectrum on Facebook and other major platforms. The efforts are no less pernicious, though, in reaching impressionable users who can help accomplish Russian objectives, researchers said.

''The audiences are much, much smaller than on your other traditional social media networks,'' said Brian Liston, a senior intelligence analyst with Recorded Future who identified the Nora Berka account. ''But you can engage the audiences in much more targeted influence ops because those who are on these platforms are generally U.S. conservatives who are maybe more accepting of conspiratorial claims.''

Many of the accounts the researchers identified were previously used by a news outlet calling itself the Newsroom for American and European Based Citizens. Meta, the owner of Facebook and Instagram, has previously linked the news outlet to the Russian information campaigns centered around the Internet Research Agency.

The network appears to have since disbanded, and many of the social media accounts associated with it went dormant after being publicly identified around the 2020 election. The accounts started becoming active again in August and September, called to action like sleeper cells.

Nora Berka's account on Gab has many of the characteristics of an inauthentic user, Mr. Liston said. There is no profile picture or identifying biographical details. No one responded to a message sent to the account through Gab.

The account, with more than 8,000 followers, posts exclusively on political issues -- not in just one state but across the country -- and often spreads false or misleading posts. Most have little engagement but a recent post about the F.B.I. received 43 responses and 11 replies, and was reposted 64 times.

Since September the account has repeatedly shared links to a previously unknown website -- electiontruth.net -- that Recorded Future said was almost certainly linked to the Russian campaign.

Electiontruth.net's earliest posts date only from Sept. 5; since then, it has posted articles almost daily ridiculing President Biden and prominent Democratic candidates, while criticizing policies regarding race, crime and gender that it said were destroying the United States. ''America under Communism'' was one typical headline.

The articles all have pseudonyms as bylines, like Andrew J, Truth4Ever and Laura. According to Mr. Liston, the website domain was registered using Bitcoin accounts.

For its contact information, electiontruth.net lists a cafe inside a converted gas station in Cotter, Ark., a town of 900 people on a bend in the White River. The cafe has closed, however, and been replaced by Cotter Bridge Market, a produce shop and deli whose owners said they knew nothing about the website. No one at Election Truth responded to a request for comment submitted through the site.

Mr. Liston said that links to electiontruth.net appeared to be closely coordinated with the accounts on Gab linked to the Russians.

In another campaign, Graphika identified a recent series of cartoons that appeared on Gab, Gettr, Parler and the discussion forum patriots.win. The cartoons, by an artist named ''Schmitz,'' disparaged Democrats in the tightest Senate and governor races.

One targeting Senator Raphael Warnock of Georgia, who is Black, employed racist motifs. Another falsely claimed that Representative Tim Ryan, the Democratic Senate candidate in Ohio, would release ''all Fentanyl distributors and drug traffickers'' from prison.

The cartoons received little engagement and did not spread virally to other platforms, according to Graphika.

A recurring theme of the new Russian efforts is an argument that the United States under President Biden is wasting money by supporting Ukraine in its resistance to the Russian invasion that began in February.

Nora Berka, for example, posted a doctored photograph in September that showed President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine as a bikini-wearing pole dancer being showered with dollar bills by Mr. Biden.

''As ***working class*** Americans struggle to afford food, gas, and find baby formula, Joe Biden wants to spend $13.7 billion more in aid to Ukraine,'' the account posted. Not incidentally, that post echoed a theme that has gained some traction among Republican lawmakers and voters who have questioned the delivery of weapons and other military assistance.

''It's no secret that Republicans -- that a large portion of Republicans -- have questioned whether we should be supporting what has been referred to as foreign adventures or somebody else's conflict,'' said Graham Brookie, senior director of the Digital Forensics Lab at the Atlantic Council, which has also been tracking foreign influence operations.

The F.B.I. and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency did not respond to requests for comment about the Russian efforts. Mr. Brookie called the revived accounts ''recidivist behavior.'' Gab did not respond to a request for comment.

As before, it may be hard to measure the exact impact of these accounts on voters come Tuesday. At a minimum, they contribute to what Edward P. Perez, a board member with the OSET Institute, a nonpartisan election security organization, called ''manufactured chaos'' in the country's body politic.

While Russians in the past sought to build large followings for their inauthentic accounts on the major platforms, today's campaigns could be smaller and yet still achieve a desired effect -- in part because the divisions in American society are already such fertile soil for disinformation, he said.

''Since 2016, it appears that foreign states can afford to take some of the foot off the gas,'' Mr. Perez, who previously worked at Twitter, said, ''because they have already created such sufficient division that there are many domestic actors to carry the water of disinformation for them.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/06/technology/russia-misinformation-midterms.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/06/technology/russia-misinformation-midterms.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A St. Petersburg, Russia, building believed to be the site of a ''troll factory'' in 2018. Misinformation has ramped up ahead of the midterms. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MSTYSLAV CHERNOV/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (B2) This article appeared in print on page B1, B2.

**Load-Date:** November 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Sex, Death, Affairs: Everything People Would Rather Talk About Than Money***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:679J-GCT1-JBG3-60R1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 13, 2023 Friday 15:33 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 1828 words

**Byline:** Emma Goldberg

**Highlight:** The merits of talking candidly about salary are widely acknowledged. Actually doing it is more complicated.

**Body**

The merits of talking candidly about salary are widely acknowledged. Actually doing it is more complicated.

Here is a small sampling of problems that were not anywhere near the scope of Emma Bushnell’s job description as an executive assistant at a law firm, yet filled her daily conversations thanks to gossipy colleagues. One lawyer’s difficulty finding a contractor for a second home. Another lawyer’s stress over planning a vacation to Colombia. The partners at her white-shoe law firm — whose salaries were at least five times her own — seemed to feel entitled to vent. Yet when she raised her own issues, about financial insecurity, they squirmed.

“They were constantly getting these questionnaires to evaluate me and I was like, ‘Any word you can put in? I’m making $55,000 a year,’” said Ms. Bushnell, 33, who left the firm last year. “They would find it gauche or uncomfortable. And I was like, ‘You know what, if you’re uncomfortable it’s because you’re making too much more money than me. And that’s your problem, not mine.’”

Ms. Bushnell’s attempts to puncture her colleagues’ silence about salary, including asking other assistants to share theirs, kept getting squelched.

That’s what happened to Mary Lemmer, an entrepreneur who bounced between jobs in Silicon Valley and found some of her requests for raises were met with what she called something like “adult temper tantrums.” Being belittled has made it tougher for her to keep asking for the money she needs, creating a physiological response of flushed skin and a pit in her stomach when she has to negotiate.

“If every time I go for a run I stub my toe or twist my ankle, I’m probably not going to be excited to go for a run again,” Ms. Lemmer said. “To have those conversations go so poorly — that really created a fear.”

Like going for a run, or drinking water and getting sleep, the merits of talking candidly about money are widely acknowledged. There are [*T-shirts*](https://breakingt.com/products/pay-the-women) emblazoned with “pay the women.” There are Beyoncé lyrics about getting paid (“Gimme my check”). There are wildly popular [*TikTok accounts*](https://www.tiktok.com/@salarytransparentstreet?lang=en) devoted to asking strangers on the street to share how much they make.

Money talk is in vogue, theoretically. In practice, however, those who try to make it happen in their real lives — over coffee with colleagues, over brunch with friends, over a friendly exchange on Slack — often find themselves stymied. They face subtle or outright resistance from higher-ups.

But as salary transparency becomes the [*law*](https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Equal-Pay-Progress-in-the-States-9.20.22.pdf) in more states, including New York, California, Colorado and Washington State, where many employers now or will soon have to disclose the compensation or the salary range for a position on any job posting, and with legislators in at least a [*dozen*](https://nwlc.org/resource/salary-range-transparency-reduces-gender-wage-gaps/) more states planning to introduce bills this year, some are hoping that the legal shift will accelerate long-awaited social and cultural shifts, too.

Alice Lemmer, Mary’s mother, has watched her daughter wrestle to get raises in recent years, and has looked back regretfully at all the moments in her own career when it didn’t occur to her that she could ask colleagues, especially her male colleagues in software, about their compensation. “I was never told ‘Oh don’t talk about your salary,’ but somehow I knew that wasn’t something you did,” Ms. Lemmer, 65, said. “It was rude. It was intrusive. I don’t know why — when you think about it logically, it shouldn’t be. But that was the hidden message.”

It’s a hidden and often not-so-hidden message, one cemented by broadly accepted rules of etiquette and Americans’ financial anxieties. Middle class people are reticent to discuss money because their class status is precarious, and they are afraid that talking about debt will expose that fragility to their children or neighbors, according to Caitlin Zaloom, an anthropologist and the author of “Indebted.” Ms. Zaloom has found that her research subjects will divulge debts and budgeting worries with her that they haven’t even shared with their children. This secrecy dates back to the 19th century, when Americans came to view a household budget as reflective of a family’s moral worth.

Rachel Sherman, a sociologist who studies affluent and wealthy people, has found that people don’t like to identify as well-off even if they have millions of dollars in family income or inherited wealth, send their children to private schools and own second homes.

Ms. Sherman, the author of the book “Uneasy Street,” once contacted a research subject with an annual household income of over $2 million who refused to label herself as affluent. Ms. Sherman traces this in part to an American upper class that has learned in elite school settings not to talk openly about excess. The 2008 financial crisis also contributed to people’s desires to hide their wealth, along with the rise of the Occupy Wall Street movement and its criticism of the “1 percent.”

What all this secrecy does, though, is place a curtain over economic inequality, these researchers said. People don’t talk about money — especially not with numbers attached — so the scale of disparities is unclear, the chasms between millionaires and upper class and middle class and ***working class*** shrouded in ambiguities.

“Not talking about numbers allows us not to talk about inequality,” Ms. Sherman said. “It allows people to move through the world without having to openly acknowledge to themselves or others that they may have a lot more than other people.”

No other clunky topic rivals the money taboo, not even sex and death. “People tell me about really profound intimate details of their lives — they tell me about all kinds of fantasies, affairs, sexual escapades,” said Matt Lundquist, 46, a psychotherapist in New York City who works with many wealthy clients. “The one thing that has historically persisted as outside what people will open up about, even in the context of long-term therapy, has been mentioning salary.”

The pressures to keep quiet, and the stakes of doing so, are heightened for women of color, who are told in subtle and unsubtle ways that they will face consequences for breaking from social conventions. Kristen Egziabher, 41, for example, who works in financial technology and lives in Texas, recalled that her parents, who had both graduated from historically Black colleges in the 1970s, taught her to avoid asking questions in the workplace that might cause her to stick out. Get noticed for quality of work, they told her, not for stirring up trouble. As a result, Ms. Egziabher rarely talks about salary negotiations with her teammates.

On top of the stigma surrounding money conversations, there’s the constant thrum of expectations to keep up with the Joneses or Kardashians — expectations that people have the newest sneaker brands and are taking weekend trips with friends, all while juggling student loans and the strain of inflation.

Terrence Shulman, a therapist who runs a program for people with financial problems including overspending and compulsive theft, has seen the way shame, guilt and childhood trauma merge to form pernicious habits, such as hiding debt from family members. Mr. Shulman experienced this himself. Growing up, he watched his mother take on debt when his father stopped paying child support. As a teenager, he buckled under the weight of trying to be a good son, and he started rebelling by shoplifting. Mr. Shulman later sought therapeutic treatment for his financial anxieties, and he has now offered it to hundreds of patients.

Even as a person who thinks and talks about financial honesty all day, Mr. Shulman struggles to speak candidly to friends about his salary. Five years ago, a close friend asked him how much he made and he balked.

“He goes ‘Do you mind my asking how much money you make?’” Mr. Shulman recalled. “I didn’t know what to say. If he’d asked me ‘How’s it going with your wife?,’ I’d tell him all the details.”

Slowly, though, cracks in the social surface are appearing, which career coaches are eager to wedge open even further.

When graduate students visit one of the career counseling offices at the University of Colorado, Molly Thompson, 44, a counselor for the masters of the environment program, asks them to calculate their “survival number”: the minimum amount of money they need to get by, taking into account rent, food and student loans. They account for inflation by adding 15 percent. Then they calculate 20 percent above that baseline number. That’s the figure they use to anchor their salary negotiations, as they apply for their first jobs out of graduate school.

When Ms. Thompson first started offering salary negotiation workshops, she couldn’t get students to show up. They told her they were too scared and would accept whatever compensation was offered to them.

Colorado’s salary transparency law, which went into effect in 2021 and is similar to New York’s enacted last year, has been a boon. Although the law requires companies to share a pay range with job candidates, not all companies are following it in good faith, Ms. Thompson said. Some employers are posting ranges as large as $25,000 to $200,000.

But at least students aren’t feeling as if their negotiation process means bumping around in the dark, hoping they won’t stub their toes.

Even in states without sweeping salary transparency laws, workers are learning from the model created by these laws and protecting themselves from being lowballed. Keren Gifford, 38, who works in health care analytics in Pennsylvania, said that when her previous employer asked her to share how much she had made in a prior role she refused to answer, sidestepping by saying how much she wanted to make in her next position. The human resources team chided her. She didn’t care.

Other workers are ratcheting up their efforts by calling on friends, relatives and even strangers for information about how much money they should ask for at work. Alexis Kirton, 29, was recently on a date with a white man who worked in her industry — gaming. Aware, as a Black woman, that in many industries, hers included, women of color are often paid the least, she shared her salary to see whether he thought she was making enough. They later called it off, but she still hopes to contact him for advice before her next salary negotiation meeting.

“We didn’t end it on bad enough terms, so I will probably reach out,” she said.

His response last time was instructive, after all: “He told me I should be making so much more.”

Audio produced by Tally Abecassis.

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PHOTOS: Mary Lemmer says she has found it tough to negotiate her compensation. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MAGGIE SHANNON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BU4); Alice Lemmer says she wishes that she had been able to discuss compensation more openly with her colleagues. “I was never told, ‘Oh don’t talk about your salary,’ but somehow I knew that wasn’t something you did,” she said. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ARIANA DREHSLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BU5) This article appeared in print on page BU4, BU5.

**Load-Date:** June 20, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Russia Reactivates Its Trolls and Bots Ahead of Tuesday’s Midterms***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66T2-XK71-DXY4-X289-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 6, 2022 Sunday 08:10 EST

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**Section:** TECHNOLOGY

**Length:** 1585 words

**Byline:** Steven Lee Myers

**Highlight:** Researchers have identified a series of Russian information operations to influence American elections and, perhaps, erode support for Ukraine.

**Body**

Researchers have identified a series of Russian information operations to influence American elections and, perhaps, erode support for Ukraine.

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.

The user on [*Gab*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/28/us/gab-robert-bowers-pittsburgh-synagogue-shootings.html) who identifies as Nora Berka resurfaced in August after a yearlong silence on the social media platform, reposting a handful of messages with sharply conservative political themes before writing a stream of original vitriol.

The posts mostly denigrated President Biden and other prominent Democrats, sometimes obscenely. They also lamented the use of taxpayer dollars to support [*Ukraine in its war*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/ukraine-russia)against invading Russian forces, depicting Ukraine’s president as a caricature straight out of Russian propaganda.

The fusion of political concerns was no coincidence.

The account was previously linked to the same secretive Russian agency that [*interfered*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/16/us/politics/russia-mueller-election.html) in the 2016 presidential election and [*again*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/03/us/politics/russian-internet-trolls-are-amplifying-election-fraud-claims-researchers-say.html) in 2020, the Internet Research Agency in St. Petersburg, according to the cybersecurity group Recorded Future.

It is part of what the group and other researchers have identified as a new, though more narrowly targeted, Russian effort ahead of [*Tuesday’s midterm elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/midterm-elections-basics-explained.html). The goal, as before, is to stoke anger among conservative voters and to undermine trust in the American electoral system. This time, it also appears intended to undermine the Biden administration’s extensive military assistance to Ukraine.

“It’s clear they are trying to get them to cut off aid and money to Ukraine,” said Alex Plitsas, a former Army soldier and Pentagon information operations official now with Providence Consulting Group, a business technology company.

The campaign — using accounts that pose as enraged Americans like Nora Berka — have added fuel to the most divisive political and cultural issues in the country today.

It has specifically targeted Democratic candidates in the most contested races, including the Senate seats up for grabs in Ohio, Arizona and Pennsylvania, calculating that a Republican majority in the Senate and the House of Representatives could help the Russian war effort.

The campaigns show not only how vulnerable the American political system remains to foreign manipulation but also how purveyors of disinformation have [*evolved and adapted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/20/technology/disinformation-spread.html) to efforts by the major social media platforms to remove or play down false or deceptive content.

Last month, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency issued [*an alert*](https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/PSA-information-activities_508.pdf) warning of the threat of disinformation spread by “dark web media channels, online journals, messaging applications, spoofed websites, emails, text messages and fake online personas.” The disinformation could include claims that voting data or results had been hacked or compromised.

The agencies urged people not to like, discuss or share posts online from unknown or distrustful sources. They did not identify specific efforts, but social media platforms and researchers who track disinformation have recently uncovered a variety of campaigns by Russia, China and Iran.

Recorded Future and two other social media research companies, Graphika and Mandiant, found a number of Russian campaigns that have turned to Gab, Parler, Getter and other newer platforms that pride themselves on creating unmoderated spaces in the name of free speech.

These are much smaller campaigns than those in the 2016 election, where inauthentic accounts reached millions of voters across the political spectrum [*on Facebook*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/17/technology/indictment-russian-tech-facebook.html) and other major platforms. The efforts are no less pernicious, though, in reaching impressionable users who can help accomplish Russian objectives, researchers said.

“The audiences are much, much smaller than on your other traditional social media networks,” said Brian Liston, a senior intelligence analyst with Recorded Future who identified the Nora Berka account. “But you can engage the audiences in much more targeted influence ops because those who are on these platforms are generally U.S. conservatives who are maybe more accepting of conspiratorial claims.”

Many of the accounts the researchers identified were previously used by a news outlet calling itself the Newsroom for American and European Based Citizens. Meta, the owner of Facebook and Instagram, has previously linked the news outlet to the Russian information campaigns centered around [*the Internet Research Agency*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/07/magazine/the-agency.html).

The network appears to have since disbanded, and many of the social media accounts associated with it went dormant after being publicly identified around the 2020 election. The accounts started becoming active again in August and September, called to action like sleeper cells.

Nora Berka’s account on Gab has many of the characteristics of an inauthentic user, Mr. Liston said. There is no profile picture or identifying biographical details. No one responded to a message sent to the account through Gab.

The account, with more than 8,000 followers, posts exclusively on political issues — not in just one state but across the country — and often spreads false or misleading posts. Most have little engagement but a recent post about the F.B.I. received 43 responses and 11 replies, and was reposted 64 times.

Since September the account has repeatedly shared links to a previously unknown website — electiontruth.net — that Recorded Future said was almost certainly linked to the Russian campaign.

Electiontruth.net’s earliest posts date only from Sept. 5; since then, it has posted articles almost daily ridiculing President Biden and prominent Democratic candidates, while criticizing policies regarding race, crime and gender that it said were destroying the United States. “America under Communism” was one typical headline.

The articles all have pseudonyms as bylines, like Andrew J, Truth4Ever and Laura. According to Mr. Liston, the website domain was registered using Bitcoin accounts.

For its contact information, electiontruth.net lists a cafe inside a converted gas station in Cotter, Ark., a town of 900 people on a bend in the White River. The cafe has closed, however, and been replaced by Cotter Bridge Market, a produce shop and deli whose owners said they knew nothing about the website. No one at Election Truth responded to a request for comment submitted through the site.

Mr. Liston said that links to electiontruth.net appeared to be closely coordinated with the accounts on Gab linked to the Russians.

In another campaign, Graphika identified a recent series of cartoons that appeared on Gab, Gettr, Parler and the discussion forum patriots.win. The cartoons, by an artist named “Schmitz,” disparaged Democrats in the tightest Senate and governor races.

One targeting Senator Raphael Warnock of Georgia, who is Black, employed racist motifs. Another falsely claimed that Representative Tim Ryan, the Democratic Senate candidate in Ohio, would release “all Fentanyl distributors and drug traffickers” from prison.

The cartoons received little engagement and did not spread virally to other platforms, according to Graphika.

A recurring theme of the new Russian efforts is an argument that the United States under President Biden is wasting money by supporting Ukraine in its resistance to the Russian invasion that began in February.

Nora Berka, for example, posted a doctored photograph in September that showed President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine as a bikini-wearing pole dancer being showered with dollar bills by Mr. Biden.

“As ***working class*** Americans struggle to afford food, gas, and find baby formula, Joe Biden wants to spend $13.7 billion more in aid to Ukraine,” the account posted. Not incidentally, that post echoed a theme that has gained some traction among Republican lawmakers and voters who have questioned the delivery of weapons and other military assistance.

“It’s no secret that Republicans — that a large portion of Republicans — have questioned whether we should be supporting what has been referred to as foreign adventures or somebody else’s conflict,” said Graham Brookie, senior director of the Digital Forensics Lab at the Atlantic Council, which has also been tracking foreign influence operations.

The F.B.I. and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency did not respond to requests for comment about the Russian efforts. Mr. Brookie called the revived accounts “recidivist behavior.” Gab did not respond to a request for comment.

As before, it may be hard to measure the exact impact of these accounts on voters come Tuesday. At a minimum, they contribute to what Edward P. Perez, a board member with the OSET Institute, a nonpartisan election security organization, called “manufactured chaos” in the country’s body politic.

While Russians in the past sought to build large followings for their inauthentic accounts on the major platforms, today’s campaigns could be smaller and yet still achieve a desired effect — in part because the divisions in American society are already such fertile soil for disinformation, he said.

“Since 2016, it appears that foreign states can afford to take some of the foot off the gas,” Mr. Perez, who previously worked at Twitter, said, “because they have already created such sufficient division that there are many domestic actors to carry the water of disinformation for them.”

PHOTO: A St. Petersburg, Russia, building believed to be the site of a “troll factory” in 2018. Misinformation has ramped up ahead of the midterms. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MSTYSLAV CHERNOV/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (B2) This article appeared in print on page B1, B2.

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[***The Elites He Now Targets Gave DeSantis a Leg Up***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:690N-GNW1-DXY4-X45F-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Over the years, Mr. DeSantis embraced and exploited his Ivy League credentials. Now he is reframing his experiences at Yale and Harvard to wage a vengeful political war.

Early last year, Gov. Ron DeSantis nestled into his chair onstage in Naples, Fla., to explain to an audience of the would-be conservative elite his journey through the reigning liberal one they hoped to destroy. His host was Larry P. Arnn, the president of Hillsdale College, a small Christian school in southern Michigan that has become an academic hub of the Trump-era right. His subject was Yale University, where Mr. DeSantis was educated and where, as he tells it, he first met the enemy.

''I'm a public school kid,'' Mr. DeSantis told the audience, unspooling a story that he has shared in recent years with aides, friendly interviewers, donors, voters and readers of his memoir, ''The Courage to Be Free.'' ''My mom was a nurse, my dad worked for a TV ratings company, installing the metering devices back then. And I show up in jean shorts and a T-shirt.'' The outfit ''did not go over well with the Andover and Groton kids'' -- sometimes it is Andover and Groton, sometimes it is Andover and Exeter, sometimes all three -- who mocked his lack of polish.

Worse than Yale's snobbery was its politics: College was ''the first time that I saw unadulterated leftism,'' he told the Republican Jewish Coalition this March. ''We're basically being told the Soviet Union was the victim in the Cold War.'' Teachers and students alike ''rejected God, and they hated our country,'' he assured the audience in Naples. ''When I get people that submit résumés,'' he said, ''quite frankly, if I got one from Yale I would be negatively disposed.''

Then there are the parts of the story he doesn't tell: How his new baseball teammates at Yale -- mostly fellow athletic recruits from the South and West who likewise viewed themselves as Yale outsiders -- were among those who teased him about his clothes, and how he would nevertheless adopt their insular culture as his own. How he joined one of Yale's storied ''secret societies,'' those breeding grounds of future senators and presidents, but left other members with the impression that he would have preferred to be tapped by a more prestigious one. How he shared with friends his dream of going to Harvard Law School -- not law school, Harvard Law School -- and successfully applied there, stacking one elite credential neatly onto another, and co-founded a tutoring firm that touted ''the only LSAT prep courses designed exclusively by Harvard Law School graduates.'' How his Yale connections helped him out-raise rivals as a first-time candidate for Congress, and how he featured his Ivy credentials -- ''a political scarlet letter as far as a G.O.P. primary went,'' Mr. DeSantis likes to say -- on his campaign websites, sometimes down to the precise degree of honors earned. And how that C.V. helped sell him to an Ivy-obsessed President Donald J. Trump, whose 2018 endorsement helped propel Mr. DeSantis to the governor's office in Florida, where his Yale baseball jersey is displayed prominently on the wall next to his desk.

Mr. DeSantis, 44, is not the first Republican politician of his generation to rail against his own Ivy League degrees while milking them for access and campaign cash. But now, as he seeks the Republican presidential nomination, he is molding his entire campaign and political persona around a vengeful war against what he calls the country's ''ruling class'': an incompetent, unaccountable elite of bureaucrats, journalists, educators and other supposed ''experts'' whose pernicious and unearned authority the governor has vowed to vanquish.

For Mr. DeSantis and his allies, the culture wars are the central struggle of American public life, and schools are the most important battleground where they will be fought. ''Education is our sword,'' Mr. DeSantis's then education commissioner, Richard Corcoran, explained to a Hillsdale audience in 2021. And Mr. DeSantis is the man to wield it -- a self-made striver who was ''given nothing,'' as he told the audience attending his campaign kickoff in Iowa in May. ''These elites are not enacting an agenda to represent us. They're imposing their agenda on us, via the federal government, via corporate America and via our own education system.'' Even as he struggles to displace Mr. Trump as the Republican Party's pre-eminent figure -- he has spent heavily since May without denting the former president's polling lead, and is under extraordinary pressure to make his mark at the first Republican debate on Wednesday, which Mr. Trump plans to skip -- Mr. DeSantis has become captain of a new conservative vanguard, positioning it to influence American politics for years to come.

Yet his emergence as his party's chief culture warrior was anything but preordained. Genuinely embittered by his experiences at elite institutions, he also astutely grasped how they could be useful to him as he climbed the political ladder, according to dozens of friends and classmates from college and law school, as well as former aides and associates. For much of his political career, including his early years as Florida governor, he was neither closely identified with education policy nor deeply engaged in the debates over race and gender identity that have come to engulf American politics. It took the Covid epidemic to awaken Mr. DeSantis to the political potency of classrooms and fully mobilize him against what he now calls the ''bureaucratic 'expert' class.'' Now, pursuing the presidency, Mr. DeSantis has fully weaponized his resentments, offering voters a revisionist history of his own encounters with the ruling class to buttress his arguments for razing it.

But Mr. DeSantis and his ideological allies -- among them a group of conservative intellectuals clustered around Hillsdale and the California-based Claremont Institute who acquired new prominence during the Trump administration -- are not aiming to abolish the ruling class. Instead, emboldened by the broader Covid-era backlash over school closures and diversity programs, they hope to replace it with a distinctly conservative one, trained in schools recaptured from liberals and reshaped by ''classical'' principles -- a more traditionalist, Christian-inflected approach to education. ''School choice may allow a small number of highly informed and committed parents to insulate their children'' from liberal ideas about social justice, the authors of a recent paper from the Manhattan Institute argued, ''but it will make little difference to the level of indoctrination in the American school-age population.''

In a written response to questions for this article, a DeSantis spokesman, Bryan Griffin, described The New York Times's reporting as a ''hit piece likely manufactured and seeded by political opponents designed to smear Ron DeSantis ahead of the debate,'' and defended the governor's record. ''In the Covid era, the world went mad with radical gender ideology and began pushing it harder than ever into school curriculum,'' Mr. Griffin said. ''DeSantis stepped up to the moment and stopped the indoctrination despite the left and the media's best efforts to cover for it.''

To uproot what he considers liberal political activism from public schools and universities, Mr. DeSantis has stripped power from teachers and administrators and transferred it to himself and his appointees. But even as he calls to dismantle ''woke'' orthodoxy, he has sought to impose another, with a sweeping ban on the teaching of ''identity politics'' or ''systemic racism'' in required classes at Florida's public colleges and universities and new civics training for high school teachers that plays down the role of slavery in early American history. Under the banner of ''parental rights,'' DeSantis-backed policies have given conservative Floridians a kind of veto power over books and curriculums favored by their more liberal neighbors, even in politically mixed or predominantly left-leaning Florida counties.

''Where local communities create conservative culture and conservative school districts, DeSantis doesn't touch them,'' said David Jolly, a former Republican congressman from Florida who served alongside Mr. DeSantis in Congress. ''Where communities confront his conservative ideologies, the state steps in.''

Earlier this year, in what amounted to a proof of concept, the governor seized control of New College of Florida, a left-leaning public liberal arts school in Sarasota. He appointed a conservative majority to the board of trustees; the college's new overseers then fired the school's leadership, installed Mr. Corcoran as president and announced plans to turn New College into a Florida version of Hillsdale. ''The goal of the university is not free inquiry,'' Christopher Rufo, a conservative activist and one of the new trustees, said during a recent appearance in California. Instead, he argued, conservatives need to deploy state power to retake public institutions wherever they can.

''The universities are not overly politicized. The universities are overly ideologized and insufficiently politicized,'' Mr. Rufo said. ''We should repoliticize the universities and understand that education is at heart a political question.''

'Hell Week,' Baseball and St. Elmo

Mr. DeSantis had never been to New England when he arrived at Yale in the late 1990s, an honor student and baseball standout from the middle-class suburban Gulf Coast city of Dunedin. He was far from the only public school graduate in Yale's freshman class, but he already carried a chip on his shoulder, caught between a powerful confidence in his own gifts -- his ''superiority complex,'' as one classmate described it -- and his discomfort with Yale's more cosmopolitan milieu. He majored in history, taking classes in the culture and politics of the Founders, and closely studied the work of Gordon Wood, whose books emphasized the political radicalness of the American Revolution. He loved ''A Few Good Men'' and ''Scent of a Woman,'' especially the rousing speech at the end, in which Al Pacino's character rails against the rich snobs tormenting a scholarship student at a New England prep school. Though Yale had a thriving conservative political scene, Mr. DeSantis shied away from it. He rarely talked about politics at all.

Instead, he found his tribe on the baseball team, where he was known to all as ''D,'' the name he preferred to his given one. Like every other freshman player, he was hazed by his new teammates, and not just for his jean shorts. The baseball players segregated themselves from the rest of Yale and cultivated a hostility toward their peers, their latent status anxiety sharpened by a realization that some of their fellow students did not take them or their sport seriously. Some recalled being told by classmates, and even professors, that they did not belong at Yale. As athletes, they perceived themselves to be the school's true meritocrats, admitted on the strength of their own sweat and discipline. ''We set ourselves up against the most privileged students at Yale, who, in truth, we did not actually know very well,'' Jonathan Levy, a baseball teammate who is now a professor at the University of Chicago, said in an email. ''In hindsight, our mid-1990s admission to Yale was our opportunity to join this elite. Every member of the team was handed that same ticket.''

As a senior, Mr. DeSantis was elected captain, which his closest Yale friends have sometimes presented as a testament to his leadership qualities. According to other former teammates, however, there were no other contenders: The team had few seniors that year, and Mr. DeSantis was a starting outfielder. His arrogance could startle. At a ''captain's practice'' that fall, the team's revered coach, John Stuper, delivered a brief pep talk to the freshmen. After he left, Mr. DeSantis told the team that their coach, a former major league pitcher, didn't know what he was doing. Through his spokesman, Mr. DeSantis denied making the remark. In an interview, Mr. Stuper, who described the governor as ''like a son'' to him, said: ''I just can't imagine that happening. He had a lot of respect for me, still does, has asked me to campaign for him.'' Mr. Stuper added, ''There's just no way that he would undermine my authority by doing that.''

Along with many of his teammates, he joined Delta Kappa Epsilon, a fraternity composed largely of athletes, many from ***working-class*** backgrounds. ''We all kind of bonded through our athletics, and through our fraternity,'' said Nick Sinatra, a Buffalo native and Yale friend who played football there. At Yale, D.K.E. was known as boorish even by fraternity standards, with a reputation for over-the-top hazing of pledges. When Mr. DeSantis was a senior, according to former brothers and pledges, a large group of pledges quit after one hazing episode turned violent. On another night, pledges were ordered to a frat house room, two of them recalled. After entering one at a time, each was blindfolded and ordered to drop his pants, with Mr. DeSantis, other brothers, and at least one female guest on hand to mock their genitalia. One of the pledges recalled that a blender was placed between his legs and abruptly turned on to scare him, splashing water on his groin.

During the fraternity's ''hell week,'' pledges wore costumes smeared with rotten food and condiments. They might be ordered to simulate sex with one another or do outdoor calisthenics in the winter air. According to four former pledges and brothers, Mr. DeSantis required one pledge, for whom he served as ''father,'' to wear a pair of baseball pants with the back and thighs cut out, exposing his buttocks and genitals.

Another D.K.E. brother, Scott Wagner, a friend of Mr. DeSantis who served on the governor's Florida transition team, said none of the pledges' costumes involved nudity. Reached by The Times, the former pledge, who asked not to be identified, confirmed that he was made to wear the revealing costume but declined to discuss the experience further. Today, some of the former brothers and pledges regard Mr. DeSantis's behavior as foreshadowing a comfort with power -- and with using it to bully others.

Mr. DeSantis denied these accounts through his spokesman, who called them ''ridiculous assertions and completely false.''

Mr. DeSantis also joined one of the school's secret societies, St. Elmo. The societies, though swathed in mystery and arcane symbolism, mostly functioned to introduce Yale seniors to classmates they might not know. His St. Elmo class was a diverse group that met weekly for a family-style dinner in a comfortable, run-down townhouse near campus. At meetings, the members took turns delivering their ''bios,'' or life stories, in the living room, in speeches that could last hours. Mr. DeSantis often showed up in his baseball uniform; his own bio leaned heavily on baseball, his Florida roots and his journey to Yale. But when it came time for others to tell their stories, Mr. DeSantis tuned out, according to former St. Elmo members. He rolled his eyes as one member, Cristina Sosa Noriega, talked about growing up as a Hispanic public schoolgirl in San Antonio, Ms. Sosa Noriega and two other members recalled. ''He seemed bored and disinterested,'' Ms. Sosa Noriega said. ''It was like I wasn't worth listening to. I had the feeling that he assumed that I didn't deserve to be there.'' (Mr. DeSantis's spokesman denied that account and said it was ''frankly absurd'' to suggest that anyone would remember ''such a detail from decades ago.'')

In ''The Courage to Be Free,'' Mr. DeSantis's Yale education is tidily repackaged as a prologue to his future battles with the ruling class. ''In retrospect, Yale allowed me to see the future,'' he writes. ''It just took me 20 years to realize it.'' Yet the book is curiously vague, identifying no particular exchanges or classes where he encountered the fervent anti-Americanism that, in his telling, defined his education there. His spokesman declined to identify any.

But other perspectives were easily available: According to Mr. Sinatra, Mr. DeSantis took Yale's most popular undergraduate class about the Cold War, taught by the historian John Lewis Gaddis, whose work blamed the Soviet Union for the conflict, not the United States. (The governor's spokesman said Mr. DeSantis ''did not take issue with John Gaddis's class.'') While the book paints turn-of-the-century Yale as cloyingly liberal, awash in Soviet flags and Che Guevara T-shirts, other classmates recall a left-leaning but generally apathetic campus of the pre-9/11 era, and a Che shirt worn by one particular roommate, with whom Mr. DeSantis seemed friendly enough.

After graduation, some of his baseball teammates ''punched their Yale ticket,'' according to Dr. Levy, moving into banking, consulting or medicine. Others returned to their hometowns, starting careers that didn't necessarily require the credentials they had acquired. And some, Dr. Levy observed, ''wanted it both ways, to have a Yale-charged life but to reject Yale elitism.'' He added: ''I think this is what DeSantis is still doing, in the form of a political project -- trying to reach the elite pinnacle of the American political establishment while railing against that same establishment.''

A Short Climb to the Elite

Mr. DeSantis began fashioning a deeper critique of the ruling class even as he quietly climbed its ranks, already telling others that he imagined himself as a future president. Harvard Law was little different from Yale, he writes in ''The Courage to Be Free,'' with a stultifying careerism layered onto overtly liberal politics. The Harvard faculty of the early 2000s, Mr. DeSantis asserted, ''was increasingly dominated by adherents of so-called critical legal studies'' -- a left-wing school of argument that seemingly neutral laws can be racist or discriminatory. At the same time, he wrote, Harvard offered an ''assembly-line style of education'' aimed chiefly at preparing students for ''a lucrative career in business or law.'' Mr. DeSantis instead joined the Navy, serving as a military prosecutor and combat adviser. Later, as the Tea Party movement arrived in Washington, he started writing his first book, about the Founders and President Barack Obama.

''Dreams From Our Founding Fathers'' came out in fall 2011, a dense tract packed with quotes from Madison and Hamilton and casting Mr. Obama as a European-style socialist bent on deconstructing the republic they imagined. As anti-Obama polemicist, Mr. DeSantis treated slavery as a kind of constitutional sideshow -- an institution whose stubborn persistence in early America need not disturb a close adherence to the Founders' vision, since it was ''doomed to fail'' in a nation guided by their universal truths. Mr. DeSantis attributed Mr. Obama's purported radicalism to his education at Harvard Law, and to his years living in the Chicago neighborhood of Hyde Park, where the future president taught law at the University of Chicago. It was in these places -- ''monolithically'' far left, populated by the ''credentialed elite'' and isolated from the ''broader political society'' -- that Mr. Obama absorbed the progressive tradition, with its attachment to ''a large administrative state'' and ''ostensibly nonpartisan 'solutions' devised by experts.''

Though many classmates shared Mr. DeSantis's recollection of Harvard as heavily oriented toward corporate law careers, other aspects of his narrative do not hold up. Faculty battles over critical legal studies had unfolded vividly at Harvard Law in the 1970s and 1980s, but by the time Mr. DeSantis arrived a quarter-century later, the approach had reached a nadir. Harvard students of his era were more drawn to the discipline of law and economics, advanced by conservative legal scholars. (Mr. DeSantis's spokesman noted that, nonetheless, ''there were critical legal studies being taught at the time.'') In interviews, some of his conservative classmates recalled being reluctant to express their political views in class. But far more described Harvard as intellectually open and committed to ideological diversity. ''The picture DeSantis gives is just not right -- it's kind of a cliché about Harvard, and it's simply not true,'' said Charles Fried, a longtime Harvard Law professor and a faculty sponsor of Harvard's chapter of the Federalist Society, the influential conservative legal organization. ''He must have known it, because everyone knew it.''

When Mr. DeSantis started at Harvard in 2002, the school had a conservative dean, Robert C. Clark, an early Federalist Society supporter whose appointment had been part of a deliberate effort to re-center the professoriate. A 2005 survey of The Harvard Law Review, published in the Federalist Society's flagship publication, The Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy, found that staff members ''identifying themselves as left-of-center did not comprise even a majority.''

Mr. DeSantis's own foray into big-firm corporate law -- a stint as a litigator for the Miami-based Holland & Knight before he ran for Congress -- goes unmentioned in his memoir. So does his involvement in Harvard's Federalist Society chapter, where he served as a business manager for the journal, crossed paths with future judges and politicians and met Leonard Leo, the conservative power broker who years later would help him execute a right-wing takeover of Florida's Supreme Court. Indeed, Mr. DeSantis showed scant public trace of bitterness about his elite education in the years before his political career.

After leaving the Navy, he again put his elite educational bona fides forward, joining with two of his closest law school friends to found an Ivy-themed test-prep company, LSAT Freedom, headquartered at his home in Ponte Vedra Beach. In a series of brief YouTube seminars with his co-founders, Mr. DeSantis comes off as earnest and knowledgeable about the mechanisms of elite advancement. ''If you're in a fourth-tier school, versus, like, a school that's maybe in the top 50,'' he observed, ''then there's a world of difference in terms of your investment and the return on your investment.''

His own credentials would yield a bounty when he finally entered politics. He was little-known to local Republican leaders and voters in the newly drawn congressional district he set out to win in early 2012, but he was a disciplined campaigner and proved a formidable fund-raiser. Supporters nicknamed him ''the Résumé.'' Yale friends around the country -- baseball teammates, fraternity brothers, fellow secret-society members -- sent checks, helping drive a flood of out-of-state money. A Yale friend put him in touch with a political adviser to Mr. Trump, who praised him on Twitter as ''very impressive.'' Law school classmates got him meetings with national Republican figures who went on to endorse his winning bid.

When Mr. DeSantis decided to run for governor a few years later, he had even more help from the Yale world, tapping an older, more conservative generation of alumni, such as the former financial executive Joseph J. Fogg III. ''He came to my attention because he's a Yalie,'' Mr. Fogg told The Miami Herald. A few months before announcing his campaign, Mr. DeSantis traveled to Cambridge, Mass., to join a panel of Harvard alumni serving in Congress. While some Republican voters might take a dim view of Harvard, he told them, the school ''opens a lot of doors'' for aspiring politicians. To the networks of ultrarich conservative donors whose money could help advance him to the next rung, his elite résumé was part of the appeal. ''I had a good story,'' he said, ''an appealing biography to people that were looking to help young leaders.''

The Outbreak

After being elected governor by a hair's breadth, Mr. DeSantis at first seemed mindful of the political center. He committed billions of dollars to protect the Everglades. Appearing at his alma mater Dunedin High School, he announced a proposal to raise teachers' minimum salaries. In the face of efforts by liberal students and activists to shut down conservative speakers on college campuses, Mr. DeSantis, like many other Republican officials in the pre-Covid era, urged Florida universities to adopt a version of the ''Chicago principles'' favoring academic free expression.

Building on the work of his Republican predecessors, he signed legislation creating a small voucher program for low-income students. Though school-choice advocates view the program as a pivotal early step toward taxpayer-funded vouchers in Florida, Mr. DeSantis resisted advisers who wanted him to move even more aggressively on choice in his first year, fearing it would crowd out other priorities, according to two former aides. (His spokesman said Mr. DeSantis ''has always been a fervent supporter of expanding school choice, and it was one of his first-term campaign platforms.'') When the Florida House speaker at the time proposed to him abolishing New College entirely, Mr. DeSantis recalled recently, he replied, ''What is New College?''

Then came Covid. At first, Mr. DeSantis reluctantly heeded Trump administration health officials like Dr. Anthony S. Fauci. He imposed a state lockdown in April 2020; he sometimes appeared masked at public events. But amid shifting federal guidance and growing worry about the social and economic impacts of lockdowns, he began doing his own research. He consulted experts who departed from the emerging medical consensus around Covid restrictions, and he moved quickly to relax them. That summer, embracing data showing that children were at low risk for severe illness or death from Covid, Mr. DeSantis took perhaps his biggest gamble: His administration ordered all Florida schools to reopen for in-person instruction when the school year began.

He was widely attacked, even mocked, for his decisions -- criticism that would galvanize Mr. DeSantis, according to former aides, and cement his nascent suspicion of bureaucrats and supposed experts. Florida schools did not become superspreaders; research later showed that students in open schools around the country tended to lose less ground during the pandemic than students in closed schools. Mr. DeSantis doubled down. In early 2021, as conservative activists and outlets fanned suspicion of the new Covid vaccines, he effectively stopped promoting them -- a turn that contributed to overwhelmed Florida hospitals, public health experts later said, and thousands of deaths that the state's own former surgeon general would deem ''preventable.'' But by then, the governor had already claimed victory over the experts. ''The Covid-19 pandemic represented a test of elites in the U.S., from public-health experts to the corporate media,'' Mr. DeSantis wrote in The Wall Street Journal in March 2021. ''Policymakers who bucked the elites and challenged the narrative have been proven right to do so.''

The pandemic had also changed the political contours of education. In blue and purple states around the country, a swath of otherwise middle-of-the-road parents erupted against Democrats and teachers' unions over continued school closures. There was a rising backlash against mask mandates and the spread, in the wake of the George Floyd protests, of ''anti-racist'' and ''equity'' curriculums. Mr. Rufo, previously a little-known documentarian and activist, had introduced millions of people to the academic doctrine known as critical race theory, saying it had infiltrated public school classrooms and workplaces around the country. New groups quickly formed to channel this swell of parental anger into political action, notably in Florida, where three mothers, one with ties to the state Republican Party, formed a group called Moms for Liberty and quickly built it into a national force. After years of playing defense on schools, Republicans now had a fight that could simultaneously energize their base, win more independents and peel off skeptical Democrats -- defending ''parental rights'' against the left-wing teachers, administrators and diversity consultants they argued were indoctrinating their children.

For Mr. DeSantis, education officials represented yet another set of ''experts'' who were getting it wrong. ''Ron bet big against the grain on one thing, which was reopening schools,'' said one former aide. ''It paid off, and he was right. He learned that lesson at the same time that education became more political. And he cared more about education because Moms for Liberty suddenly existed.''

Florida, already shifting rapidly to the right, would have a starring role in the country's new culture wars, and Mr. DeSantis was quick to grasp the political opportunity. In 2022, Florida lawmakers began drafting what its detractors would label the ''Don't Say Gay'' law. Though Mr. DeSantis is now indelibly linked to the legislation, at first, ''I was not fully versed in the intricacies of the Parental Rights in Education bill,'' he recalled in his memoir. ''Yet I saw the corporate media and the political left colluding to create and repeat a false narrative about the bill.'' For critics, the bill -- a complex piece of legislation banning classroom discussion or instruction about ''sexual orientation or gender identity'' in ways that were not ''age appropriate or developmentally appropriate'' -- seemed designed to force gay students and teachers into the closet. Mr. DeSantis and his aides were soon defending the bill vigorously; one claimed that anyone opposing the bill ''is probably a groomer.'' The conflict thrust Mr. DeSantis to the culture war's front lines, and he would repeat the playbook over and over, with a blitz of hard-edge school and curriculum policies that outraged many liberals and endeared him to the grass-roots right.

At the Heart of a Movement

As he battled against critical race theory and bureaucratic elites, Mr. DeSantis became entwined with a rising movement of conservative academics and activists outside Florida.

Less known for technical policy advice than for sweeping polemics about the decay of American government and culture, Claremont scholars shared Mr. DeSantis's belief that ''American freedom required a recovering of the Founding ideals,'' as Brian T. Kennedy, a former president of Claremont who remains a fellow there, put it. One of Claremont's founders, Dr. Arnn, had taken over Hillsdale in 2000 and transformed it into both a fund-raising juggernaut and a redoubt of Christian, classically oriented liberal arts education. The upset win of Mr. Trump, whose rough brand of populism echoed Claremont's more highbrow take on American decline, gave both institutions new prominence in Washington. His tumultuous defeat, in 2020, left the intellectuals and funders of Claremont and Hillsdale considering whether they ought to find a new horse to back.

Mr. DeSantis had cultivated them even before becoming governor. As a congressman, he sent Dr. Arnn a copy of ''Dreams From Our Founding Fathers.'' ''I read his book, and I went, 'Wow, this is pretty good,''' Dr. Arnn recalled last year. ''This guy can actually walk and chew gum.'' Later, as Hillsdale looked to expand its network of classical charter schools, it found the DeSantis administration a willing partner. (Today, Florida has one of the largest concentrations of Hillsdale-affiliated charters in the country.) Mr. DeSantis was connected to Claremont in part through friends: Adam Laxalt, a Navy roommate and scion of a Nevada political dynasty, and Michael B. McClellan, a California lawyer, Yale classmate and former Claremont fellow. But the institute's core political critique -- that American constitutional ideals had been corrupted by the emergence of the so-called administrative state -- also resonated with Mr. DeSantis. Among the only modern-day intellectual influences he has acknowledged in his recent book and public appearances is Angelo Codevilla, the late Claremont scholar and author of a seminal 2010 essay attacking what he called the American ruling class.

Dr. Codevilla held that class was a matter of culture and ideology, not money. A foreign service officer turned academic, he was scathing about the ruling class's credentialism and faith in scientific consensus, and critiqued the role of schools in perpetuating the American elite. ''Today's ruling class, from Boston to San Diego, was formed by an educational system that exposed them to the same ideas and gave them remarkably uniform guidance, as well as tastes and habits,'' he wrote. ''These amount to a social canon of judgments about good and evil, complete with secular sacred history, sins (against minorities and the environment) and saints.'' Usefully, Dr. Codevilla's formulation placed traditionalist intellectuals and wealthy Middle American elites on the side of the common man. ''An underpaid but well-connected blogger for The New York Times who graduated from Sarah Lawrence College and supports open borders would be considered part of the ruling class,'' David Azerrad, a Hillsdale professor, wrote in The American Spectator in 2017. ''A millionaire used-car dealer in Omaha who 'clings to his guns and religion' and is proudly patriotic would not.''

As Mr. DeSantis's profile rose amid the Covid battles, both Claremont and Hillsdale lavished him with attention and praise. In Naples last year, Dr. Arnn introduced Mr. DeSantis as ''one of the most important people living.'' Claremont scholars describe Florida as a test bed for the new right, and at its annual gala in 2021, Claremont awarded Mr. DeSantis its statesmanship award. ''Governor DeSantis is a product of elite education and yet, wonderfully, rejects its core premises,'' the institute's president, Ryan P. Williams, said by way of introduction, and he ''wields the prestige that he got from that elite education on behalf of normal America -- a too-rare thing.'' Accepting the award, Mr. DeSantis approvingly cited Dr. Codevilla and called for battle against the ruling class. ''He saw this probably before anybody,'' said Mr. DeSantis. ''But he was right on the money.''

Lecturing the Lecturers

As his preparations for the presidential campaign accelerated this year, so did Mr. DeSantis's crusade against the ruling class. In February, the governor and his wife, Casey, invited Mr. Williams, along with several other Claremont fellows and affiliates, to a private meeting at the Capitol in Tallahassee. The occasion was the opening of Claremont's new Florida outpost, under the aegis of Scott Yenor, a professor at Boise State University and a Claremont fellow, now the institute's new ''senior director of state coalitions.'' ''Protecting Americans from infringing woke ideology is important work,'' tweeted Ms. DeSantis, ''and we are grateful Scott and the Claremont Institute picked Florida to continue their mission.'' Later that day, the Claremont crowd joined the governor and his top aides for cocktails and dinner. Over a glass of Macallan at the Governor's Mansion, he regaled them with the story of his takeover of New College the previous month and exchanged ideas about battling campus liberals.

The red-carpet welcome underscored Claremont's increasingly prominent role in Mr. DeSantis's policy apparatus. Earlier that month, Mr. DeSantis had invited another Claremont fellow to join his ''round table'' on the need to pass new laws against ''legacy media defamation.'' (The setting was a mock television studio, with Mr. DeSantis playing the role of host.) A few weeks later, in advance of his expected presidential bid, Mr. DeSantis treated his top donors and fund-raisers to a Claremont-only panel at the Four Seasons in Palm Beach. (The purpose of the panel, according to planning emails obtained by The Times, was to ''define the 'Regime' which illegitimately rules us'' and lay out a strategy to ''make states more autonomous from the woke regime by ridding themselves of leftist interests.'') In March, Dr. Yenor joined Mr. DeSantis for yet another round table, this one focused on the evils of diversity, equity and inclusion programs in higher education.

Dr. Yenor was already a controversial figure. In a 2021 speech in Orlando, Fla., describing ''the political and personal evils that flow from feminism,'' he had claimed that feminist ''careerism'' made women ''more medicated, meddlesome and quarrelsome than women need to be.'' Calling modern universities ''citadels of our gynecocracy,'' he argued that they should stop recruiting women to medical, law and trade schools and instead focus on recruiting more men. Boise State officials resisted calls to fire Dr. Yenor for his remarks, citing the principles of academic freedom and his First Amendment rights; though some students filed Title IX complaints, he was ultimately cleared.

On the same day he appeared with the governor in March, Dr. Yenor unveiled a report, ''Florida Universities: From Woke to Professionalism,'' asserting that public colleges were ''gripped by D.E.I. ideology'' that threatened to ''tear Florida apart.'' Though released by Claremont, the report was first edited by a top DeSantis aide, according to emails obtained by The Times. And though it drew little notice outside Florida, the report echoed Dr. Yenor's viral speech. The state should not only defund ''D.E.I.-infused'' programs and classes, he recommended, but ban the collection of ''race-based data'' entirely, in order to hobble federal investigations into discrimination at Florida institutions. The real victims of higher-education discrimination, Dr. Yenor wrote, were men: Florida should ''order civil rights investigations of all university units in which women vastly outnumber men among the student body and/or faculty -- especially colleges of nursing and education -- for disparate impact'' and root out ''any anti-male elements of curriculum.'' (At New College, The Sarasota Herald-Tribune reported in August, DeSantis allies have boosted male enrollment in part by doling out a disproportionate share of the school's merit scholarships to a new crop of student-athlete applicants, though that group had lower-than-average grades and test scores.) Rather than defend academic free speech, Dr. Yenor advised, Mr. DeSantis and his appointees should adopt ''a more ideological bent'' to rein in administrators and teachers and cultivate love of country.

Two months later, the governor signed a law banning the state's public colleges and universities from spending money on diversity programs, setting off a now-familiar cycle of negative headlines and DeSantis counterattacks. Despite the coverage, however, only portions of the bill actually addressed D.E.I. administrators. Perhaps more consequentially, the legislation imposed a vague but expansive speech code on Florida public university campuses -- prohibiting required courses ''based on theories that systemic racism, sexism, oppression and privilege are inherent in the institutions of the United States and were created to maintain social, political and economic inequities.'' (In an interview, Manny Diaz Jr., the state's current education commissioner, said that ''conversations about theories and the debates about these theories'' should take place only in higher-level elective courses. ''Why am I talking about that in a math class? In a literature class?'') In legal battles to defend Mr. DeSantis's higher-education agenda, lawyers for his administration, far from defending academic freedom, have argued that the concept does not even apply to public university professors: College curriculums and in-class instruction are merely ''government speech,'' controllable by duly elected officials. The American Association of University Professors likened the state's position to ''authoritarian control of education similar to what exists in North Korea, Iran, or Russia.''

In April 2022, the state's Department of Education rejected dozens of math textbooks because, officials claimed, they ''contained prohibited topics,'' including critical race theory. A Times review of about half the textbooks found little reference to race at all, let alone the more abstruse academic topic of critical race theory. In fact, only three of 125 state-appointed reviewers had found objectionable content, The Herald reported. Two had ties to Hillsdale -- a civics education specialist involved in the college's ''1776 Curriculum,'' which emphasizes a patriotic, traditional view of the Founding, and a sophomore political science major who was secretary of the Hillsdale College Republicans.

Mr. Corcoran, then the education commissioner, also tapped Hillsdale to join a small group of outside institutions helping to revise the state's civics standards, another signature DeSantis initiative. Both Hillsdale and Claremont personnel feature disproportionately in a series of online teacher training courses subsequently created for the effort. (A Hillsdale spokeswoman said individuals involved in the training and in Florida's textbook reviews had acted in their ''private capacity,'' not on behalf of the school.) In-person training last summer amounted to an indoctrination, according to some teachers who attended, into conservative views about constitutional ''originalism'' and the separation of church and state. Much as Mr. DeSantis had in his own writing, the training sessions sought to minimize the relevance of slavery to an understanding of the Founding: One slide stated that even those Founders ''that held slaves did not defend the institution.'' (Mr. DeSantis's spokesman said it was ''inane media propaganda'' to suggest that the training slides minimized slavery or that the governor had ever done so.) Other slides criticized court rulings opposed by conservatives, such as a 1962 decision against school-sponsored prayer.

In a statement last year about the training, the Florida Education Department told The Herald that ''every lesson we teach is based on history, not ideology or any form of indoctrination.'' But Mr. Corcoran was more direct while speaking at Hillsdale. Education, he said then, is ''100 percent ideological.''

Deepening Influence

Whatever the fate of his presidential campaign, Mr. DeSantis's influence over Florida schools seems likely to expand. Last summer, as he ramped up his re-election bid in Florida, he became the state's first governor to campaign in local school board races, endorsing a slate of 30 candidates -- many of them also backed by Moms for Liberty -- ''committed to the student-first principles of the DeSantis Education Agenda.'' The normally sleepy, officially nonpartisan races became pitched ideological battles, awash in money. Most of his candidates won, placing new pro-DeSantis majorities in a half-dozen coastal boards previously controlled by more liberal members. Last spring, Republican lawmakers placed on next year's ballot an amendment to the state constitution that would make such elections formally partisan. Mr. DeSantis, like Republicans elsewhere in the country, supports such efforts, though they defy a long American tradition of nonpartisan public education governance.

One of the new Republican-majority boards is in Pinellas County, where Mr. DeSantis grew up and where he began his climb into the American elite. In January, Pinellas school district officials yanked Toni Morrison's classic novel ''The Bluest Eye'' from high schools after a parent complained about a two-page rape scene. (In a YouTube video, the parent, who herself taught at a private Christian school, described Pinellas schools as ''Marxist indoctrination camps.'') The officials cited new state guidelines, crafted with input from Moms for Liberty volunteers, to ''err on the side of caution'' when evaluating what books to make available to schoolchildren. Soon after, an administrator blocked one local elementary school from showing the Disney film ''Ruby Bridges,'' about the 6-year-old Black girl who integrated New Orleans schools in the 1960s. The removal came after a different mother, who had already declined permission for her daughter to see the movie in class, demanded that no one else's children be allowed to see it.

Both decisions were later reversed -- months later, in the case of Ms. Morrison's novel. ''Activists file blanket complaints against hundreds of books, and in many school districts, that triggers the books' automatic removal pending review. And very often, those reviews can take months to complete, effectively banning the book in the meanwhile,'' said Jeffrey Sachs, a scholar at Acadia University in Nova Scotia who studies academic speech policies. Mr. Diaz disputed that the new state policy was to blame for such delays. ''I think the onus is on the district to make that process speedy,'' he said.

Elements of Mr. DeSantis's education policies have been blocked in court, and others remain under legal challenge as his presidential campaign unfolds. But in counties like Pinellas, his policies and rhetoric have already had what his critics believe is their intended effect. ''Before the pandemic, I felt like what I call the 'swirl of Tallahassee' just lived up there,'' said Laura Hine, a Pinellas school board member who is not registered with either party and is among the board candidates Mr. DeSantis's operation has targeted for defeat in next year's elections. ''The weaponization of political rhetoric around education, and the associated policies, have now reached our classroom teachers.''

Two years ago, a Pinellas parent named Renee Chiea -- also warning of ''Marxist indoctrination'' in county schools -- filed a complaint against Brandt Robinson, a teacher at Dunedin High School. She objected to parts of the syllabus Mr. Robinson had distributed to his class on African-American history, which her son had briefly enrolled in. In a written complaint, Ms. Chiea argued that one book Mr. Robinson planned to assign, ''Creating Black Americans: African-American History and Its Meanings, 1619 to the Present,'' by the Princeton historian Nell Irvin Painter, distorted history by painting America as ''inherently racist'' -- violating new state rules, passed earlier that year at Mr. DeSantis's urging, banning from classrooms any material that espoused the idea ''that racism is embedded in American society and its legal systems.'' In an email to The Times, Ms. Chiea, an activist with the Pinellas chapter of Moms for Liberty, also argued that the book was based on ''the same theories'' as ''The 1619 Project,'' a Times examination of the legacy of slavery, which Florida had also banned from classrooms.

A review panel ultimately rejected her complaint. ''I don't stop my class and ask my white kids, 'Hey, how are you feeling?' What kind of teacher would do that?'' Mr. Robinson said. ''It's not my job to tell you what to think. It's to help you become a better thinker.'' People identifying themselves as Moms for Liberty activists began leaving comments on Mr. Robinson's TikTok account, where he posts daily videos about history. In January, someone reported Mr. Robinson for a TikTok mentioning that he had taught students in his Dunedin sociology class about the Black thinker W.E.B. Du Bois and the concept of ''double consciousness'' -- how racism forced Black Americans to always imagine how they might appear through white people's eyes.

According to Mr. Robinson, whoever reported him claimed that he was indoctrinating his students. ''Some of the people who make these assertions are just grossly undereducated. In their minds, critical race theory is all kinds of things,'' he said.

Ms. Chiea said she felt that the school district had mishandled her own complaint against his course, and believed that Mr. Robinson was still trying to circumvent Florida's new rules. ''I am positive he has not changed the content of what he teaches in his class,'' she said. ''And until there is some honesty and transparency in that, it will remain under scrutiny by me.''

Julie Tate contributed research.Julie Tate contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/20/us/politics/ron-desantis-education.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/20/us/politics/ron-desantis-education.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Education is a battleground for Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE BUGLEWICZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1)

Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida spoke in June to Moms for Liberty, a conservative group that has fought against teaching liberal ideas about race and gender in public schools. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

As an undergrad at Yale, Mr. DeSantis quickly fit in on the baseball team, where he was known to all as ''D.'' He was elected captain in his senior year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY YALE ATHLETICS)

Mr. DeSantis majored in history, enrolling in courses on the culture and politics of the Founders, and studying the work of Gordon Wood. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER CAPOZZIELLO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

Mr. DeSantis joined the Navy after attending Harvard, serving as a military prosecutor. (PHOTOGRAPH BY US NAVY)

Hillsdale College, a small Christian liberal arts school in southern Michigan that has become an academic hub of the Trump-era right. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN PROCTOR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18)

Then came Covid. At first, Mr. DeSanMr. DeSantis signing the Parental Rights in Education bill, a law last year that banned classroom discussions of gender identity and sexual orientation deemed as not being age-appropriate. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUGLAS R. CLIFFORD/TAMPA BAY TIMES, VIA AP) (A18-A19)

A protest at New College, a left-leaning liberal arts school that Mr. DeSantis took over and filled with conservative leadership. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TODD ANDERSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Signs for Mr. DeSantis in Osceola, Iowa. He has molded his campaign around a conflict against what he calls the country's ''ruling class.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER SMITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A19) This article appeared in print on page A1, A17, A18, A19.

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[***Democratic Report Raises 2022 Alarms on Messaging and Voter Outreach***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62VK-VX01-JBG3-63BN-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** A new report, in perhaps the most thorough soul-searching done by either party this year, points to an urgent need for the party to present a positive economic agenda and rebut Republican misinformation.

**Body**

A new report, in perhaps the most thorough soul-searching done by either party this year, points to an urgent need for the party to present a positive economic agenda and rebut Republican misinformation.

Democrats defeated President Donald J. [*Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/10/us/politics/biden-democrats-suburbs.html) and captured the Senate last year with a racially diverse coalition that delivered victories by tiny margins in key states like Georgia, Arizona and Wisconsin.

In the next election, they cannot count on repeating that feat, a new report warns.

A review of the 2020 election, conducted by several prominent Democratic advocacy groups, has concluded that the party is at risk of losing ground with Black, Hispanic and Asian American voters unless it does a better job presenting an economic agenda and countering [*Republican efforts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/07/us/politics/republican-election-fraud-claims.html) to spread misinformation and tie all Democratic candidates to the far left.

The [*73-page report*](https://int.nyt.com/data/documenttools/2020-postelection-analysis/871b6e27d1b7c544/full.pdf), obtained by The New York Times, was assembled at the behest of three major Democratic interest groups: Third Way, a centrist think tank, and the Collective PAC and the Latino Victory Fund, which promote Black and Hispanic candidates. It appears to be the most thorough act of self-criticism carried out by Democrats or Republicans after the last campaign.

The document is all the more striking because it is addressed to a victorious party: Despite their successes, Democrats had hoped to achieve more robust control of both chambers of Congress, rather than the ultra-precarious margins they enjoy.

In part, the study found, Democrats fell short of their aspirations because many House and Senate candidates failed to match Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s support with voters of color who loathed Mr. Trump but distrusted the Democratic Party as a whole. Those constituencies included Hispanic voters in Florida and Texas, Vietnamese American and Filipino American voters in California, and Black voters in North Carolina.

Overall, the report warns, Democrats in 2020 lacked a core argument about the economy and recovering from the coronavirus pandemic — one that might have helped candidates repel Republican claims that they wanted to “keep the economy shut down,” or worse. The party “leaned too heavily on ‘anti-Trump’ rhetoric,” the report concludes.

“Win or lose, self-described progressive or moderate, Democrats consistently raised a lack of strong Democratic Party brand as a significant concern in 2020,” the report states. “In the absence of strong party branding, the opposition latched on to G.O.P. talking points, suggesting our candidates would ‘burn down your house and take away the police.’”

Former Representative Debbie Mucarsel-Powell, a Democrat who [*lost re-election*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-florida-house-district-26.html) in South Florida in November, said in an interview that she had spoken with the authors of the report and raised concerns about Democratic outreach to Hispanic voters and the party’s failure to rebut [*misinformation in Spanish-language media*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/04/us/spanish-language-misinformation-latinos.html).

“Unfortunately, the Democratic Party has in some ways lost touch with our electorate,” Ms. Mucarsel-Powell said. “There is this assumption that of course people of color, or the ***working class***, are going to vote for Democrats. We can never assume anything.”

The report, chiefly written by a pair of veteran Democratic operatives, Marlon Marshall and Lynda Tran, is among the most significant salvos yet in the Democratic Party’s internal debate about how it should approach the [*2022 elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/16/us/politics/midterm-elections-campaign-financing.html). It may stir skepticism from some quarters because of the involvement of Third Way, which much of the left regards with hostility.

A fourth group that initially backed the study, the campaign finance reform group End Citizens United, backed away this spring. Tiffany Muller, the head of the group, said it had to abandon its involvement to focus instead on passing [*the For the People Act*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/30/us/politics/voting-rights-law.html), a sweeping good-government bill that is stuck in the Senate.

Mr. Marshall and Ms. Tran, as well as the groups sponsoring the review, have begun to share its conclusions with Democratic lawmakers and party officials in recent days, including Jaime Harrison, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

The study spanned nearly six months of research and data analysis that scrutinized about three dozen races for the House and the Senate, and involved interviews with 143 people, including lawmakers, candidates and pollsters, people involved in assembling the report said. Among the campaigns reviewed were the Senate elections in Arizona, Georgia and North Carolina, as well as House races in the suburbs of Minneapolis, Los Angeles, Atlanta and Dallas, and in rural New Mexico and Maine.

The study follows an internal review conducted by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee [*that was unveiled last month*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/19/us/politics/house-democrats-2022.html). Both projects found that Democratic candidates had been hobbled by flawed polling and pandemic-imposed limitations on campaigning.

In the D.C.C.C. report, the committee attributed setbacks at the congressional level to a surge in turnout by Trump supporters and an inadequate Democratic response to attacks calling them police-hating socialists.

Some lawmakers on the left have complained that criticism of left-wing messaging amounts to scapegoating activists for the party’s failures.

Yet the review by Third Way, the Collective PAC and the Latino Victory Fund goes further in diagnosing the party’s messaging as deficient in ways that may have cost Democrats more than a dozen seats in the House. Its report offers a blunt assessment that in 2020, Republicans succeeded in misleading voters about the Democratic Party’s agenda and that Democrats had erred by speaking to voters of color as though they are a monolithic, left-leaning group.

Representative Tony Cárdenas of California, who last year helmed the Congressional Hispanic Caucus’s political action committee, embraced that critique of Democratic messaging and said the party should discard the assumption “that voters of color are inherently more progressive.”

“That’s been a ridiculous idea and that’s never been true,” Mr. Cárdenas said, lamenting that Republicans had succeeded in “trying to confuse Latino voters with the socialism message, things of that nature, ‘defund the police.’”

Quentin James, the president of the Collective PAC, said it was clear that “some of the rhetoric we see from coastal Democrats” had been problematic. Mr. James pointed to the activist demand to [*“defund” the police*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/08/us/what-does-defund-police-mean.html) as especially harmful, even with supporters of policing overhauls.

“We did a poll that showed Black voters, by and large, vastly support reforming the police and reallocating their budgets,” Mr. James said. “That terminology — ‘defund’ — was not popular in the Black community.”

Kara Eastman, a progressive Democrat who lost her bid for a House seat based in Omaha, said Republicans had succeeded in delivering a “barrage of messages” that tarred her and her party as being outside the mainstream. Ms. Eastman said she had told the authors of the 2020 review that she believed those labels were particularly damaging to women.

Matt Bennett, a Third Way strategist, said the party needed to be far better prepared to mount a defense in the [*midterm*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/10/us/politics/biden-democrats-suburbs.html) campaign.

“We have got to take very seriously these attacks on Democrats as radicals and stipulate that they land,” Mr. Bennett said. “A lot of this just didn’t land on Joe Biden.”

Democrats maintained a large advantage with voters of color in the 2020 elections, but the report identified telling areas of weakness. Mr. Biden and other Democrats [*lost ground with Latino voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/09/us/politics/democrats-latino-voters.html) relative to the party’s performance in 2016, “especially among ***working-class*** and non-college voters in these communities,” the report found.

The report found that a surge in Asian American turnout appeared to have secured Mr. Biden’s victory in Georgia but that Democratic House candidates ran behind Mr. Biden with Asian American voters in contested California and Texas races. In some important states, Democrats did not mobilize Black voters at the same rate that Republicans did conservative white voters.

“A substantial boost in turnout netted Democrats more raw votes from Black voters than in 2016, but the explosive growth among white voters in most races outpaced these gains,” the report warns.

There has been no comparable self-review on the Republican side after the party’s severe setbacks last year, mainly because G.O.P. leaders have no appetite for a debate about Mr. Trump’s impact.

The Republican Party faces serious political obstacles, arising from Mr. Trump’s unpopularity, the growing liberalism of young voters and the country’s growing diversity. Many of the party’s policies are unpopular, including cutting social-welfare and retirement-security programs and keeping taxes low for the wealthy and big corporations.

Yet the structure of the American electoral system has tilted national campaigns toward the G.O.P., because of congressional gerrymandering and the disproportionate representation of rural white voters in the Senate and the Electoral College.

Democratic hopes for the [*midterm elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/15/us/politics/midterms-california-republicans-newsom.html) have so far hinged on the prospect of a strong recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and on voters’ regarding Republicans as a party unsuited to governing.

Representative Mikie Sherrill of New Jersey, a moderate Democrat who was briefed on the findings of the report, called it proof that the party needed a strong central message about the economy in 2022.

“We need to continue to show the American people what we’ve done, and then talk incessantly across the country, in every town, about how Democrats are governing,” Ms. Sherrill said.

Largely unaddressed in the report is the immense deficit Democrats face among lower-income white voters. In its conclusion, however, Mr. Marshall and Ms. Tran write that Democrats need to deliver a message that includes ***working-class*** whites and matches the G.O.P.’s clear “collective gospel” about low taxes and military strength.

“Our gospel should be about championing all working people — including but not limited to white working people — and lifting up our values of opportunity, equity, inclusion,” they write.

PHOTO: Ex-Representative Debbie Mucarsel-Powell, who lost re-election in South Florida last year, is worried about outreach to Latino voters. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SAUL MARTINEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:614V-DG41-JBG3-627C-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Lost in America

To the Editor:

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Far more humiliating is the current White House occupant's reliance on golf cart transportation in al fresco situations when he cannot be driven by car. In golf etiquette, this is regarded as the apogee of inconsiderate gaucheness.

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In advice from the grave, Vidal says: ''Write what you know will always be excellent advice for those who ought not to write at all. Write what you think, what you imagine, what you suspect!''

Following this advice makes one's creative sweat more worthwhile, but not easier.

Jim GizaBaltimoreThe 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/2020/10/23/books/review/letters-to-the-editor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/books/review/letters-to-the-editor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tyler Comrie FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 25, 2020

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[***Women’s Gains in the Work Force Conceal a Problem***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y1R-85D1-DXY4-X483-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 21, 2020 Tuesday 13:55 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 1273 words

**Byline:** Claire Cain Miller

**Highlight:** Jobs traditionally viewed as female still don’t pay well, and still don’t appeal to men. Fixing one of these things would fix the other.

**Body**

Jobs traditionally viewed as female still don’t pay well, and still don’t appeal to men. Fixing one of these things would fix the other.

American women have just achieved a significant milestone: They hold more payroll jobs than men. But this isn’t entirely good news for workers, whether they’re men or women.

The difference is small, but it reflects the fact that women have been doing better in the labor market compared with men. One big reason is that the occupations that are shrinking tend to be male-dominated, like manufacturing, while those that are growing remain female-dominated, like health care and education. That puts men at a disadvantage in today’s economy — but it also ensures that the female-dominated jobs remain devalued and underpaid.

“Female-dominated jobs in the ***working class*** are just not comparable to men’s jobs,” said Janette Dill, a sociologist at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. “So yes, it’s great to see women participating at such a high level in the labor market, but it also really means continuing challenges for ***working-class*** families, because these jobs just don’t replace manufacturing jobs in terms of job quality and wages.”

Women now hold 50.04 percent of payroll jobs (which excludes people who work on farms or in households or are self-employed), according to the Labor Department’s [*jobs report*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf) this month. (Men are still a larger share of the labor force than women, a number that is calculated differently — it includes people who don’t have jobs but are looking for work; farm and household workers; and self-employed people.)

The only other time women have held more jobs was in mid-2010, when men were hit particularly hard by the recession and the decline in construction and manufacturing jobs. This time, the economy is thriving — but women seem better able to take advantage of it.

Reasons for the [*decline in work for less educated men*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf) are many. They include the   [*rise of automation*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf); the waning power of unions; rising incarceration rates; the factories that move overseas; and hurdles to   [*switching jobs*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf) like having to move away or return to school. But gender norms are a major and often overlooked factor. However much politicians talk about manufacturing jobs, the United States economy has   [*become service-dominated*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf) — and jobs helping people have typically been done by women, while jobs making things have been associated with men.

Women’s success in the labor market has been driven by their educational gains, and by [*black and Hispanic women*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf). While women in large numbers have moved into male-dominated jobs, especially professional ones, the reverse isn’t true. Women are 84 percent of social services workers and 78 percent of health care workers. Differences in the jobs that men and women choose are now the single largest cause of the gender pay gap,   [*accounting for more than half of it*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf), research by the economists Francine Blau and Lawrence Kahn has found.

Sex segregation is much more prevalent in ***working-class*** jobs than in white-collar ones. But even the more [*prestigious female-dominated jobs*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf), like nurse practitioner or high school teacher, have   [*failed to attract*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf) many men. Yet when men do   [*so-called pink-collar jobs*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf), they tend to have more job security and wage growth over time than they would have in blue-collar jobs,   [*research has found*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf).

One reason men are reluctant to take pink-collar jobs is that over all, they pay less than male-dominated ones. When women enter fields in greater numbers, [*pay declines*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf), the sociologist Paula England and colleagues   [*have found*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf). Jobs that involve caregiving, like health aide or preschool teacher, are   [*particularly low-paying*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf), even after controlling for the high share of female workers, other work by Ms. England has found.

Most workers have in mind the lowest wage they’re willing to accept in a new job, [*economists say*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf), and men who have left higher-paying manufacturing and construction jobs might be unwilling to take a large pay cut.

“The wages that nursing assistants and home health aides get, and child care workers and teachers get, communicate to society that these jobs are not valued compared to male-dominated jobs, so of course men don’t want to do that,” Ms. Dill said.

Another thing holding men back from service jobs is norms about masculinity. The markers of masculinity include earning a good income and distancing oneself from feminine things, research has shown. Taking a job traditionally done by women threatens both, said Jill Yavorsky, a sociologist at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte.

A new experiment found that when unemployed men looked at job postings, they were willing to take a job that employed mostly women. But if it called for stereotypically female traits like interpersonal skills or care work, they were not, found Ms. Dill, Ms. Yavorsky and Enrica Ruggs at the University of Memphis. Moreover, a study [*published in December*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf) by Ms. Yavorsky found that men, across education levels and job types, were less likely to be called back by employers for interviews when they applied for traditionally female roles.

Also, social scientists have observed that women seem to show more flexibility than men in training for and moving to new industries. Women who worked in manufacturing were hit harder than men during the recession, but they were also [*more likely than men*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf) to move into high-skill jobs and health care jobs.

The men who have gone into pink-collar work have viewed these jobs as [*a last resort*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf) after facing disadvantages in the labor market,   [*researchers have found*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf). They are   [*more likely to be*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf) black or Hispanic and to have had the least education and the lowest earnings. Even though pink-collar jobs pay less over all, the men who take them often earn more than they had in jobs like manual labor, found a   [*paper published this month*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf) by Ms. Dill and Ms. Yavorsky, using census data from 2004 to 2013.

When men take female-dominated jobs, they’re more likely than not [*to use them as a stopgap*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf), and return to a male-dominated job as soon as they can, found Margarita Torre Fernández, a sociologist at the University Carlos III of Madrid. Using data from the census and the National Longitudinal Study of Youth from 1979 to 2006, she found this happened in nearly every female-dominated occupation, particularly elementary school teaching, health technology and social work.

“Some men would rather endure unemployment than accept a relatively high-paying women’s job and suffer the potential social stigma,” [*she wrote*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf).

Policymakers and recruiters have discussed various ways to address this issue, like bringing back manufacturing jobs, or emphasizing the masculine qualities of service jobs. But there’s another solution, researchers say: improving the quality of pink-collar jobs, in terms of wages, stability, benefits and hours. That could both attract men to these jobs and also benefit women.

“There are immense economic benefits to these jobs,” Ms. Yavorsky said. “Inevitably, if they were more highly valued in our society, I think men would be more likely to enter them, and women would very much benefit from the higher wages.”

Improving the quality of pink-collar, ***working-class*** jobs has the potential to close gender gaps — and also to shrink the widening gaps between the highest and lowest earners, both women and men.

PHOTO: At Ford’s River Rouge plant in Dearborn, Mich., in 2018. Debbie Manzano, center, is the first female manager at the plant. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Brittany Greeson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 22, 2020

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[***Letters to the Editor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:614C-X8X1-DXY4-X1NN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 23, 2020 Friday 05:02 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 791 words

**Highlight:** Readers respond to recent issues of the Sunday Book Review.

**Body**

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tyler Comrie FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 23, 2020

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[***Museum Town***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61JB-HHF1-DXY4-X0R7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 18, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 318 words

**Byline:** By Lovia Gyarkye

**Body**

This documentary looks at how a contemporary art museum in Western Massachusetts transformed a struggling small town.

At its heart, the documentary ''Museum Town,'' is a love letter -- to the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, to artistic experimentation and to North Adams, the struggling factory town where the institution is situated.

The film's main thread follows the staff of Mass MoCA as they prepare for ''Until,'' a colossal exhibition by the Black sculptor Nick Cave that includes an eclectic mix of found materials like ceramic birds and 10 miles of crystals. The project, which was on display from October 2016 to September 2017, perfectly encapsulates Mass MoCA's mission: to help contemporary artists realize their wildest dreams and to curate in ways not dictated by the art market. Between scenes of Cave approving different ceramic trinkets and the staff maneuvering the moving pieces of the exhibition are two other stories, narrated by Meryl Streep: The history of Mass MoCA's uneven development and the story of how North Adams went from a bustling ***working-class*** factory town to a divested one.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The film was directed by Jennifer Trainer, who was also the first director of development at the museum, and her adoration for Mass MoCA is obvious at every turn. This isn't always bad, but at times, one wishes the documentary had more distance from its subject. Interesting conversations about gentrification as a means to revitalization and who a museum serves (the public, the artist, both?) are quickly papered over, and the focus on local residents' indifference toward contemporary art begins to feel gimmicky. But for those even mildly curious about the story of one of the country's largest visual and performing arts spaces, ''Museum Town'' is worth watching.

Museum TownNot rated. Running time: 1 hour 16 minutes. Watch through virtual cinemas.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/17/movies/museum-town-review.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/17/movies/museum-town-review.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art in ''Museum Town.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY KINO LORBER)

**Load-Date:** December 18, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The ‘Sleeping Giant’ That May Decide the Midterms; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66KR-0K41-JBG3-6510-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 12, 2022 Wednesday 15:40 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2970 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** The choices made by Latino voters will be crucial to the outcome in a disproportionate share of Senate battleground states and key House races.

**Body**

The choices made by Latino voters on Nov. 8 will be crucial to the outcome in a [*disproportionate share of*](https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/hispanic-population-by-state) Senate battleground states, like Arizona (31.5 percent of the population), Nevada (28.9), Florida (25.8), Colorado (21.7), Georgia (9.6) and North Carolina (9.5).

According to most analysts, there is no question that a majority of Hispanic voters will continue to support Democratic candidates. The question going into the coming elections is how large that margin will be.

In terms of the battle for control of the House, three Hispanic-majority congressional districts in South Texas — the 15th, 28th and 34th — have become proving grounds for Republican candidates challenging decades of Democratic dominance. In a special election in the 34th District in June, the Republican candidate, Mayra Flores, prevailed.

Two weeks ago, The Texas Tribune [*reported*](https://www.texastribune.org/2022/09/29/south-texas-congressional-races-attack-ads/):

Since Labor Day, outside G.O.P. groups have blasted the Democratic nominees on multiple fronts, criticizing them all as weak on border issues and then zeroing in on candidate-specific vulnerabilities. Democratic groups are countering in two of the races, though for now, it is Republicans who appear to be in a more offensive posture.

Last week, [*Axios reported*](https://www.axios.com/2022/10/09/midterms-spending-candidates-democrats-republicans) that in the 15th Congressional District, which is [*81.9 percent*](https://datausa.io/profile/geo/congressional-district-15-tx) Hispanic, national Democratic groups had begun to abandon its nominee as a lost cause:

Texas Democrat Michelle Vallejo, a progressive running in a majority-Hispanic Rio Grande Valley district against Republican Monica De La Cruz, isn’t getting any Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee support in her Trump +3 district. House Majority PAC is planning to cancel the scheduled ad reservations for her at the end of the month, according to a source familiar with the group’s plans.

Across a wide range of studies and exit poll data analyses, there is general agreement that President Donald Trump significantly improved his 2016 margin among Hispanic voters in 2020. But there is less agreement on how large his gain was, on the demographics of his new supporters and on whether the movement was related to Trump himself, Trump-era Covid payments or to a secular trend.

In their July 2022 paper “[*Reversion to the Mean, or Their Version of the Dream?*](https://www.dropbox.com/s/acdh7316857x2gb/Latino_Partisanship_2020.pdf?dl=0) An Analysis of Latino Voting in 2020,” [*Bernard L. Fraga*](https://www.bernardfraga.com/), [*Yamil R. Velez*](https://www.yamilrvelez.com/) and [*Emily A. West*](https://emilywest.org/), political scientists at Emory, Columbia and the University of Pittsburgh, write that there is

an increasing alignment between issue positions and vote choice among Latinos. Moreover, we observe significant pro-Trump shifts among ***working-class*** Latinos and modest evidence of a pro-Trump shift among newly engaged U.S.-born Latino children of immigrants and Catholic Latinos. The results point to a more durable Republican shift than currently assumed.

That is, the more Hispanic voters subordinate traditional party and ethnic solidarity in favor of voting based on conservative or moderate policy preferences, the more likely they are to defect to the Republican Party.

The authors caution, however, that nothing is fixed in stone:

On the one hand, there is evidence that ***working-class*** Latino voters became more supportive of Trump in 2020, mirroring increases in educational polarization among the mass public. If similar processes are at play for Latinos — and if such polarization is not Trump-specific — then this could mean a durable change in partisan loyalties.

On the other hand, they continue:

Historical voting patterns among Latinos reveal natural ebbs and flows. Using exit poll data from 1984-2020, political scientist Alan Abramowitz finds that the pro-Democratic margin among Latinos ranges from +9 in 2004 to +51 in 1996, with an average margin of +35 points. Instead of reflecting a durable shift, 2020 could be a “reversion to the mean,” with 2016 serving as a recent high-water mark for the Democrats.

In an email responding to my inquiry about future trends, Fraga wrote:

My sense is that most of the Latinos who shifted to the Republican Party in 2020 have not returned to the Democratic Party. Many of these new Republican converts were ideologically conservative pre-2020, so Republicans didn’t have to shift their policy message very much to win them over.

“[*Portrait of a Persuadable Latino*](https://equisresearch.medium.com/2020-post-mortem-part-one-16221adbd2f3)” — an April 2021 study by the nonprofit [*Equis Research*](https://weareequis.us/) of Hispanic defections from the Democratic Party — found similar overall trends to those reported in the Fraga-Velez-West paper but revealed slightly different demographic patterns.

The Equis survey found that the largest percentage tilt toward Trump was among women, at plus 8 percent, compared with men, at 3 percent; among non-college Latinos, plus 6, compared with just 1 percent among the college educated; among Protestants, plus 7 compared with plus 5 among Catholics and plus 15 percent among conservative Hispanics. There was no tilt among liberals and a plus 4 percent tilt among moderates.

[*Carlos Odio*](https://www.weareequis.us/en-US/labs/our-story), a co-founder and the senior vice president at [*Equis Labs*](https://www.weareequis.us/en-US/labs/our-story), a nonprofit committed “to massively increase civic participation among Latinos in this country,” emailed a response to my query about Hispanic voter trends:

While Latinos shifted toward Republicans between 2016 and 2020, an 8-point swing toward Trump, we do not see evidence of a further decrease in Democratic support since Biden’s win. In most states, things do not look worse for Dems with Latinos than they did in the last election, nor do they look better.

But, Odio pointedly cautioned,

the political environment has the potential to lead to further erosion of Democratic support among Latinos. A meaningful share of Latino voters remain on the fence, having not firmly chosen a side in the election. These late breakers could move toward either party, or toward the couch, before the midterms are over.

Odio sent me a September 2022 Equis report, “[*Latino Voters in Limbo — A Midterm Update*](https://assets.ctfassets.net/ms6ec8hcu35u/52IX7xRBKXEfnKLuPwm5aB/80e3a487c69f8a3024e6bb35a299a1b6/Equis_2022_Fall_Election_Memo.pdf),” which found:

Young Latinos (18-34), Latino men and self-identified conservatives are overrepresented among the 2020 Biden voters who today disapprove of the president’s job performance. Among the most likely to be undecided today are ideological holdouts: conservative and moderate Latinos who have held back from Republicans, despite seeming to share some characteristics with their G.O.P.-supporting white counterparts. Notably Republicans have not increased support among these Latinos in the last year in almost any state — likely because a large majority of conservative or moderate Latinos who don’t yet vote Republican believe Democrats “care more about people like them.”

Today, the report continues, “what keeps many Latinos on the fence is again concerns about the economy and fears that Democrats don’t consistently prioritize the economy, handle it as decisively as business-obsessed Republicans or value hard work.”

A separate Equis study, “[*2020 Post-Mortem: The American Dream Voter*](https://assets.ctfassets.net/ms6ec8hcu35u/4E5a5nNoWi9JNFqeAylkmS/bf542d82f900dbfb62cc6e6d7253a24a/Post-Mortem_Part_Two_FINAL_Dec_14.pdf),” found that a negative attitude toward socialism was a factor among Hispanics nationwide, especially among those who stress the importance of working hard to get ahead:

There isn’t one overriding concern about “socialism” — but a package of complaints usually rises to the top around government control over people’s lives, raising taxes and money going to “undeserving” recipients. If a through line exists, it is a worry over people becoming “lazy and dependent on government” by those who highly value hard work.

The American Dream Voter study found that the declining salience of immigration in 2020 compared with 2016 or 2018, combined with the debate in 2020 over Covid lockdowns versus reopening the economy, diminished ethnic solidarity in 2020, allowing conservative Hispanics to shift their allegiance to the Republican Party. According to the report’s authors, “The economy unlocked a door: The issue landscape shifted to more favorable ground for Trump, opening a way for some Latinos who found it unacceptable to vote for him in 2016” and then “the socialism attack broke through: It created a space for defection.”

Democrats, the report noted,

retain some natural credibility with Latino voters but have lost ground on workers, work and the American dream; they’re also open to attack for taking Hispanics for granted; Republicans have some openings but are still held back by their image as the uncaring party of big corporations.

In 2016, the study continued,

some Latinos who we might predict would vote Republican — based on their demographics, partisanship and ideology — were held back from supporting Trump by (a) opposition to his hard-line immigration positions and (b) the importance of their Hispanic identity. By the middle of 2020, neither views on immigration nor the role of Hispanic identity were showing a major effect on vote choice — they were no longer cleanly differentiating Trump voters from Democratic voters.

In 2018, according to the study, Trump “lost even the conservatives on family separation. But family separation was not front and center by the end of the election” in 2020. It continued, “Reopening the economy — one of Trump’s most popular planks with Latino voters — was.”

A 2021 [*Pew Research report*](https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2021/11/04/majority-of-latinos-say-skin-color-impacts-opportunity-in-america-and-shapes-daily-life/) found that Latinos view anti-Hispanic discrimination differently from anti-Black discrimination. Hispanic voters were asked whether “there was ‘too much,’ ‘about the right amount’ or ‘too little’ attention paid to race and racial issues” when it comes to Hispanics and then asked the same question about Black Americans.

Just over half, 51 percent, of Latino respondents said, “too little” attention is paid to discrimination against Hispanics, 28 percent said, “about the right amount” and 19 percent said, “too much.” Conversely, 30 percent of Latino respondents said that in the case of Black Americans, “too little” attention is paid to discrimination, 23 percent said, “about the right amount” and 45 percent said, “too much.”

The American Dream Voter survey Equis performed found that when Hispanics were asked, “Which concerns you more, Democrats embracing socialism/leftist policies or Republicans embracing fascist/antidemocratic policies?” 42 percent of Latinos said socialism/leftist policies, and 38 percent said fascist/antidemocratic politics.

Equis did find substantial Democratic advantages when Hispanics were asked which party is “better for Hispanics” (53 percent Democratic to 31 percent Republican), which “is the party of fairness and equality” (51 to 31) and which party “cares about people like you” (49 to 32). But the Democratic advantage shrank to statistical insignificance on key bread-and-butter issues: which party “values hard work” (42 to 40) and “which is the party of the American dream” (41 to 39) and a dead heat (42 to 42) on “which party is better for the American worker.”

Last month, Pew Research released a survey that showed continuing Democratic strength among Hispanics, “[*Most Latinos Say Democrats Care About Them and Work Hard for Their Vote, Far Fewer Say So of G.O.P.*](https://www.pewresearch.org/race-ethnicity/2022/09/29/most-latinos-say-democrats-care-about-them-and-work-hard-for-their-vote-far-fewer-say-so-of-gop/)”

Pew found that over the past four years, Democrats experienced a modest gain in partisan identification among Hispanics over Republicans, going from 62 and 34 percent (28-point margin) in 2018 to 63 and 32 percent (31-point margin) in 2022.

From March 2022 to August 2022, the share of Latinos identifying abortion as a “very important issue” shot up from 42 to 57 percent in response to the Supreme Court’s decision in Dobbs in June. Hispanics favor abortion rights 57 percent to 40 percent — slightly smaller than the split among all voters, 62 to 36, according to Pew.

At the same time, the percentage of Latino respondents listing violent crime among the most important issues rose, from 61 to 70 percent; support for gun control rose, from 59 to 66 percent; and concern over voter suppression rose, from 51 to 59 percent.

Registered Latino voters split 53 to 26 in favor of voting for a generic Democratic congressional candidate over a generic Republican, according to Pew, but there were striking religious differences: Catholics, who make up 47 percent of the Hispanic electorate, favored a generic Democratic House candidate 59 to 26; evangelical Protestants, 24 percent of Hispanics, backed Republicans 50 to 32; Latinos with little or no religious affiliation, 23 percent, backed Democrats 60 to 17.

[*Matt A. Barreto*](http://mattbarreto.com/), a professor of political science and Chicano and Central American studies at U.C.L.A, pointed to data in the Oct. 2 National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials weekly Latino voter [*poll*](https://naleo.org/COMMS/PRA/2022/BSP_Latino_Voter_Tracking_Poll/10_5_22_-_NEF_Results_Week_4_-_Final.pdf):

Indeed if you look at issues like access to abortion, student debt, immigrant rights and gun violence, there are no signs at all that Latinos are becoming more conservative. When asked about government policy, 70 to 80 percent of Latino voters give support to the Democratic Party policy agenda. Indeed for the fourth week in a row, the NALEO tracking poll shows that abortion rights are the number two most important issue to Latino voters in 2022 and issues such as mass shootings and lowering the costs of health care are top-five issues as well.

Trump’s 2020 gains reflected “a clear pattern that concern over the Covid economic slowdown helped Trump make temporary gains with Latino voters,” Barreto argued. “Because so many were negatively impacted by the slumping economy in 2020, Trump was able to convince at least some Latinos that he would reopen the economy faster.”

Despite those improvements, Barreto contended, “the reality is that Trump’s gains in 2020 were not part of any pattern of realignment or ideological shift among Latinos. As the national economy continues to recover and improve, Biden favorability continues to recover among Latinos.”

In September 2020, [*Ian F. Haney López*](https://www.law.berkeley.edu/our-faculty/faculty-profiles/ian-haney-lopez/#tab_profile), a law professor at the University of California, Berkeley, wrote [*an essay*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/18/opinion/biden-latino-vote-strategy.html) for The Times with [*Tory Gavito*](https://waytowin.us/team), the president of Way to Win, a liberal advocacy group. They wrote that they asked white, Black and Hispanic voters

how “convincing” they found a [*dog-whistle*](https://global.oup.com/academic/product/dog-whistle-politics-9780190229252?lang=en&amp;cc=us) message lifted from Republican talking points. The message condemned “illegal immigration from places overrun with drugs and criminal gangs” and called for “fully funding the police, so our communities are not threatened by people who refuse to follow our laws.” Almost three out of five white respondents judged the message convincing. More surprising, exactly the same percentage of African Americans agreed, as did an even higher percentage of Latinos.

In other words, Haney López and Gavito wrote, “Mr. Trump’s competitiveness among Latinos is real.” Progressives, they continued,

commonly categorize Latinos as people of color, no doubt partly because progressive Latinos see the group that way and encourage others to do so as well. Certainly, we both once took that perspective for granted. Yet in our survey, only one in four Hispanics saw the group as people of color. In contrast, the majority rejected this designation. They preferred to see Hispanics as a group integrating into the American mainstream, one not overly bound by racial constraints but instead able to get ahead through hard work.

I asked Haney López about the current political and partisan state of play among Hispanic voters going into the 2022 elections. He emailed me his reply:

As with white voters, the most important predictors of support for Republicans track racial resentment as well as anxiety over racial status. Rather than an ideological sorting, we are witnessing a racial sorting among Latinos — not in terms of anything so simple as skin color, but rather, in terms of those who seek a higher status for themselves by more closely identifying on racial grounds with the white mainstream, versus those who give less priority to race, or even see Latinos as a nonwhite racial group.

Some Latinos, Haney López continued,

are susceptible to Republican propaganda promoting social conflict and distrust. The greatest failure of the Democratic Party with respect to Latinos, and indeed the polity generally, is its failure to pursue policies and to stress stories that build social solidarity, especially across lines of race, class, and other wedge identities, including gender and sexual identity.

Asked the same set of questions, [*Marcelo Suárez-Orozco*](https://www.umb.edu/the_university/chancellor/about), the chancellor of the University of Massachusetts, Boston, and a former dean of the U.C.L.A. Graduate School of Education &amp; Information Studies, had a somewhat different take.

By email, Suárez-Orozco wrote:

I am unpersuaded by the claim that Hispanics are becoming more conservative. To be more precise, over time, they are becoming more American. The holy trinity of integration: language, marriage patterns and connectivity to the labor market tell a powerful story. Over time, Hispanics mimic mainstream norms. They are learning English much faster than Italians did a century and a half ago, they are marrying outside their ethnicity at very significant rates, and their connectivity to the labor market is very muscular.

To Suárez-Orozco, Latinos in the United States are primed to play an ever more significant role — in politics and everywhere else: “The dominant metaphor on Hispanics qua elections over the last half-century has been ‘the sleeping giant.’ When the sleeping giant wakes up: Alas, s/he is us.”

The question is whether this “sleeping giant” will move to the right or to the left. The evidence points both ways — but this is not a contest the Democrats can afford to lose.

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PHOTO: Monica De La Cruz, the Republican candidate in Texas’ 15th Congressional District, at a rally in McAllen, Texas. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Verónica G. Cárdenas for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 12, 2022

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[***$142,000 a Year: State Legislators’ Expected New Salary; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:674V-FYY1-JBG3-642X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

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**Byline:** James Barron

**Highlight:** Lawmakers are headed to Albany today to vote themselves a raise that would make them the best-paid legislators in the nation.

**Body**

Lawmakers are headed to Albany today to vote themselves a raise that would make them the best-paid legislators in the nation.

Good morning. It’s Thursday. We’ll find out why the State Senate and the Assembly will convene today in an unusual special session. We’ll also look at why some New Yorkers say race shapes the criticism of Mayor Eric Adams.

State lawmakers are gathering in Albany today to give themselves a raise. If only a salary bump were that easy for everyone. The bill before the lawmakers, who already get six-figure base salaries for a five-month scheduled session in Albany, would boost their pay to [*roughly twice the median family income in the United States*](https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2022/demo/p60-276.html#:~:text=Real%20median%20household%20income%20was,and%20Table%20A%2D1).) and slightly more than five times what lawmakers in neighboring Connecticut make. I asked my colleague Jesse McKinley for details.

How are lawmakers in New York paid in comparison with other state legislators?

Pretty darn well. According to the [*National Conference of State Legislatures*](https://www.ncsl.org/), New York lawmakers rank [*No. 2 in the nation in base pay*](https://www.ncsl.org/research/about-state-legislatures/2022-legislator-compensation.aspx#_blank), thanks to a raise they received in 2018. California, which has a habit of besting New York in all kinds of categories (population, economic output, number of professional baseball teams) is No. 1 for the moment.

Won’t this make lawmakers in New York the best-compensated in the nation?

Yes, with Thursday’s anticipated pay hike, Albany’s 213 lawmakers will now have the highest base salary of any in the country: $142,000 a year, from the current $110,000 a year. State lawmakers in California will still be taking home $119,702 a year.

What’s the catch?

The concession made by lawmakers to get that $32,000 raise is that they will agree to a $35,000 cap on outside income, something that good government groups have long pushed for (though some would like an even lower threshold for such nongovernment earning).

The concern is the potential for corruption and conflicts of interest that could arise from, say, working in a law firm. Legislative leaders say this is a big step toward wiping out Albany’s well-deserved reputation for money-driven malfeasance. But the $35,000 limit won’t take effect until 2025, unlike the raise, which will take effect on Jan. 1.

Why did they go back to Albany for one day just to give themselves a raise?

Albany loves leaving things till the last minute, including its budgets, which used to be chronically late and now are only periodically late.

The more germane answer, however, is that the bill authorizing the raise has to be approved before the new session of the Legislature begins in January. Lawmakers cannot vote themselves a raise that takes effect during the same session as the vote. It says so in the state Constitution. Obviously time is running out between now and January — hence, a lot of people descending on the capital for a one-day-only session.

Will Gov. Kathy Hochul sign the bill raising their compensation? What happens if she decides not to sign it?

The governor hasn’t explicitly said she’ll sign the bill to hike the lawmakers’ pay, but she’s expressed support for such an increase in the past. Also, it seems unlikely to me that the legislators would go all the way back to Albany without an implicit understanding that Hochul — a Democrat, like the leaders that control both houses of the Legislature — is cool with higher salaries.

If she decided not to sign the bill, my best guess is that she would get very few Christmas presents from legislative leaders this year.

What has the reaction been?

Giving yourself a raise is always a bad look for politicians, even if many outside groups agree that it’s not unjustified. Republicans have lambasted the raise — and its timing during a “special session” — and some watchdog groups have said it doesn’t go far enough to limit outside earning.

But legislative leaders stand by it, including the speaker of the Assembly, Carl Heastie. “I don’t think there’s enough money in the world,” he said recently, “that could compensate you for being away from your families.”

Prepare for wind gusts and rain persisting through the evening. Temps will be steady around the low to mid-50s.

In effect until Dec. 26.

The latest New York news

Crime

* Suffolk cyberattack: The malicious cyberattack that forced the county government offline for weeks this fall began more than a year ago, [*officials revealed.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/21/nyregion/suffolk-county-cyberattack.html)

1. Brooklyn subway shooting: The man accused in a shooting spree on an N train has told his lawyers he wants to admit to the April attack. [*He is expected to plead guilty to terrorism as well as a firearms charge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/21/nyregion/brooklyn-subway-shooting-frank-james-guilty-plea.html).
2. Councilman’s home invaded: Protesters descended on the home and the office of a gay member of the New York City Council, [*vandalizing the walls with homophobic graffiti and attacking one of his neighbors, over his support for Drag Story Hour events at libraries.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/20/nyregion/drag-queen-story-hours-protests-nyc.html)

More local news

* A fall triathlon: The New York City Triathlon will move to the fall, [*with a race date of Oct. 1,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/21/sports/new-york-city-triathlon-october.html)following years of interruptions from extreme summer heat.

1. Seasonal staples are back: After one holiday season lost to the pandemic and another curtailed by Omicron, [*“The Nutcracker” is being danced, “A Christmas Carol” is being performed and “Messiah” is being sung again*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/21/theater/broadway-christmas-pandemic-holidays.html).

* “Almost Famous” closing: “Almost Famous,” a stage adaptation of the acclaimed 2000 film, [*will close on Broadway on Jan. 8 after facing soft ticket sales in a competitive market.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/19/theater/almost-famous-broadway-closing.html)

Race and criticism of the mayor

The end of the year is in sight — the end of Mayor Eric Adams’s first year in office. It has been a difficult 12 months in which he faced the challenges of moving the city past the pandemic, reinvigorating a weakened economy and tempering heightened fears of crime.

Some [*New Yorkers have questioned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/09/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc.html) whether he moved fast enough to address intractable problems like homelessness and a lack of affordable housing. Complaints have also focused on his [*hiring practices*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/30/nyregion/eric-adams-pearson-salary-nyc.html), his [*response to the crisis at the Rikers Island jail complex*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/14/nyregion/rikers-jail-unions-eric-adams.html) and how he handled the [*influx of migrants*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/23/nyregion/migrants-nyc-eric-adams.html) from Texas.

But my colleagues Jeffery C. Mays and Emma G. Fitzsimmons write that [*several Black leaders are raising concerns that criticism of the mayor has been shaped by race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/21/nyregion/eric-adams-dinkins-race.html). They suggest that implicit racism undermined Mayor David Dinkins, the city’s first Black mayor, a generation ago, and could undercut Adams now.

Adams himself said that he was accustomed to criticism, but that when some people “look at these two Black mayors, Dinkins and my role now, there are those that wish we fail.”

“Look at all the mayors,” he said. “Dinkins and I are the only two mayors that people talk about how we went out at night. They used to say he had a tuxedo in his car all the time because he went out to different galas and balls and what have you. That’s the role of the mayor.”

Adams’s allies may be hoping to discourage criticism at a time when his popularity appears to be waning: In a recent [*Siena College poll*](https://scri.siena.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/SNY1222-Crosstabs.pdf), 50 percent of voters in the city viewed him favorably and 35 percent unfavorably.

Adams, a former police captain, has sought to have a better relationship with the police than Dinkins did: He brought back a [*controversial plainclothes police unit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/05/nyregion/eric-adams-nypd-anti-crime-unit.html). He has also dispatched waves of officers to address crime on the subway and protected police funding in his budget while often standing by officers accused of misconduct.

Adams said he had drawn two lessons from Dinkins’s loss to Rudolph Giuliani in 1993: Focus on making “real changes in office” and do not allow your political coalition to erode. He has made sure that his base feels heard after [*winning the mayoralty with a coalition of Black and Latino voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/nyregion/nyc-eric-adams-primary-results.html) and moderates outside Manhattan.

“My secret sauce is everyday ***working-class*** families,” he said, adding that he had met some of those families on a recent visit to the Rockaways in Queens. “They’re just not complicated. They just want a safe place to raise their children and families. Those are my folks.”

Rock, rock, rock

Dear Diary:

“Rock, rock, rock,” I heard a voice repeating. “Rock, rock, rock.”

I was walking up a trail into the Ramble in Central Park when I came upon the voice’s owner: a tall, slender man with a twist of silver hair over one eye.

I waited, not wanting to interrupt whatever it was that he was doing.

“Rock, rock, rock,” he said again in a monotone. “Rock, rock, rock.”

Two minutes later, a red cardinal flew down from a tree, landed on a large flat rock and did the hokey pokey, hopping tentatively toward the middle of the rock.

That was when I noticed a single peanut in the shell sitting there. The cardinal grappled with how to lift the nut. After finally securing it, the bird flew off.

The man turned to me.

“The wife is much smarter,” he said in a serious tone. “I’ve known the family for years. I never have to wait when she’s around.”

— Sharyn Wolf

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, Morgan Malget and Ed Shanahan contributed to New York Today. You can reach the team [*nytoday@nytimes.com*](mailto:nytoday@nytimes.com)

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tristan Spinski for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***How Ron DeSantis Joined the ‘Ruling Class’ — and Turned Against It***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6908-CK61-JBG3-60T3-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Nicholas Confessore

**Highlight:** Over the years, Mr. DeSantis embraced and exploited his Ivy League credentials. Now he is reframing his experiences at Yale and Harvard to wage a vengeful political war.

**Body**

Over the years, Mr. DeSantis embraced and exploited his Ivy League credentials. Now he is reframing his experiences at Yale and Harvard to wage a vengeful political war.

Early last year, Gov. Ron DeSantis nestled into his chair onstage in Naples, Fla., to explain to an audience of the would-be conservative elite his journey through the reigning liberal one they hoped to destroy. His host was Larry P. Arnn, the president of Hillsdale College, a small Christian school in southern Michigan that has become an academic hub of the Trump-era right. His subject was Yale University, where Mr. DeSantis was educated and where, as he tells it, he first met the enemy.

“I’m a public school kid,” Mr. DeSantis told the audience, unspooling a story that he has shared in recent years with aides, friendly interviewers, donors, voters and readers of his memoir, “The Courage to Be Free.” “My mom was a nurse, my dad worked for a TV ratings company, installing the metering devices back then. And I show up in jean shorts and a T-shirt.” The outfit “did not go over well with the Andover and Groton kids” — sometimes it is Andover and Groton, sometimes it is Andover and Exeter, sometimes all three — who mocked his lack of polish.

Worse than Yale’s snobbery was its politics: College was “the first time that I saw unadulterated leftism,” he told the Republican Jewish Coalition this March. “We’re basically being told the Soviet Union was the victim in the Cold War.” Teachers and students alike “rejected God, and they hated our country,” he [*assured the audience*](https://freedomlibrary.hillsdale.edu/programs/national-leadership-seminar-naples-florida/challenges-to-american-liberty) in Naples. “When I get people that submit résumés,” he said, “quite frankly, if I got one from Yale I would be negatively disposed.”

Then there are the parts of the story he doesn’t tell: How his new baseball teammates at Yale — mostly fellow athletic recruits from the South and West who likewise viewed themselves as Yale outsiders — were among those who teased him about his clothes, and how he would nevertheless adopt their insular culture as his own. How he joined one of Yale’s storied “secret societies,” those breeding grounds of future senators and presidents, but left other members with the impression that he would have preferred to be tapped by a more prestigious one. How he shared with friends his dream of going to Harvard Law School — not law school, Harvard Law School — and successfully applied there, stacking one elite credential neatly onto another, and co-founded a [*tutoring firm*](https://www.prweb.com/releases/harvard-law-school-grads/online-lsat-prep-course/prweb4395344.htm) that touted “the only LSAT prep courses designed exclusively by Harvard Law School graduates.” How his Yale connections helped him [*out-raise rivals*](https://flaglerlive.com/congress-district6-money/#gsc.tab=0) as a first-time candidate for Congress, and how he featured his Ivy credentials — “a political scarlet letter as far as a G.O.P. primary went,” Mr. DeSantis likes to say — on his campaign websites, sometimes down to the precise degree of honors earned. And how that C.V. [*helped sell him*](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1010129956222001153) to an Ivy-obsessed President Donald J. Trump, whose 2018 endorsement helped propel Mr. DeSantis to the governor’s office in Florida, where his Yale baseball jersey is [*displayed prominently*](https://www.flgov.com/2023/04/13/governor-ron-desantis-signs-heartbeat-protection-act/) on the wall next to his desk.

Mr. DeSantis, 44, is not the first Republican politician of his generation to rail against his own Ivy League degrees while milking them for access and campaign cash. But now, as he seeks the Republican presidential nomination, he is molding his entire campaign and political persona around a vengeful war against what he calls the country’s “ruling class”: an incompetent, unaccountable elite of bureaucrats, journalists, educators and other supposed “experts” whose pernicious and unearned authority the governor has vowed to vanquish.

For Mr. DeSantis and his allies, the culture wars are the central struggle of American public life, and schools are the most important battleground where they will be fought. “Education is our sword,” Mr. DeSantis’s then education commissioner, Richard Corcoran, [*explained*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVujpIator0) to a Hillsdale audience in 2021. And Mr. DeSantis is the man to wield it — a self-made striver who was “given nothing,” as he [*told*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVujpIator0) the audience attending his campaign kickoff in Iowa in May. “These elites are not enacting an agenda to represent us. They’re imposing their agenda on us, via the federal government, via corporate America and via our own education system.” Even as he struggles to displace Mr. Trump as the Republican Party’s pre-eminent figure — he has spent heavily since May without denting the former president’s polling lead, and is under extraordinary pressure to make his mark at the first Republican debate on Wednesday, which Mr. Trump plans to skip — Mr. DeSantis has become captain of a new conservative vanguard, positioning it to influence American politics for years to come.

Yet his emergence as his party’s chief culture warrior was anything but preordained. Genuinely embittered by his experiences at elite institutions, he also astutely grasped how they could be useful to him as he climbed the political ladder, according to dozens of friends and classmates from college and law school, as well as former aides and associates. For much of his political career, including his early years as Florida governor, he was neither closely identified with education policy nor deeply engaged in the debates over race and gender identity that have come to engulf American politics. It took the Covid epidemic to awaken Mr. DeSantis to the political potency of classrooms and fully mobilize him against what he now calls the “bureaucratic ‘expert’ class.” Now, pursuing the presidency, Mr. DeSantis has fully weaponized his resentments, offering voters a revisionist history of his own encounters with the ruling class to buttress his arguments for razing it.

But Mr. DeSantis and his ideological allies — among them a group of conservative intellectuals clustered around Hillsdale and the California-based Claremont Institute who acquired new prominence during the Trump administration — are not aiming to abolish the ruling class. Instead, emboldened by the broader Covid-era backlash over school closures and diversity programs, they hope to replace it with a distinctly conservative one, trained in schools recaptured from liberals and reshaped by “classical” principles — a more traditionalist, Christian-inflected approach to education. “School choice may allow a small number of highly informed and committed parents to insulate their children” from liberal ideas about social justice, [*the authors of a recent paper from the Manhattan Institute argued*](https://media4.manhattan-institute.org/sites/default/files/school-choice-not-enough-impact-of-critical-social-justice-ideology-in-american-education.pdf), “but it will make little difference to the level of indoctrination in the American school-age population.”

In a written response to questions for this article, a DeSantis spokesman, Bryan Griffin, described The New York Times’s reporting as a “hit piece likely manufactured and seeded by political opponents designed to smear Ron DeSantis ahead of the debate,” and defended the governor’s record. “In the Covid era, the world went mad with radical gender ideology and began pushing it harder than ever into school curriculum,” Mr. Griffin said. “DeSantis stepped up to the moment and stopped the indoctrination despite the left and the media’s best efforts to cover for it.”

To uproot what he considers liberal political activism from public schools and universities, Mr. DeSantis has stripped power from teachers and administrators and transferred it to himself and his appointees. But even as he calls to dismantle “woke” orthodoxy, he has sought to impose another, with a sweeping ban on the teaching of “identity politics” or “systemic racism” in required classes at Florida’s public colleges and universities and new [*civics training for high school teachers*](https://www.tampabay.com/news/florida-politics/2022/06/28/some-teachers-alarmed-by-florida-civics-training-approach-on-religion-slavery/) that plays down the role of slavery in early American history. Under the banner of “parental rights,” DeSantis-backed policies have given conservative Floridians a kind of veto power over books and curriculums favored by their more liberal neighbors, even in politically mixed or predominantly left-leaning Florida counties.

“Where local communities create conservative culture and conservative school districts, DeSantis doesn’t touch them,” said David Jolly, a former Republican congressman from Florida who served alongside Mr. DeSantis in Congress. “Where communities confront his conservative ideologies, the state steps in.”

Earlier this year, in what amounted to a proof of concept, the governor seized control of New College of Florida, a left-leaning public liberal arts school in Sarasota. He appointed a conservative majority to the board of trustees; the college’s new overseers then fired the school’s leadership, installed Mr. Corcoran as president and announced plans to turn New College into a Florida version of Hillsdale. “The goal of the university is not free inquiry,” Christopher Rufo, a conservative activist and one of the new trustees, said during [*a recent appearance*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLHrony2mns) in California. Instead, he argued, conservatives need to deploy state power to retake public institutions wherever they can.

“The universities are not overly politicized. The universities are overly ideologized and insufficiently politicized,” Mr. Rufo said. “We should repoliticize the universities and understand that education is at heart a political question.”

‘Hell Week,’ Baseball and St. Elmo

Mr. DeSantis had never been to New England when he arrived at Yale in the late 1990s, an honor student and baseball standout from the [*middle-class suburban*](https://www.tampabay.com/news/florida-politics/2023/04/26/ron-desantis-tampa-bay-hometown-has-evolved-does-it-still-claim-him/) Gulf Coast city of Dunedin. He was far from [*the only public school*](https://news.yale.edu/1997/08/28/class-2001-arrives-new-haven) graduate in Yale’s freshman class, but he already carried a chip on his shoulder, caught between a powerful confidence in his own gifts — his “superiority complex,” as one classmate described it — and his discomfort with Yale’s more cosmopolitan milieu. He majored in history, taking classes in the culture and politics of the Founders, and closely studied the work of Gordon Wood, whose books emphasized the political radicalness of the American Revolution. He loved “A Few Good Men” and “Scent of a Woman,” especially the rousing speech at the end, in which Al Pacino’s character rails against the rich snobs tormenting a scholarship student at a New England prep school. Though Yale had a thriving conservative political scene, Mr. DeSantis shied away from it. He rarely talked about politics at all.

Instead, he found his tribe on the baseball team, where he was known to all as “D,” the name he preferred to his given one. Like every other freshman player, he was hazed by his new teammates, and not just for his jean shorts. The baseball players segregated themselves from the rest of Yale and cultivated a hostility toward their peers, their latent status anxiety sharpened by a realization that some of their fellow students did not take them or their sport seriously. Some recalled being told by classmates, and even professors, that they did not belong at Yale. As athletes, they perceived themselves to be the school’s true meritocrats, admitted on the strength of their own sweat and discipline. “We set ourselves up against the most privileged students at Yale, who, in truth, we did not actually know very well,” Jonathan Levy, a baseball teammate who is now a professor at the University of Chicago, said in an email. “In hindsight, our mid-1990s admission to Yale was our opportunity to join this elite. Every member of the team was handed that same ticket.”

As a senior, Mr. DeSantis was elected captain, which his closest Yale friends have [*sometimes*](https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/miami-dade/article199439369.html) presented as a testament to his leadership qualities. According to other former teammates, however, there were no other contenders: The team had few seniors that year, and Mr. DeSantis was a [*starting outfielder*](https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2001/03/30/baseballs-desantis-shines-on-yale-field-of-dreams/). His arrogance could startle. At a “captain’s practice” that fall, the team’s revered [*coach*](https://yalebulldogs.com/sports/baseball/roster/coaches/john-stuper/14), John Stuper, delivered a brief pep talk to the freshmen. After he left, Mr. DeSantis told the team that their coach, a former major league pitcher, didn’t know what he was doing. Through his spokesman, Mr. DeSantis denied making the remark. In an interview, Mr. Stuper, who described the governor as “like a son” to him, said: “I just can’t imagine that happening. He had a lot of respect for me, still does, has asked me to campaign for him.” Mr. Stuper added, “There’s just no way that he would undermine my authority by doing that.”

Along with many of his teammates, he joined Delta Kappa Epsilon, a fraternity composed largely of athletes, many from ***working-class*** backgrounds. “We all kind of bonded through our athletics, and through our fraternity,” said Nick Sinatra, a Buffalo native and Yale friend who played football there. At Yale, D.K.E. was [*known as boorish*](https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/the-long-decline-of-dke-brett-kavanaughs-fraternity-at-yale) even by fraternity standards, with a reputation for over-the-top hazing of pledges. When Mr. DeSantis was a senior, according to former brothers and pledges, a large group of pledges quit after one hazing episode turned violent. On another night, pledges were ordered to a frat house room, two of them recalled. After entering one at a time, each was blindfolded and ordered to drop his pants, with Mr. DeSantis, other brothers, and at least one female guest on hand to mock their genitalia. One of the pledges recalled that a blender was placed between his legs and abruptly turned on to scare him, splashing water on his groin.

During the fraternity’s “hell week,” pledges [*wore costumes*](https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2006/01/20/an-inside-look-at-dkes-hell-week/) smeared with rotten food and condiments. They might be ordered to simulate sex with one another or do outdoor calisthenics in the winter air. According to four former pledges and brothers, Mr. DeSantis required one pledge, for whom he served as “father,” to wear a pair of baseball pants with the back and thighs cut out, exposing his buttocks and genitals.

Another D.K.E. brother, Scott Wagner, a friend of Mr. DeSantis who served on the governor’s Florida transition team, said none of the pledges’ costumes involved nudity. Reached by The Times, the former pledge, who asked not to be identified, confirmed that he was made to wear the revealing costume but declined to discuss the experience further. Today, some of the former brothers and pledges regard Mr. DeSantis’s behavior as foreshadowing a comfort with power — and with using it to bully others.

Mr. DeSantis denied these accounts through his spokesman, who called them “ridiculous assertions and completely false.”

Mr. DeSantis also joined one of the school’s secret societies, St. Elmo. The societies, though swathed in mystery and arcane symbolism, mostly functioned to introduce Yale seniors to classmates they might not know. His St. Elmo class was a diverse group that met weekly for a family-style dinner in a comfortable, run-down townhouse near campus. At meetings, the members took turns delivering their “bios,” or life stories, in the living room, in speeches that could last hours. Mr. DeSantis often showed up in his baseball uniform; his own bio leaned heavily on baseball, his Florida roots and his journey to Yale. But when it came time for others to tell their stories, Mr. DeSantis tuned out, according to former St. Elmo members. He rolled his eyes as one member, Cristina Sosa Noriega, talked about growing up as a Hispanic public schoolgirl in San Antonio, Ms. Sosa Noriega and two other members recalled. “He seemed bored and disinterested,” Ms. Sosa Noriega said. “It was like I wasn’t worth listening to. I had the feeling that he assumed that I didn’t deserve to be there.” (Mr. DeSantis’s spokesman denied that account and said it was “frankly absurd” to suggest that anyone would remember “such a detail from decades ago.”)

In “The Courage to Be Free,” Mr. DeSantis’s Yale education is tidily repackaged as a prologue to his future battles with the ruling class. “In retrospect, Yale allowed me to see the future,” he writes. “It just took me 20 years to realize it.” Yet the book is curiously vague, identifying no particular exchanges or classes where he encountered the fervent anti-Americanism that, in his telling, defined his education there. His spokesman declined to identify any.

But other perspectives were easily available: According to Mr. Sinatra, Mr. DeSantis took Yale’s most popular undergraduate class about the Cold War, taught by the historian John Lewis Gaddis, whose work blamed the Soviet Union for the conflict, not the United States. (The governor’s spokesman said Mr. DeSantis “did not take issue with John Gaddis’s class.”) While the book paints turn-of-the-century Yale as cloyingly liberal, awash in Soviet flags and Che Guevara T-shirts, other classmates recall a left-leaning but generally apathetic campus of the pre-9/11 era, and a Che shirt worn by one particular roommate, with whom Mr. DeSantis seemed friendly enough.

After graduation, some of his baseball teammates “punched their Yale ticket,” according to Dr. Levy, moving into banking, consulting or medicine. Others returned to their hometowns, starting careers that didn’t necessarily require the credentials they had acquired. And some, Dr. Levy observed, “wanted it both ways, to have a Yale-charged life but to reject Yale elitism.” He added: “I think this is what DeSantis is still doing, in the form of a political project — trying to reach the elite pinnacle of the American political establishment while railing against that same establishment.”

A Short Climb to the Elite

Mr. DeSantis began fashioning a deeper critique of the ruling class even as he quietly climbed its ranks, already [*telling*](https://www.tampabay.com/sports/rays/2020/03/10/the-ron-desantis-double-play-a-star-ballplayer-and-a-future-politician/) [*others*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/05/us/desantis-high-school-teacher-georgia.html) that he imagined himself as a future president. Harvard Law was little different from Yale, he writes in “The Courage to Be Free,” with a stultifying careerism layered onto overtly liberal politics. The Harvard faculty of the early 2000s, Mr. DeSantis asserted, “was increasingly dominated by adherents of so-called critical legal studies” — a left-wing school of argument that seemingly neutral laws can be racist or discriminatory. At the same time, he wrote, Harvard offered an “assembly-line style of education” aimed chiefly at preparing students for “a lucrative career in business or law.” Mr. DeSantis instead joined the Navy, serving as a military prosecutor and combat adviser. Later, as the Tea Party movement arrived in Washington, he started writing his first book, about the Founders and President Barack Obama.

“Dreams From Our Founding Fathers” came out in fall 2011, a dense tract [*packed with quotes*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2023/05/21/ron-desantis-book-founding-fathers/) from Madison and Hamilton and casting Mr. Obama as a European-style socialist bent on deconstructing the republic they imagined. As an anti-Obama polemicist, Mr. DeSantis [*treated slavery as a kind of constitutional sideshow*](https://www.theatlantic.com/books/archive/2023/02/desantis-american-history-interpretation-constitution-originalism/673152/) — an institution whose stubborn persistence in early America need not disturb a close adherence to the Founders’ vision, since it was “doomed to fail” in a nation guided by their universal truths. Mr. DeSantis attributed Mr. Obama’s purported radicalism to his education at Harvard Law, and to his years living in the Chicago neighborhood of Hyde Park, where the future president taught law at the University of Chicago. It was in these places — “monolithically” far left, populated by the “credentialed elite” and isolated from the “broader political society” — that Mr. Obama absorbed the progressive tradition, with its attachment to “a large administrative state” and “ostensibly nonpartisan ‘solutions’ devised by experts.”

Though many classmates shared Mr. DeSantis’s recollection of Harvard as heavily oriented toward corporate law careers, other aspects of his narrative do not hold up. Faculty battles over critical legal studies had unfolded vividly [*at Harvard Law*](https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2021/2/11/HLS-fed-soc/) in the 1970s and 1980s, but by the time Mr. DeSantis arrived a quarter-century later, the approach had reached a nadir. Harvard students of his era were more drawn to the discipline of law and economics, advanced by conservative legal scholars. (Mr. DeSantis’s spokesman noted that, nonetheless, “there were critical legal studies being taught at the time.”) In interviews, some of his conservative classmates recalled being reluctant to express their political views in class. But far more described Harvard as intellectually open and committed to ideological diversity. “The picture DeSantis gives is just not right — it’s kind of a cliché about Harvard, and it’s simply not true,” said Charles Fried, a longtime Harvard Law professor and a faculty sponsor of Harvard’s chapter of the Federalist Society, the influential conservative legal organization. “He must have known it, because everyone knew it.”

When Mr. DeSantis started at Harvard in 2002, the school had a conservative dean, Robert C. Clark, an early Federalist Society supporter whose [*appointment*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1989/02/19/conservative-is-selected-as-harvard-law-dean/090210dd-6de3-4a79-bec6-7288e572c4b4/) had been part of a deliberate effort to re-center the professoriate. A 2005 survey of The Harvard Law Review, published in the Federalist Society’s flagship publication, The Harvard Journal of Law &amp; Public Policy, found that staff members “identifying themselves as left-of-center did not comprise even a majority.”

Mr. DeSantis’s own foray into big-firm corporate law — a stint as a litigator for the Miami-based Holland &amp; Knight before he ran for Congress — goes unmentioned in his memoir. So does his involvement in Harvard’s Federalist Society chapter, where he served as a business manager for the journal, crossed paths with future judges and politicians and met Leonard Leo, the conservative power broker who years later would help him [*execute a right-wing takeover*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2023/06/20/gov-ron-desantis-used-secretive-panel-flip-state-supreme-court/) of Florida’s Supreme Court. Indeed, Mr. DeSantis showed scant public trace of bitterness about his elite education in the years before his political career.

After leaving the Navy, he again put his elite educational bona fides forward, joining with two of his closest law school friends to found an Ivy-themed test-prep company, LSAT Freedom, [*headquartered at his home in Ponte Vedra Beach*](https://search.sunbiz.org/Inquiry/CorporationSearch/SearchResultDetail?inquirytype=EntityName&amp;directionType=Initial&amp;searchNameOrder=LSATFREEDOM%20L090000595180&amp;aggregateId=flal-l09000059518-52d8428b-c64f-403a-b822-8cf7f95ebb5f&amp;searchTerm=LSAT%20Freedom&amp;listNameOrder=LSATFREEDOM%20L090000595180). In a series of brief YouTube seminars with his co-founders, Mr. DeSantis comes off as earnest and knowledgeable about the mechanisms of [*elite*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ny5SO9qRdo) advancement. “If you’re in a fourth-tier school, versus, like, a school that’s maybe in the top 50,” he observed, “then there’s a world of difference in terms of your investment and the return on your investment.”

His own credentials would yield a bounty when he finally entered politics. He was little-known to local Republican leaders and voters in the newly drawn congressional district he set out to win in early 2012, but he was a disciplined campaigner and proved a formidable fund-raiser. Supporters [*nicknamed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/13/magazine/ron-desantis.html) him “the Résumé.” Yale friends around the country — baseball teammates, fraternity brothers, fellow secret-society members — sent checks, helping drive a [*flood*](https://flaglerlive.com/congress-district6-money/#gsc.tab=0) of out-of-state money. A Yale friend put him in touch with a political [*adviser*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2023/02/18/trump-desantis-relationship-2024-election/) to Mr. Trump, who praised him on Twitter as “very impressive.” Law school classmates got him meetings with national Republican figures who went on to [*endorse*](https://www.jacksonville.com/story/news/politics/2012/07/26/newcomer-ron-desantis-has-become-darling-right/15859733007/) his winning bid.

When Mr. DeSantis decided to run for governor a few years later, he had even more help from the Yale world, tapping an older, more conservative generation of alumni, [*such as*](https://www.miamiherald.com/article199439369.html) the former financial executive Joseph J. Fogg III. “He came to my attention because he’s a Yalie,” Mr. Fogg [*told*](https://www.miamiherald.com/article199439369.html) The Miami Herald. A few months before [*announcing his campaign*](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/gop-rep-ron-desantis-announces-run-for-governor-of-florida/), Mr. DeSantis traveled to Cambridge, Mass., to [*join a panel*](https://200.hls.harvard.edu/events/hls-in-the-world/hls-in-the-house/) of Harvard alumni serving in Congress. While some Republican voters might take a dim view of Harvard, he told them, the school “opens a lot of doors” for aspiring politicians. To the networks of ultrarich conservative donors whose money could [*help advance him to the next rung*](https://floridapolitics.com/archives/200267-ron-desantis-at-koch-conclave-in-california/), his elite résumé was part of the appeal. “I had a good story,” he said, “an appealing biography to people that were looking to help young leaders.”

The Outbreak

After being elected governor by a hair’s breadth, Mr. DeSantis at first [*seemed mindful*](https://washingtonmonthly.com/2023/06/06/ron-desantiss-moderate-sabbatical-year/) of the political center. He committed billions of dollars to [*protect the Everglades*](https://www.flgov.com/2019/01/10/governor-ron-desantis-announces-major-water-policy-reforms/). Appearing at his alma mater Dunedin High School, he announced a proposal to [*raise teachers’ minimum salaries*](https://www.tampabay.com/florida-politics/buzz/2019/10/07/ron-desantis-unveils-plan-to-raise-starting-pay-for-florida-teachers/). In the face of efforts by liberal students and activists to shut down conservative speakers on college campuses, Mr. DeSantis, like [*many other Republican*](https://www.thefire.org/news/florida-becomes-ninth-state-ban-restrictive-campus-free-speech-zones) officials in the pre-Covid era, [*urged*](https://www.tampabay.com/florida-politics/2019/04/15/ron-desantis-seeks-free-speech-policy-allowing-controversial-speakers-at-florida-universities/) Florida universities to adopt a version of the “[*Chicago principles*](https://freeexpression.uchicago.edu/)” favoring academic free expression.

Building on the work of his Republican predecessors, he [*signed legislation*](https://www.fldoe.org/newsroom/latest-news/commissioner-corcoran-applauds-governor-desantis-and-legislative-leaders-on-historic-2019-legislative-session.stml) creating a [*small voucher program*](https://www.flgov.com/2019/10/11/governor-ron-desantis-and-commissioner-richard-corcoran-celebrate-the-family-empowerment-scholarship-reaching-18000-students/) for low-income students. Though school-choice advocates view the program as a pivotal early step toward taxpayer-funded vouchers in Florida, Mr. DeSantis resisted advisers who wanted him to move even more aggressively on choice in his first year, fearing it would crowd out other priorities, according to two former aides. (His spokesman said Mr. DeSantis “has always been a fervent supporter of expanding school choice, and it was one of his first-term campaign platforms.”) When the Florida House speaker at the time proposed to him abolishing New College entirely, Mr. DeSantis [*recalled*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FC7xPq8ts9c) recently, he replied, “What is New College?”

Then came Covid. At first, Mr. DeSantis reluctantly heeded Trump administration health officials like Dr. Anthony S. Fauci. He [*imposed a state lockdown*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/us/coronavirus-florida-de-santis-trump.html) in April 2020; he sometimes appeared masked at public events. But amid shifting federal guidance and growing worry about the social and economic impacts of lockdowns, he began doing his own research. He consulted experts who departed from the emerging medical consensus around Covid restrictions, and he [*moved quickly*](https://apnews.com/article/virus-outbreak-florida-business-ron-desantis-donald-trump-e64376aba8306681b53d52956d15bcd7#:~:text=Ron%20DeSantis%20lifted%20all%20restrictions,the%20spread%20of%20the%20coronavirus.) to relax them. That summer, embracing data showing that children were at low risk for severe illness or death from Covid, Mr. DeSantis took perhaps his [*biggest gamble*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/florida-coronavirus-schools/2020/08/14/a37b39a8-dd99-11ea-b205-ff838e15a9a6_story.html): His administration ordered all Florida schools to reopen for in-person instruction when the school year began.

He was widely attacked, even mocked, for his decisions — criticism that would galvanize Mr. DeSantis, according to former aides, and cement his nascent suspicion of bureaucrats and supposed experts. Florida schools [*did not become superspreaders*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/florida-schools-reopened-without-becoming-covid-19-superspreaders-11615973402); research later [*showed*](https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2022/05/remote-learning-likely-widened-racial-economic-achievement-gap/) that students in open schools around the country tended to lose less ground during the pandemic than students in closed schools. Mr. DeSantis doubled down. In early 2021, as conservative activists and outlets fanned suspicion of the new Covid vaccines, he effectively stopped promoting them — a turn that contributed to overwhelmed Florida hospitals, [*public health experts later said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/22/us/politics/ron-desantis-covid.html), and thousands of deaths that the state’s own former surgeon general would deem “preventable.” But by then, the governor had already claimed victory over the experts. “The Covid-19 pandemic represented a test of elites in the U.S., from public-health experts to the corporate media,” Mr. DeSantis [*wrote*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/ron-desantis-on-the-pandemic-year-dont-trust-the-elites-11616093752) in The Wall Street Journal in March 2021. “Policymakers who bucked the elites and challenged the narrative have been proven right to do so.”

The pandemic had also changed the political contours of education. In blue and purple states around the country, a swath of otherwise [*middle-of-the-road parents erupted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/us/politics/school-republican-campaign-issue.html) against [*Democrats*](https://newark.chalkbeat.org/2021/11/4/22763646/murphy-election-schools-ciattarelli-education-mask-mandates-racism) and teachers’ unions over continued school closures. There was a rising backlash against mask mandates and the spread, in the wake of the George Floyd protests, of “anti-racist” and “equity” curriculums. Mr. Rufo, previously a little-known documentarian and activist, had introduced millions of people to the academic doctrine known as critical race theory, [*saying it had infiltrated*](https://www.newyorker.com/news/annals-of-inquiry/how-a-conservative-activist-invented-the-conflict-over-critical-race-theory) public school classrooms and workplaces around the country. New groups quickly formed to channel this swell of parental anger into political action, notably in Florida, where three mothers, one [*with ties to the state Republican Party*](https://www.mediamatters.org/critical-race-theory/unmasking-moms-liberty), formed a group called Moms for Liberty and quickly built it into a national force. After years of playing defense on schools, Republicans now had a fight that could simultaneously energize their base, win more independents and peel off skeptical Democrats — defending “parental rights” against the left-wing teachers, administrators and diversity consultants they argued were indoctrinating their children.

For Mr. DeSantis, education officials represented yet another set of “experts” who were getting it wrong. “Ron bet big against the grain on one thing, which was reopening schools,” said one former aide. “It paid off, and he was right. He learned that lesson at the same time that education became more political. And he cared more about education because Moms for Liberty suddenly existed.”

Florida, already shifting rapidly to the right, would have a starring role in the country’s new culture wars, and Mr. DeSantis was quick to grasp the political opportunity. In 2022, Florida lawmakers began drafting what its detractors would label the “Don’t Say Gay” law. Though Mr. DeSantis is now indelibly linked to the legislation, at first, “I was not fully versed in the intricacies of the Parental Rights in Education bill,” he recalled in his memoir. “Yet I saw the corporate media and the political left colluding to create and repeat a false narrative about the bill.” For critics, the bill — a complex piece of legislation banning classroom discussion or instruction about “sexual orientation or gender identity” in ways that were not “age appropriate or developmentally appropriate” — seemed designed to force gay students and teachers into the closet. Mr. DeSantis and his aides were soon defending the bill vigorously; one claimed that anyone opposing the bill “is probably a [*groomer*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/04/05/teachers-groomers-pedophiles-dont-say-gay/).” The conflict thrust Mr. DeSantis to the culture war’s front lines, and he would repeat the playbook over and over, with a blitz of hard-edge school and curriculum policies that outraged many liberals and endeared him to the grass-roots right.

At the Heart of a Movement

As he battled against critical race theory and bureaucratic elites, Mr. DeSantis became entwined with a rising movement of conservative academics and activists outside Florida.

Less known for technical policy advice than for sweeping polemics about the decay of American government and culture, Claremont scholars shared Mr. DeSantis’s belief that “American freedom required a recovering of the Founding ideals,” as Brian T. Kennedy, a former president of Claremont who remains a fellow there, put it. One of Claremont’s founders, Dr. Arnn, had taken over Hillsdale in 2000 and transformed it into both a fund-raising juggernaut and a redoubt of Christian, classically oriented liberal arts education. The upset win of Mr. Trump, whose rough brand of populism echoed Claremont’s more highbrow take on American decline, gave both institutions new prominence in Washington. His tumultuous defeat, in 2020, left the intellectuals and funders of Claremont and Hillsdale considering whether they ought to find a new horse to back.

Mr. DeSantis had cultivated them even before becoming governor. As a congressman, he sent Dr. Arnn a copy of “Dreams From Our Founding Fathers.” “I read his book, and I went, ‘Wow, this is pretty good,’” [*Dr. Arnn recalled last year*](https://freedomlibrary.hillsdale.edu/programs/national-leadership-seminar-naples-florida/challenges-to-american-liberty). “This guy can actually walk and chew gum.” Later, as Hillsdale looked to expand its network of classical charter schools, it found the DeSantis administration a willing partner. (Today, Florida has one of the largest concentrations of Hillsdale-affiliated charters in the country.) Mr. DeSantis was connected to Claremont in part through friends: Adam Laxalt, a Navy roommate and scion of a Nevada political dynasty, and Michael B. McClellan, a California lawyer, Yale classmate and former Claremont fellow. But the institute’s core political critique — that American constitutional ideals had been corrupted by the emergence of the so-called administrative state — also resonated with Mr. DeSantis. Among the only modern-day intellectual influences he has acknowledged in his recent book and public appearances is Angelo Codevilla, the late Claremont scholar and author of [*a seminal 2010 essay*](https://spectator.org/americas-ruling-class/) attacking what he called the American ruling class.

Dr. Codevilla held that class was a [*matter of culture and ideology, not money*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/03/obituaries/angelo-codevilla-dead.html). A foreign service officer turned academic, he was scathing about the ruling class’s credentialism and faith in scientific consensus, and critiqued the role of schools in perpetuating the American elite. “Today’s ruling class, from Boston to San Diego, was formed by an educational system that exposed them to the same ideas and gave them remarkably uniform guidance, as well as tastes and habits,” he wrote. “These amount to a social canon of judgments about good and evil, complete with secular sacred history, sins (against minorities and the environment) and saints.” Usefully, Dr. Codevilla’s formulation placed traditionalist intellectuals and wealthy Middle American elites on the side of the common man. “An underpaid but well-connected blogger for The New York Times who graduated from Sarah Lawrence College and supports open borders would be considered part of the ruling class,” David Azerrad, a Hillsdale professor, wrote in [*The American Spectator*](https://www.heritage.org/conservatism/commentary/america-divided-the-republican-party-theory-and-practice) in 2017. “A millionaire used-car dealer in Omaha who ‘clings to his guns and religion’ and is proudly patriotic would not.”

As Mr. DeSantis’s profile rose amid the Covid battles, both Claremont and Hillsdale lavished him with attention and praise. In Naples last year, Dr. Arnn [*introduced*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FC7xPq8ts9c) Mr. DeSantis as “one of the most important people living.” Claremont scholars describe Florida as a test bed for the new right, and at its annual gala in 2021, Claremont awarded Mr. DeSantis its statesmanship award. “Governor DeSantis is a product of elite education and yet, wonderfully, rejects its core premises,” the institute’s president, Ryan P. Williams, said by way of introduction, and he “wields the prestige that he got from that elite education on behalf of normal America — a too-rare thing.” Accepting the award, Mr. DeSantis approvingly cited Dr. Codevilla and called for battle against the ruling class. “He [*saw this probably*](https://twitter.com/UrbanAchievr/status/1452693715340906496?s=20) before anybody,” said Mr. DeSantis. “But he was right on the money.”

Lecturing the Lecturers

As his preparations for the presidential campaign accelerated this year, so did Mr. DeSantis’s crusade against the ruling class. In February, the governor and his wife, Casey, invited Mr. Williams, along with several other Claremont fellows and affiliates, to a private meeting at the Capitol in Tallahassee. The occasion was the opening of Claremont’s new Florida outpost, under the aegis of Scott Yenor, a professor at Boise State University and a Claremont fellow, now the institute’s new “senior director of state coalitions.” “Protecting Americans from infringing woke ideology is important work,” [*tweeted*](https://twitter.com/CaseyDeSantis/status/1623434042518515712?s=20) Ms. DeSantis, “and we are grateful Scott and the Claremont Institute picked Florida to continue their mission.” Later that day, the Claremont crowd joined the governor and his top aides for cocktails and dinner. Over a glass of Macallan at the Governor’s Mansion, he [*regaled*](https://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2023/02/a-day-with-desantis.php) them with the story of his takeover of New College [*the previous month*](https://apnews.com/article/desantis-new-college-florida-woke-timeline-5a5bcd78230ddd2a1adb8021fea8a755) and exchanged ideas about battling campus liberals.

The red-carpet welcome underscored Claremont’s increasingly prominent role in Mr. DeSantis’s policy apparatus. Earlier that month, Mr. DeSantis had invited another Claremont fellow to join his “[*round table*](https://www.flgov.com/2023/02/07/governor-ron-desantis-hosts-roundtable-discussion-on-legacy-media-defamation-practices/)” on the need to pass new laws against “legacy media defamation.” (The setting was a mock television studio, with Mr. DeSantis playing the role of host.) A few weeks later, in advance of his expected presidential bid, Mr. DeSantis treated his top donors and fund-raisers to a Claremont-only panel at the Four Seasons in Palm Beach. (The purpose of the panel, according to planning emails obtained by The Times, was to “define the ‘Regime’ which illegitimately rules us” and lay out a strategy to “make states more autonomous from the woke regime by ridding themselves of leftist interests.”) In March, Dr. Yenor joined Mr. DeSantis for [*yet another*](https://www.flgov.com/2023/03/13/governor-ron-desantis-hosts-roundtable-exposing-the-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-scam-in-higher-education/) round table, this one focused on the evils of diversity, equity and inclusion programs in higher education.

Dr. Yenor was already a controversial figure. In a 2021 [*speech*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EOu9Fby4pro) in Orlando, Fla., describing “the political and personal evils that flow from feminism,” he had claimed that feminist “careerism” made women “more medicated, meddlesome and quarrelsome than women need to be.” Calling modern universities “citadels of our gynecocracy,” he argued that they should stop recruiting women to medical, law and trade schools and instead focus on recruiting more men. Boise State officials [*resisted calls*](https://www.ktvb.com/article/news/local/boise-state-professor-criticized-controversial-statements/277-06cdb26c-0232-4bb4-81d9-ef29946fc8cb) to fire Dr. Yenor for his remarks, citing the principles of academic freedom and his First Amendment rights; though some students filed [*Title IX complaints*](https://lawliberty.org/inside-the-title-ix-tribunal/), he was [*ultimately cleared*](https://lawliberty.org/inside-the-title-ix-tribunal/).

On the same day he appeared with the governor in March, Dr. Yenor unveiled a report, “Florida Universities: From Woke to Professionalism,” asserting that public colleges were “gripped by D.E.I. ideology” that threatened to “tear Florida apart.” Though released by Claremont, the report was first edited by a top DeSantis aide, according to emails obtained by The Times. And though it drew little notice outside Florida, [*the report*](https://dc.claremont.org/florida-universities-from-woke-to-professionalism/) echoed Dr. Yenor’s viral speech. The state should not only defund “D.E.I.-infused” programs and classes, he recommended, but ban the collection of “race-based data” entirely, in order to hobble federal investigations into discrimination at Florida institutions. The real victims of higher-education discrimination, Dr. Yenor wrote, were men: Florida should “order civil rights investigations of all university units in which women vastly outnumber men among the student body and/or faculty — especially colleges of nursing and education — for disparate impact” and root out “any anti-male elements of curriculum.” (At New College, The Sarasota Herald-Tribune [*reported in August*](https://www.heraldtribune.com/story/news/education/2023/07/27/new-college-of-florida-pursues-student-athletes-at-academic-cost-richard-corcoran/70445567007/), DeSantis allies have boosted male enrollment in part by doling out a disproportionate share of the school’s merit scholarships to a new crop of student-athlete applicants, though that group had lower-than-average grades and test scores.) Rather than defend academic free speech, Dr. Yenor advised, Mr. DeSantis and his appointees should adopt “a more ideological bent” to rein in administrators and teachers and cultivate love of country.

Two months later, the governor signed a law [*banning*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/15/us/politics/ron-desantis-dei-bill.html) the state’s public colleges and universities from spending money on diversity programs, setting off a now-familiar cycle of negative headlines and DeSantis counterattacks. Despite the coverage, however, only portions of the [*bill*](https://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/266/BillText/er/HTML) actually addressed D.E.I. administrators. Perhaps more consequentially, the legislation imposed [*a vague but expansive speech code*](https://twitter.com/JeffreyASachs/status/1658203945066438665) on Florida public university campuses — [*prohibiting required courses*](https://www.flgov.com/2023/05/15/governor-ron-desantis-signs-legislation-to-strengthen-floridas-position-as-national-leader-in-higher-education/) “based on theories that systemic racism, sexism, oppression and privilege are inherent in the institutions of the United States and were created to maintain social, political and economic inequities.” (In an interview, Manny Diaz Jr., the state’s current education commissioner, said that “conversations about theories and the debates about these theories” should take place only in higher-level elective courses. “Why am I talking about that in a math class? In a literature class?”) In legal battles to defend Mr. DeSantis’s higher-education agenda, lawyers for his administration, far from defending academic freedom, [*have argued*](https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.flnd.442797/gov.uscourts.flnd.442797.52.0.pdf) that the concept does not even apply to public university professors: College curriculums and in-class instruction are merely “government speech,” controllable by duly elected officials. The American Association of University Professors [*likened*](https://www.aaup.org/news/floridas-stop-woke-act-must-be-rejected-court) the state’s position to “authoritarian control of education similar to what exists in North Korea, Iran, or Russia.”

In April 2022, the state’s Department of Education [*rejected*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/18/us/florida-math-textbooks-critical-race-theory.html) dozens of math textbooks because, officials claimed, they “contained prohibited topics,” including critical race theory. A Times [*review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/us/florida-rejected-textbooks.html) of about half the textbooks found little reference to race at all, let alone the more abstruse academic topic of critical race theory. In fact, only three of 125 state-appointed reviewers had found objectionable content, The Herald reported. Two had ties to Hillsdale — a civics education specialist involved in the college’s “1776 Curriculum,” which [*emphasizes a patriotic, traditional view*](https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Education/2022/0614/One-country-two-histories-What-does-it-mean-to-be-an-American) of the Founding, and a sophomore political science major who was secretary of the Hillsdale College Republicans.

Mr. Corcoran, then the education commissioner, also tapped Hillsdale to join a small group of outside institutions [*helping to revise*](https://www.abcactionnews.com/news/state/classical-education-charter-schools-on-the-rise-in-florida-with-help-from-small-conservative-michigan-college#:~:text=In%202019%2C%20Corcoran%20selected%20Hillsdale,specialized%20civics%20training%20Hillsdale%20approved.) the state’s civics standards, another signature DeSantis initiative. Both Hillsdale and Claremont personnel feature disproportionately in a series of online teacher [*training courses*](https://www.civicsexcellence.org/) subsequently created for the effort. (A Hillsdale spokeswoman said individuals involved in the training and in Florida’s textbook reviews had acted in their “private capacity,” not on behalf of the school.) In-person training last summer amounted to an indoctrination, according to [*some teachers who attended*](https://perma.cc/X8QH-FPST), into conservative views about constitutional “originalism” and the separation of church and state. Much as Mr. DeSantis had in his own writing, the training sessions sought to minimize the relevance of slavery to an understanding of the Founding: One slide stated that even those Founders “that held slaves did not defend the institution.” (Mr. DeSantis’s spokesman said it was “inane media propaganda” to suggest that the training slides minimized slavery or that the governor had ever done so.) Other slides criticized court rulings opposed by conservatives, such as a 1962 decision against school-sponsored prayer.

In a statement last year about the training, the Florida Education Department [*told*](https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/education/article262982363.html) The Herald that “every lesson we teach is based on history, not ideology or any form of indoctrination.” But Mr. Corcoran was more direct while [*speaking at Hillsdale*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVujpIator0). Education, he said then, is “100 percent ideological.”

Deepening Influence

Whatever the fate of his presidential campaign, Mr. DeSantis’s influence over Florida schools seems likely to expand. Last summer, as he ramped up his re-election bid in Florida, he became the state’s [*first governor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/24/us/politics/ron-desantis-florida-school-board.html) to campaign in local school board races, [*endorsing*](https://twitter.com/RonDeSantis/status/1562127282398969858) a slate of 30 candidates — many of them also [*backed by*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/12/03/desantis-school-boards-lgbt-race/) Moms for Liberty — “committed to the student-first principles of the DeSantis Education Agenda.” The normally sleepy, officially nonpartisan races became pitched ideological battles, awash in money. Most of his candidates won, placing new pro-DeSantis majorities in [*a half-dozen*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/12/03/desantis-school-boards-lgbt-race/) coastal boards previously controlled by more liberal members. Last spring, Republican lawmakers placed on next year’s ballot [*an amendment*](https://www.wcjb.com/2023/04/19/partisan-school-board-elections-go-ballot-florida/) to the state constitution that would make such elections formally partisan. Mr. DeSantis, like Republicans [*elsewhere in the country*](https://www.politico.com/news/2021/12/29/republicans-education-wars-school-board-races-526053), supports [*such efforts*](https://thenationaldesk.com/news/americas-news-now/desantis-proposes-political-party-affiliation-for-florida-school-board-candidates-florida-rond-crisis-classroom-teacher-bill-rights-democrat-republican), though they defy a long American tradition of nonpartisan public education governance.

One of the new Republican-majority boards is in Pinellas County, where Mr. DeSantis grew up and where he began his climb into the American elite. In January, Pinellas school district officials yanked Toni Morrison’s classic novel “The Bluest Eye” from high schools after a [*parent complained*](https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/2023/03/27/removal-ruby-bridges-film-pinellas-school-sparks-outrage/) about a two-page rape scene. (In a YouTube video, [*the parent*](https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/2023/01/25/pinellas-schools-remove-book-by-prize-winning-author-toni-morrison/), who herself taught at a private Christian school, described Pinellas schools as “Marxist indoctrination camps.”) The officials cited new state guidelines, [*crafted with input*](https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/2022/12/14/critics-allege-conservative-slant-florida-book-panel-ends-its-work/) from Moms for Liberty volunteers, to “err on the side of caution” when [*evaluating*](https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/2023/03/27/removal-ruby-bridges-film-pinellas-school-sparks-outrage/) what books to make available to schoolchildren. Soon after, an administrator blocked one local elementary school from showing the Disney film “Ruby Bridges,” about the 6-year-old Black girl who integrated New Orleans schools in the 1960s. The removal came after a different mother, who had already declined permission for her daughter to see the movie in class, [*demanded that no one else’s children*](https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/2023/03/27/removal-ruby-bridges-film-pinellas-school-sparks-outrage/) be allowed to see it.

Both decisions were later reversed — [*months later*](https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/2023/04/18/pinellas-toni-morrison-bluest-eye-book-ban/), in the case of Ms. Morrison&#39;s novel. “Activists file blanket complaints against hundreds of books, and in many school districts, that triggers the books’ automatic removal pending review. And very often, those reviews can take months to complete, effectively banning the book in the meanwhile,” said Jeffrey Sachs, a scholar at Acadia University in Nova Scotia who [*studies*](https://pen.org/these-4-florida-bills-censor-classroom-subjects-and-ideas/) academic speech policies. Mr. Diaz disputed that the new state policy was to blame for such delays. “I think the onus is on the district to make that process speedy,” he said.

Elements of Mr. DeSantis’s education policies have been blocked in court, and [*others*](https://wslr.org/new-college-faculty-union-joins-statewide-lawsuit-against-senate-bill-266/) remain under [*legal*](https://www.heraldtribune.com/story/news/education/2023/07/27/new-college-of-florida-pursues-student-athletes-at-academic-cost-richard-corcoran/70445567007/) [*challenge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/20/books/book-bans-florida-tango-makes-three.html) as his presidential campaign unfolds. But in counties like Pinellas, his policies and rhetoric have already had what his critics believe is their intended effect. “Before the pandemic, I felt like what I call the ‘swirl of Tallahassee’ just lived up there,” said Laura Hine, a Pinellas school board member who is not registered with either party and is among the board candidates Mr. DeSantis’s operation has [*targeted*](https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/2023/02/22/desantis-targets-4-tampa-bay-area-school-board-members-2024-election/) for defeat in next year’s elections. “The weaponization of political rhetoric around education, and the associated policies, have now reached our classroom teachers.”

Two years ago, a Pinellas parent named Renee Chiea — also [*warning*](https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/2022/01/18/pinellas-teacher-accused-of-marxist-lessons-says-his-focus-is-us-history/) of “Marxist indoctrination” in county schools — filed a complaint against Brandt Robinson, a teacher at Dunedin High School. She objected to parts of the syllabus Mr. Robinson had distributed to his class on African-American history, which her son had briefly enrolled in. In a written complaint, Ms. Chiea argued that one book Mr. Robinson planned to assign, “Creating Black Americans: African-American History and Its Meanings, 1619 to the Present,” by the Princeton historian Nell Irvin Painter, distorted history by painting America as “inherently racist” — violating [*new state rules*](https://wusfnews.wusf.usf.edu/education/2021-06-10/florida-education-board-bans-critical-race-theory-1619-project-in-schools), passed earlier that year at Mr. DeSantis’s urging, [*banning*](https://apnews.com/article/florida-race-and-ethnicity-government-and-politics-education-74d0af6c52c0009ec3fa3ee9955b0a8d#:~:text=June%2010%2C%202021-,TALLAHASSEE%2C%20Fla.,could%20%E2%80%9Cdistort%20historical%20events.%E2%80%9D) from classrooms any material that espoused the idea “that racism is embedded in American society and its legal systems.” In an email to The Times, Ms. Chiea, an activist with the Pinellas chapter of Moms for Liberty, also argued that the book was based on “the same theories” as “The 1619 Project,” a Times examination of the legacy of slavery, which Florida had also banned from classrooms.

A review panel ultimately [*rejected*](https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/2022/01/18/pinellas-teacher-accused-of-marxist-lessons-says-his-focus-is-us-history/) her complaint. “I don’t stop my class and ask my white kids, ‘Hey, how are you feeling?’ What kind of teacher would do that?” Mr. Robinson said. “It’s not my job to tell you what to think. It’s to help you become a better thinker.” People identifying themselves as Moms for Liberty activists began leaving comments on Mr. Robinson’s TikTok account, where he posts daily videos about history. In January, someone reported Mr. Robinson for a TikTok mentioning that he had taught students in his Dunedin sociology class about the Black thinker W.E.B. Du Bois and the concept of “double consciousness” — how racism forced Black Americans to always imagine how they might appear through white people’s eyes.

According to Mr. Robinson, whoever reported him claimed that he was indoctrinating his students. “Some of the people who make these assertions are just grossly undereducated. In their minds, critical race theory is all kinds of things,” he said.

Ms. Chiea said she felt that the school district had mishandled her own complaint against his course, and believed that Mr. Robinson was still trying to circumvent Florida’s new rules. “I am positive he has not changed the content of what he teaches in his class,” she said. “And until there is some honesty and transparency in that, it will remain under scrutiny by me.”

Julie Tate contributed research.

Julie Tate contributed research.

PHOTOS: Education is a battleground for Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE BUGLEWICZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1); Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida spoke in June to Moms for Liberty, a conservative group that has fought against teaching liberal ideas about race and gender in public schools. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); As an undergrad at Yale, Mr. DeSantis quickly fit in on the baseball team, where he was known to all as “D.” He was elected captain in his senior year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY YALE ATHLETICS); Mr. DeSantis majored in history, enrolling in courses on the culture and politics of the Founders, and studying the work of Gordon Wood. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER CAPOZZIELLO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17); Mr. DeSantis joined the Navy after attending Harvard, serving as a military prosecutor. (PHOTOGRAPH BY US NAVY); Hillsdale College, a small Christian liberal arts school in southern Michigan that has become an academic hub of the Trump-era right. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN PROCTOR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18); Then came Covid. At first, Mr. DeSanMr. DeSantis signing the Parental Rights in Education bill, a law last year that banned classroom discussions of gender identity and sexual orientation deemed as not being age-appropriate. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUGLAS R. CLIFFORD/TAMPA BAY TIMES, VIA AP) (A18-A19); A protest at New College, a left-leaning liberal arts school that Mr. DeSantis took over and filled with conservative leadership. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TODD ANDERSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Signs for Mr. DeSantis in Osceola, Iowa. He has molded his campaign around a conflict against what he calls the country’s “ruling class.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER SMITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A19) This article appeared in print on page A1, A17, A18, A19.

**Load-Date:** August 27, 2023

**End of Document**



[***‘Museum Town’ Review: A Love Letter to Mass MoCA***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61J5-FJK1-DXY4-X51M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 17, 2020 Thursday 08:39 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 331 words

**Byline:** Lovia Gyarkye

**Highlight:** This documentary looks at how a contemporary art museum in Western Massachusetts transformed a struggling small town.

**Body**

This documentary looks at how a contemporary art museum in Western Massachusetts transformed a struggling small town.

At its heart, the documentary “Museum Town,” is a love letter — to the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, to artistic experimentation and to North Adams, the struggling factory town where the institution is situated.

The film’s main thread follows the staff of [*Mass MoCA*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/21/arts/mass-moca-artists.html) as they prepare for “Until,” a colossal exhibition by [*the Black sculptor Nick Cave*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/10/15/t-magazine/nick-cave-artist.html) that includes an eclectic mix of found materials like ceramic birds and 10 miles of crystals. The project, which was on display from October 2016 to September 2017, perfectly encapsulates Mass MoCA’s mission: to help contemporary artists realize their wildest dreams and to curate in ways not dictated by the art market. Between scenes of Cave approving different ceramic trinkets and the staff maneuvering the moving pieces of the exhibition are two other stories, narrated by Meryl Streep: The history of Mass MoCA’s uneven development and the story of how North Adams went from a bustling ***working-class*** factory town to a divested one.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/o64QL-NNxxg)]

The film was directed by Jennifer Trainer, who was also the first director of development at the museum, and her adoration for Mass MoCA is obvious at every turn. This isn’t always bad, but at times, one wishes the documentary had more distance from its subject. Interesting conversations about gentrification as a means to revitalization and who a museum serves (the public, the artist, both?) are quickly papered over, and the focus on local residents’ indifference toward contemporary art begins to feel gimmicky. But for those even mildly curious about the story of one of the country’s largest visual and performing arts spaces, “Museum Town” is worth watching.

Museum Town

Not rated. Running time: 1 hour 16 minutes. [*Watch through virtual cinemas.*](https://www.museumtownmovie.com/)

PHOTO: The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art in “Museum Town.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY KINO LORBER)

**Load-Date:** October 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Little Falls, N.J.: A Low-Key Suburb Less Than 20 Miles From Manhattan; Living in***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:674N-7DK1-JBG3-6325-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 21, 2022 Wednesday 22:23 EST

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**Section:** REALESTATE

**Length:** 1578 words

**Byline:** Jill P. Capuzzo

**Highlight:** The Passaic County township attracts those seeking more affordable homes with easy city access. (And yes, an episode of ‘The Sopranos’ was shot there.)

**Body**

The Passaic County township attracts those seeking more affordable homes with easy city access. (And yes, an episode of ‘The Sopranos’ was shot there.)

After years of renting apartments in Jersey City and Union City, N.J., Erica and Tim Walsh decided they were ready to start a family — and that meant buying a house in the suburbs.

They set their sights on Montclair, a township in Essex County with an urban vibe that has long attracted city dwellers. It wasn’t long, however, before they came to the conclusion that, given Montclair’s property values, being in the general vicinity was good enough. That’s when they decided to focus on neighboring Little Falls instead.

“We had always heard a lot about Montclair, with its cool mix of restaurants and bars, but it was clear we couldn’t afford Montclair,” said Ms. Walsh, 33, a product manager for a finance company.

In March of 2021, the couple bought a new four-bedroom raised ranch house in Little Falls for $850,000. Two months later, they were expecting their daughter, Lucie, now 9 months old.

“We finally felt we had room to breathe,” she said, attributing the growth of their family in part to their move to Little Falls, where they have settled in happily. “We really love it here. We’ve had a chance to explore a lot of the restaurants and are becoming kind of regulars.”

Unlike its glitzier neighbor, Little Falls maintains a modest profile, said Ray Damiano, 70, a real estate broker with Premier Properties and a longtime resident, who describes the township as a ***working-class***, family-oriented place. “People generally live below their means,” he said. “They don’t have the flashiest houses.”

Many of the township’s 13,360 residents have deep roots there, said his son, James Damiano, who was elected mayor in 2016 at the age of 30: “If you haven’t lived here for many generations, you’re brand-new.”

But in recent years, more young couples like the Walshes have discovered this low-key Passaic County township 16 miles west of Manhattan. In August, Yuliya Krol and Jason Green moved from their rental apartment in Brooklyn into a 1950s three-bedroom ranch house in Little Falls that they bought for $600,000, after being outbid on a number of other houses in the area.

“Little Falls is nice and quiet, but you can easily drive to more populated places,” said Ms. Krol, 32, who works in sales for a technology company. “The community is so nice. Everyone is so friendly — you get the feeling that they really enjoy living and working here.”

Both couples were introduced to Little Falls by Maggie Sherman D’Aquila, a real estate agent with Compass. Ms. Sherman D’Aquila, now 43, moved to Little Falls from Park Slope, Brooklyn, five years ago, with her husband, Rob D’Aquila, a chiropractor, and their son, Talon, paying $495,000 for a four-bedroom ranch house with sunset views. (Talon is now 6 and has a younger brother, Hunter, 3.)

“I said at the time, ‘There’s no way I’m moving to New Jersey,’” she said. “New Yorkers have this unrealistic view of New Jersey, thinking it’s all I-95 or ‘The Sopranos,’ and I did, too. Now all I do is try to get people to cross the Hudson and come to the greener pastures of the Garden State.”

What You’ll Find

As it happens, a scene from the HBO series “The Sopranos” was shot in a deli in Little Falls. The township was also home to the teenage Jonas Brothers, who wrote some of their early songs while living in a three-bedroom house in the Great Notch section.

The 2.87-square-mile township is divided into three sections: the easternmost Great Notch area, where larger homes sit on higher ground; the center of the township, where older residential streets radiate out from the commercial district; and the Singac section, where mostly modest homes and bungalows sit along curved roads that abut the Passaic River.

Much of the low-lying Singac area is in a designated flood zone. In recent years, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has bought and razed 139 homes that were subject to repeated flooding, said Mr. Damiano, the mayor, leaving what he described as a “jack-o’lantern-style” look in the neighborhood, with permanently empty lots next to existing houses.

Eager to keep property taxes down, he is upset over the loss of tax ratables from those missing homes, but he is more frustrated by the tax-exempt status of the large and growing Montclair State University. Despite being named for the neighboring township, the school straddles the two communities — and more than 80 percent of its 252-acre campus is in Little Falls.

As a state institution, all of its land and buildings are exempt from local taxation, said Andrew Mees, the university’s media relations director. With its last large property acquisition in Little Falls in 2012, he said, the school gave Little Falls a payment in lieu of taxes over the next five years totaling $882,731.

Near the center of the township, there are a number of condominium and rental apartment complexes, from The Mill at Little Falls, a condominium with about 320 units in a converted carpet mill along the Passaic River, to The Parke at Little Falls, a new townhouse development being built by Lennar.

What You’ll Pay

As of mid-December, there were 23 properties on the market in Little Falls, including 11 single family homes, seven condominiums, two multifamily homes and three lots.

The highest priced home was a five-bedroom, three-and-a-half-bathroom house on 0.56 acres, built in 2002 and listed for $1.2 million, with annual taxes of $22,975; the lowest priced was a one-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment listed for $219,000, with taxes of $4,072 annually.

Prices have been fairly steady for the past several years. This year, through Dec. 12, 2022, 153 homes sold for an average price of $434,228, according to information from the Garden State Multiple Listing Service. During the same period in 2021, 147 homes sold for an average price of $424,611. And in 2020, 140 homes sold for an average price of $413,554. (That represents a slight uptick from before the pandemic: In 2019, 139 homes sold for an average price of $388,153.)

The Vibe

Small, one-of-a-kind shops and restaurants line East Main Street, and include popular spots like Ethan and the Bean coffee shop and A Taco Affair. The commercial center is currently getting its first face-lift in more than 50 years, with new lighting and curb upgrades.

Weekends are busy at the recently refurbished recreation center, where new turf football fields sit alongside pickleball, tennis and basketball courts and an indoor soccer center. At the heart of the complex is The Shack, an open-air restaurant where parents can take a break from watching their children’s games and grab a burger.

Another popular gathering spot is Wilmore Park. Along with its war memorials and buried time capsule, the park is the site of summer concerts, a farmers’ market and holiday celebrations.

The Schools

Public school students in prekindergarten through second grade attend Little Falls School No. 2, while those in third and fourth grades attend School No. 3 and those in fifth through eighth grade attend School No. 1.

In high school, Little Falls students join those from neighboring Totowa and Woodland Park at Passaic Valley Regional High School, in Little Falls. The school has just over 1,000 students and offers 13 Advanced Placement courses, 30 honors courses and 19 dual enrollment courses, where students can earn credits at local colleges and universities. In 2020-21, students’ average SAT scores were 517 in reading and writing and 515 in math, compared with state averages of 557 and 560.

Private schools in the area include Pioneer Academy in Wayne, N.J., for students in prekindergarten through 12th grade, and Monarch Montessori School, in Little Falls, for children from six weeks old to those in fourth grade.

The Commute

Little Falls has two New Jersey Transit train stations: one near the center of the township and the other on the Montclair State University campus. The trip to Penn Station in Manhattan from the township station takes a little over an hour and includes a transfer in Newark; tickets are $9.25 one way or $270 for a monthly pass. The trip to Penn Station from Montclair State takes 47 to 57 minutes, with some direct train options; tickets are $7.75 one way or $227 a month.

New Jersey Transit bus No. 191 from Main Street to Port Authority Bus Terminal in Manhattan takes about 50 minutes and costs $7 one way or $199 for a monthly pass. The No. 193 bus from Willowbrook Mall, in Wayne, N.J., takes 33 minutes to reach the Port Authority and costs $8 one way or $235 a month.

The History

Little Falls was the central site for building the Morris Canal in the 1820s. Hundreds of workers descended on the township to dig the waterway trench and quarry Little Falls brownstone for the retaining walls. When the canal opened in 1829, canalboats powered by mules took five days to complete the 102-mile journey, bringing coal and goods from the Delaware River to Newark Bay. In 1925, when it was replaced by train transport, the canal was drained and closed. The portion running through Little Falls is now a nature preserve.

For weekly email updates on residential real estate news, [*sign up here*](http://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/realestate/).

PHOTO: Main Street and Paterson Avenue in Little Falls, N.J. The town “is nice and quiet, but you can easily drive to more populated places,” said Yuliya Krol, a resident. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page RE5.

**Load-Date:** December 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Riddle of Riley Keough***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6361-DY21-DXY4-X3JK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 20, 2021 Tuesday 11:05 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1665 words

**Byline:** Kyle Buchanan

**Highlight:** The “Zola” actress has a knack for inhabiting ***working-class*** characters who feel real, even though her own family history is as outrageous as it gets.

**Body**

The “Zola” actress has a knack for inhabiting ***working-class*** characters who feel real, even though her own family history is as outrageous as it gets.

Most actresses play to you. When they’re thinking or feeling something, you know exactly what that thing is. But Riley Keough is a little more elusive.

Whether she’s weighing matters of money and sex in “[*The Girlfriend Experience*](https://www.starz.com/us/en/series/the-girlfriend-experience/25586)” or staring down a romantic rival in “[*American Honey*](https://www.starz.com/us/en/series/the-girlfriend-experience/25586),” Keough, 32, certainly looks like a star — it helps that she inherited ice-blue eyes and a chin curved like a question mark from her grandfather Elvis Presley — even though her screen presence remains unusually impassive and mysterious. What are Keough’s characters thinking? You can never quite tell.

This isn’t a bad thing. Instead, it’s the primary source of her allure: That gap between what you don’t know but want to find out is what’s so beguiling. And then, as you scan Keough’s face for flickers of intention and emotion, you realize you’re leaning in.

“She’s one of those actors who so effortlessly lands in the feet of her character that it almost seems like it isn’t acting,” said the director [*Janicza Bravo*](https://www.starz.com/us/en/series/the-girlfriend-experience/25586), who pursued Keough to play Stefani, an exotic dancer with murky intentions, for her raucous new comedy “[*Zola*](https://www.starz.com/us/en/series/the-girlfriend-experience/25586).” You’re compelled by Stefani even when you don’t fully trust her, and Bravo knew Keough could play that ambiguity to the hilt.

“That morsel, that taste, that juice, that flavor — I wanted that,” Bravo said.

In late 2018, the “Zola” script was sent to Keough, and a meeting was set at the starry, storied Chateau Marmont, in Hollywood. Bravo got there first and while she waited, a woman came by her table, said hello and began to hover. The Chateau boasted a high level of celebrity density in its prepandemic heyday but every so often, a civilian still got through. And this one wasn’t leaving.

Though Bravo nodded back, she was busy scanning the room for her would-be star. But this normie, this noncelebrity, this interloper kept standing by her table like she expected something.

And then she said, “I’m Riley.”

Bravo apologized profusely to Keough that day, and now she laughs about it. “I had this idea of what I thought she was going to be like — I believed her to be a larger-than-life person — and what landed in front of me was someone with a good deal of ease,” Bravo said. “I’m maybe dancing around it, but I didn’t expect her to be normal.”

Me neither. When I met Keough in mid-June at the home of a friend in Los Angeles, I was struck by her calm, undisturbed energy — something I’ve never sensed in even the most wellness-obsessed stars. With Keough, there is no eagerness to please, no need to impress or to have all eyes on her. You feel that you’re simply talking to and observing a normal person.

So how does she hold on to that lack of self-consciousness in Hollywood? “I have an ability that’s really hard in this industry to be kind of like, ‘Meh,’” Keough told me, shrugging. “I don’t take things too seriously.”

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.starz.com/us/en/series/the-girlfriend-experience/25586)]

“Zola,” based on a notorious Twitter thread, is about people who use social media as an advertisement, but Keough prefers using it to puncture her own celebrity: Though she has starred in a few films for the hot studio A24, Keough [*hopped on her Instagram last year*](https://www.starz.com/us/en/series/the-girlfriend-experience/25586) to breezily rattle off all the A24 movies she failed to book, including “Uncut Gems,” “Spring Breakers” and “The Spectacular Now.”

Directors of those films messaged Keough to offer apologies, but the rejections hadn’t bothered her much to begin with. “I don’t care if I fail,” she said. “I have this attitude of, ‘Well, then I’ll just do better.’” And besides, there were bigger quandaries to spend that energy on.

“I’ve lived my whole life in a sort of existential crisis,” she told me matter-of-factly, tucking strands of auburn hair behind her ear. “The minute I got to Earth, I was like, ‘What am I doing here? Why is everyone just acting like this is normal?’”

Of course, Keough’s childhood was far from ordinary: When she was about 5, her mother Lisa Marie Presley split from her musician father, Danny Keough, and married Michael Jackson. One parent provided access to moneyed fortresses like Graceland and Neverland, while the other lived more modestly, in trailer parks with mattresses on the floor.

Keough had no qualms about visiting her father; once, [*she even told him*](https://www.starz.com/us/en/series/the-girlfriend-experience/25586), “When I grow up, I want to be poor like you.” She hadn’t known then how offensive her remark was, but that bifurcated childhood with her brother, Benjamin, would come in handy in her 20s, when Keough pursued work as an actress: She had amassed enough authenticity to play regular people as well as enough privilege to live her life without much worry.

And blasé suits her: In movies like “American Honey” and “[*Logan Lucky*](https://www.starz.com/us/en/series/the-girlfriend-experience/25586),” about hustlers just trying to get by, her characters feel real and lived-in rather than condescended to. Or, as a recent [*tweet*](https://www.starz.com/us/en/series/the-girlfriend-experience/25586) put it, “Riley Keough understands the white ***working class*** way better than J.D. Vance.” Was it glib to compare her to the “Hillbilly Elegy” author turned struggling [*Senate candidate*](https://www.starz.com/us/en/series/the-girlfriend-experience/25586)? Perhaps, but the tweet still got more than 1,000 likes: Keough’s brand is strong.

The Florida-set “Zola” at first appeared to be cut from that same cloth: Stefani is a Southerner and a sex worker, two types Keough has played plenty of in the past. Still, the actress wanted to use this opportunity to push things a little further. “I didn’t want it to be ‘American Honey,’ this really naturalistic, understated performance,” Keough said. “When you do something well, people want it again and then you kind of get stuck.”

Bravo wanted her to go big, too. Adorned in blond cornrows and hoop earrings, Stefani shrieks and cajoles in a blaccent so pronounced that even Iggy Azalea might blush. At first, when Keough was trying to find Stefani’s voice, she would text recordings to Bravo: “And Janicza was always like, ‘More, more.’ I was like, ‘OK, if you say so!’”

The movie’s Black heroine, Zola ([*Taylour Paige*](https://www.starz.com/us/en/series/the-girlfriend-experience/25586)), can hardly believe the vibe that Stefani is putting down, and in an era when white appropriation of Black culture has become a hot topic, audiences might find themselves shocked by Stefani, too. “Riley said, ‘Am I going to get canceled for this?’” Bravo recalled. “But what she’s playing only lands if you’re going to the extreme. If you’re at all shying away from what it is, it can look like an apology.”

The result is the polar opposite of Keough’s more tamped-down performances: Stefani is outrageous, over the line and gut-bustingly funny, even if Keough can sense that some viewers don’t know what do with her.

“People are like, ‘Am I allowed to laugh? Am I a bad person?’” she said. “I love that. I’m a little bit of a troll in my heart, and I think I bring that into my work.” And if you have trouble sussing out Stefani’s intentions as she goads Zola into a road trip that quickly turns dangerous, that’s by design.

“You don’t know if the whole thing’s a manipulation, even in her moments of being vulnerable,” Keough said. “That’s why I love playing these characters that would seem like the bad guy. It’s so much more fun to make people have moments with those characters where you’re like, ‘I feel bad for her.’ Or, ‘I’m having fun with her. I’d go with her, too.’”

“Zola” premiered in January 2020 at the Sundance Film Festival, and Keough was excited for it to come out that summer: She’s always been kind of a searcher, and if the movie led to new and more interesting work in comedies, maybe those roles would help her to understand herself better. Then the pandemic scuttled those plans, and as Keough was adjusting to months off from work, her younger brother, Benjamin, killed himself in July 2020.

What followed was “a year of feeling like I was thrown into the ocean and couldn’t swim,” Keough said. “The first four or five months, I couldn’t get out of bed. I was totally debilitated. I couldn’t talk for two weeks.”

Even now, Keough finds the tragedy hard to accept. “It’s very complicated for our minds to put that somewhere because it’s so outrageous,” she said. “If I’m going through a breakup, I know what to do with that and where to file it in my mind, but suicide of your brother? Where do you put that? How does that integrate? It just doesn’t.”

Keough got through it with the help of her friends and her husband, Ben Smith-Petersen, a stuntman, but first she laid down some ground rules: “I wanted to make sure that I was feeling everything and I wasn’t running from anything,” she said. To that end, Keough recently became a death doula. Instead of helping to facilitate a birth, she guides people through the issues that arise during the final portion of their lives.

“That’s really what’s helped me, being able to put myself in a position of service,” she said. “If I can help other people, maybe I can find some way to help myself.”

And she has lately found things to treasure about her grief, too, though she admits that if someone had told her to expect a silver lining shortly after Benjamin died, she probably would have replied with expletives. “But there’s this sense of the fragility of life and how every moment matters to me now,” Keough said.

It’s her new normal, one she’s still getting used to: Maybe you’re never quite certain where Keough stands because until recently, she hadn’t been all that sure herself. It almost couldn’t be helped with a childhood that whiplashed between two extremes. But now, at 32, she’s finally figured something out.

“I think growing up, I was always searching for answers,” she said. “Now I know that everything’s inside me. All you can do is surrender and be present for the experience.”

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MAGGIE SHANNON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C1); Top, Riley Keough in Los Angeles. Above, Keough with Taylour Paige in “Zola.” The comedy movie, which is based on a Twitter thread, premiered in January 2020 at the Sundance Film Festival. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAGGIE SHANNON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ANNA KOORIS/A24) (C2)

**Load-Date:** July 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Tuesday’s vote shows Adams won over Black and Latino voters.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6308-4NJ1-JBG3-627X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 23, 2021 Wednesday 15:30 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 420 words

**Byline:** Jeffery C. Mays

**Highlight:** Early results show he captured much of the vote in Harlem and the Bronx, as well as sections of Brooklyn and Queens.

**Body**

Early results show he captured much of the vote in Harlem and the Bronx, as well as sections of Brooklyn and Queens.

During the long race for the Democratic nomination for mayor, there were certain Black and Latino neighborhoods that Eric Adams, [*the leader after the first round*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/06/22/nyregion/nyc-primary-election#eric-adams-leads-in-initial-tally-calling-it-a-win-for-the-little-guy) of vote-counting, returned to time and again.

More than any other candidate, Mr. Adams built his coalition on a foundation of Black and Latino voters, and the strong support of labor unions. A former police captain, he [*focused on public safety*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/06/22/nyregion/nyc-primary-election#eric-adams-leads-in-initial-tally-calling-it-a-win-for-the-little-guy) and on championing the concerns of ***working-class*** New Yorkers, while promising to tackle inequality in education, housing and other areas.

“The little guy won,” he said at his primary night party. Mr. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, leads Maya Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio, and Kathryn Garcia, the former sanitation commissioner, in the first round of ranked-choice balloting.

On Sunday, one of the last full days of campaigning, Mr. Adams, 60, appeared at a Black Episcopal Church in Brooklyn in the morning, in Upper Manhattan for a rally with Latino supporters after that, and, at the end of the day, at the scene of a recent shooting in the Bronx that [*endangered two children’s lives*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/06/22/nyregion/nyc-primary-election#eric-adams-leads-in-initial-tally-calling-it-a-win-for-the-little-guy). It was his second trip to the area in 24 hours.

The strategy paid off. [*Mr. Adams, who is Black, won in huge*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/06/22/nyregion/nyc-primary-election#eric-adams-leads-in-initial-tally-calling-it-a-win-for-the-little-guy)sections of the Bronx, including neighborhoods like Tremont and University Heights. In Brooklyn, he won close to 70 percent of first-choice votes in many Assembly districts in East New York and Canarsie.

He also won in parts of Queens dominated by middle-class Black families, like Cambria Heights and Springfield Gardens. And while Kathryn Garcia, the former sanitation commissioner, dominated in much of Manhattan, Mr. Adams won in large swaths of Harlem.

Patricia Linen, 62, a paraprofessional who works in the New York City schools, stopped to greet Mr. Adams at a rally in Washington Heights on Primary Day. She said she had voted for him because he sent her masks, gloves and hand sanitizer during the pandemic while she was contending with a cancer diagnosis.

“I’m excited about him being mayor because he has been through what my sons have been through,” said Ms. Linen, who is Black. “We’d have someone who understands us and knows us.”

PHOTO: Eric Adams campaigned heavily in Black and Latino neighborhoods, and it helped him gain an early lead in the race for the Democratic nomination for mayor. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Blesener for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Fed's preferred inflation gauge probably popped again last month.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64C7-CR31-JBG3-6527-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 23, 2021 Thursday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk

**Length:** 668 words

**Byline:** By Jeanna Smialek

**Body**

The Personal Consumption Expenditures index is expected to confirm what other inflation measures have shown: Prices are coming in hot.

Federal Reserve policymakers are likely to finish a year that has been colored by surprisingly high inflation with yet more bad news: Their preferred price measure could touch its highest level since 1982 when the latest reading is published on Thursday morning.

The Personal Consumption Expenditures price index, which is the indicator that the Fed officially targets when it aims for 2 percent annual inflation on average over time, is expected to have climbed by 5.7 percent in November from a year earlier, economists surveyed by Bloomberg estimate. That would be the fastest pace of increase in nearly 40 years.

Part of the jump will be caused by gasoline prices, which were up sharply in November, and have moderated this month. But a so-called ''core'' index that excludes food and fuel prices is also expected to increase sharply, to 4.5 percent.

Rapidly rising prices are lasting longer than policymakers had hoped, and they have become broader in recent months. Earlier this year, big price increases were largely limited to goods that were in short supply as demand surged and as overtaxed shipping lines struggled to keep up. More recently, they have spread into categories like rent -- which can be more long-lasting.

Fed officials are tasked with keeping inflation moderate and helping the country achieve full employment, and they have grown increasingly worried about the surge in prices. This month they pivoted on policy, speeding up plans to cut back on economic support and preparing to raise interest rates early next year if that proves necessary. Higher interest rates can weaken demand for everything from homes to cars, helping to slow down the economy and restrain inflation.

The big question for officials at the central bank -- and in the Biden administration -- is what will come next. With the Omicron variant of the coronavirus surging around the world, it is unlikely that tangled supply chains will get back to normal quickly. At the same time, rising housing costs could keep inflation high even as some of the most painful trends of 2021, including a surge in used-car prices tied to a computer chip shortage, moderate.

Fed officials do expect inflation to ease to 2.6 percent by the end of next year, their most recent economic forecasts showed, but that would remain substantially above their 2 percent goal. None of the Fed's 18 top officials expect inflation to drop below 2 percent next year. High inflation also is sapping consumer confidence as people face down rising costs, even at a time when job openings far exceed available workers and wages are rising.

''It's a devastating thing for people who are ***working class*** and middle-class,'' President Biden said at the White House on Tuesday, adding: ''It really hurts.''

The administration is trying to pull what levers it can -- increasing the supply of oil and gas and trying to keep ports open longer in an effort to clear shipping backlogs.

But costs also are increasing because households have saved a lot after repeated government stimulus checks and months locked at home. People are spending voraciously, giving companies the power to raise prices without losing customers.

It is the Fed's job to lean against those demand-tied inflation pressures.

''While the drivers of higher inflation have been predominantly connected to the dislocations caused by the pandemic, price increases have now spread to a broader range of goods and services,'' Jerome H. Powell, the Fed chair, said at a news conference last week. He suggested that if prices remain uncomfortably high, the Fed will do more to keep them under control.

''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,'' Mr. Powell said. ''We are committed to our price stability goal.''

[*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: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Kevin Lamarque/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 23, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64PV-X621-JBG3-6523-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 6, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 755 words

**Body**

Capping Off a Good Story

To the Editor:

Brian Blomerth's back-page Sketchbook, ''The Mushroom Painter'' (Jan. 23), deserves a happy ending. Although Jean-Henri Fabre worried, as noted by Blomerth, about the future of his paintings of mushrooms, they are safe and well cared for at the Harmas de Fabre museum -- Fabre's longtime home in Sérignan-du-Comtat, France, which is now part of the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, and is operated as a museum, garden and study center. The paintings were also published as a limited-edition book in 1991 as ''Les Champignons de Jean-Henri Fabre.'' Neither rats nor a grandnephew has attacked these treasures, thanks to the work of his family and the museum.

Donald H. PfisterCambridge, Mass.

The writer is the Asa Gray research professor of systematic botany at Harvard University.

Crossed Paths

To the Editor:

Regarding Troy Jollimore's review of ''Jim Harrison: Complete Poems'' (Jan. 16): For many years, beginning 40 years ago, we stayed at a resort on Lake Michigan in the Leelanau Peninsula owned by the Jolliffe family and called the Jolli-Lodge. One day, Mrs. Jolliffe was showing me around the main house, built for wealthy Chicago folks in the 1920s. When she opened the door to one bedroom, still furnished as the original owners had left it, I saw a huge bottle of Gallo wine on the rickety desk. Mrs. Jolliffe said: ''Oh, that's Jim Harrison's. He comes here to write when he needs some quiet and privacy.'' I almost genuflected in the doorway but restrained myself. I knew Harrison was living on the peninsula but this was the closest I ever got to a sighting despite many visits to the area. (We also have a poster created by the Leelanau Cellars with a bit of Harrison's poetry in the guest bathroom.)

Judith K. Simonson Grand Rapids, Mich.

An Uncomfortable Admission

To the Editor:

Your review of Kendra James's ''Admissions'' (Jan. 23) brought back a flood of memories, including tragic ones. I'm white, but I too experienced the paradox of being an outsider in the insular world of an elite boarding school. Fifty years ago, I was a scholarship student at the Lawrenceville School, a prep school with classes of 12, teachers with Ivy League doctorates, and amenities like Black men serving food to white boys whose surnames revealed which corporation their families owned.

To get there, I dragged a trunk that weighed as much as I did through New York's Port Authority Terminal. I'll never forget the intellectual excitement I felt as a Yale-educated teacher had me reading and writing about books like ''A Clockwork Orange.'' I will also never forget a school official's failure to do simple, obvious things when I struggled emotionally in my second year. My ***working-class*** background made me an outsider. Both my parents suffered from severe mental illness, putting me even more at risk than adolescent boys in a low-supervision setting already are.

Reading the review of Kendra James's memoir was painful, even 50 years after my own experience. Eye-popping endowments create the conditions for superb education. Efforts to create racial and class diversity are laudable. But when elite schools bring outsiders to what can be a Lewis Carroll-novel scale of cultural change, they have a duty to reach those students as the young, vulnerable humans they are. For me, that didn't happen.

David A. ScottColumbus, Ohio

Slow Down

To the Editor:

In her By the Book interview (Jan. 16), Annie Leibovitz reports that Susan Sontag once told her that if she read as slowly as Leibovitz did, she wouldn't read anything. Some adults are entirely capable of shaming children about their reading, but this is proof that anybody, regardless of age, can be subjected to this kind of patronizing remark. Maybe Sontag ''inhaled books,'' but I suspect it's likely that Leibovitz, instead of inhaling books, savors them, and ultimately derives more from her reading than people who maintain an endless reading list, and who confuse book-consumption rate with comprehension.

David EnglishActon, Mass.

[*books@nytimes.comThe*](mailto:books@nytimes.comThe) 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/2022/02/04/books/review/mushroom-paintings-reading-speeds-and-other-letters-to-the-editor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/04/books/review/mushroom-paintings-reading-speeds-and-other-letters-to-the-editor.html)

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2022

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[***The Joys of Walking; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6124-0N21-DXY4-X1C2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 12, 2020 Monday 00:25 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 284 words

**Highlight:** A program of walking during the pandemic lockdown. Also: In prison, creating art.

**Body**

A program of walking during the pandemic lockdown. Also: In prison, creating art.

To the Editor:

Re “[*That Walk Was Awesome*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/30/well/move/an-awe-walk-might-do-wonders-for-your-well-being.html?searchResultPosition=1),” by Gretchen Reynolds (Phys Ed, Science Times, Oct. 6):

I started a walking program at the beginning of the lockdown, gradually building up to two one-hour walks a day. I’ve lost 20 pounds, but weight loss was not my primary goal. I walk because I’m fortunate enough to live in a beautiful and fairly rural section of New England, and the “small wonders” mentioned in the column are countless.

I encounter few other human beings (though many squirrels), so my risk for Covid-19 infection is minimal. And although I’m certainly not a misanthrope, I find that these natural glories are best appreciated solo. You notice more, and have more time for introspection, when conversation is left out of the equation. (And to eliminate distractions, I carry a bare-bones flip phone, not a smartphone.)

I’m not as obsessive a walking enthusiast as Henry David Thoreau, who routinely took four-hour daily walks, but I certainly now understand why the ritual meant so much to him.

David English

Acton, Mass.

Creativity in Prison, Against the Odds

To the Editor:

Re “[*Stirring Creations From Behind Bars*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/30/well/move/an-awe-walk-might-do-wonders-for-your-well-being.html?searchResultPosition=1)” (Critic’s Pick, Weekend Arts, Sept. 25):

It’s hard to imagine what talent is stifled behind prison bars. The creative urge bursts forth even under these discouraging conditions: confinement with no traditional artist’s materials.

One inmate used odds and ends salvaged from trash to create “images from his ***working-class*** childhood.” What opportunity for rehab and what talent is wasted! As I see it, this is a crime.

Phyllis Bogen

Englewood, N.J.

PHOTO:    (PHOTOGRAPH BY Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Joys of Walking***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6127-W5W1-JBG3-60CC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 13, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 26; LETTERS

**Length:** 279 words

**Body**

A program of walking during the pandemic lockdown. Also: In prison, creating art.

To the Editor:

Re ''That Walk Was Awesome,'' by Gretchen Reynolds (Phys Ed, Science Times, Oct. 6):

I started a walking program at the beginning of the lockdown, gradually building up to two one-hour walks a day. I've lost 20 pounds, but weight loss was not my primary goal. I walk because I'm fortunate enough to live in a beautiful and fairly rural section of New England, and the ''small wonders'' mentioned in the column are countless.

I encounter few other human beings (though many squirrels), so my risk for Covid-19 infection is minimal. And although I'm certainly not a misanthrope, I find that these natural glories are best appreciated solo. You notice more, and have more time for introspection, when conversation is left out of the equation. (And to eliminate distractions, I carry a bare-bones flip phone, not a smartphone.)

I'm not as obsessive a walking enthusiast as Henry David Thoreau, who routinely took four-hour daily walks, but I certainly now understand why the ritual meant so much to him.

David EnglishActon, Mass.

Creativity in Prison, Against the Odds

To the Editor:

Re ''Stirring Creations From Behind Bars'' (Critic's Pick, Weekend Arts, Sept. 25):

It's hard to imagine what talent is stifled behind prison bars. The creative urge bursts forth even under these discouraging conditions: confinement with no traditional artist's materials.

One inmate used odds and ends salvaged from trash to create ''images from his ***working-class*** childhood.'' What opportunity for rehab and what talent is wasted! As I see it, this is a crime.

Phyllis BogenEnglewood, N.J.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/12/opinion/letters/covid-walking.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/12/opinion/letters/covid-walking.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Let Them Fly Commercial: France Considers a Ban on Private Jets***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:667P-0HC1-JBG3-64R2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 26, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1125 words

**Byline:** By Constant Méheut

**Body**

Politicians are proposing regulating or banning flights by such planes after a summer of extreme heat and soaring energy prices prompted growing calls to tackle the causes of climate change.

PARIS -- As France reels from a summer of extreme temperatures and soaring energy prices, prompting increasingly urgent calls to rein in polluters contributing to global warming, one high-flying culprit is finding itself in the cross hairs: the private jet.

In recent days, France's transportation minister called for flights by such planes to be restricted because of their outsize contribution to climate change, while a prominent lawmaker for the Green Party said he would soon introduce a bill to ban them altogether.

The announcements have struck a chord in France, where weeks of severe drought and wildfires have brought home the realities of global warming, stoking a larger debate about consumer responsibility for addressing climate change.

Calls for better conservation of energy are also growing in France, like in much of Europe, as the war in Ukraine squeezes supplies of gas and oil.

''Without resorting to demagogy or launching ad hominem attacks, there is certain behavior that is no longer acceptable,'' Clément Beaune, the transportation minister, told Le Parisien newspaper on Saturday, as he announced his plan to regulate private jets.

Mr. Beaune's advisers said he was considering several options, including requiring companies to disclose trips taken on private planes, or expanding the European Union's emissions trading program -- which caps how much carbon companies are allowed to emit -- to the jets. Mr. Beaune said he would consult with bloc partners on the issue.

The aviation sector is already considered one of the world's top carbon emitters. And private jets are estimated to cause five to 14 times as much pollution as commercial planes per passenger, and 50 times as much as trains, according to a study published last year by Transport & Environment, a group campaigning for cleaner transportation.

The study showed that France, with a capital city in the north and a Mediterranean Riviera prized by the superrich in the south, had the second-highest level of emissions from private jets in Europe, after Britain. In 2019, one-tenth of all of the country's outbound flights were with private jets, according to the study.

In recent months, some social media accounts in France have started tracking flights several French billionaires take with the jets, adding to the public outcry over the use of the planes.

On Twitter and Instagram, popular accounts with names like I Fly Bernard -- a reference to Bernard Arnault, the head of the luxury giant LVMH and one of the world's richest men -- have made public the billionaires' trips and released estimates of their carbon emissions.

On Friday, I Fly Bernard wrote on Twitter that the private jet belonging to the company of the French media mogul Vincent Bolloré had made three flights on the same day in a journey between France and Greece, releasing 22 tons of carbon dioxide, the equivalent on average of 10 years of emissions for a car in France, based on figures from the organization Greenpeace.

''This simple little tool is extremely powerful because you suddenly understand that something is wrong,'' Julien Bayou, a member of France's National Assembly, the lower house of Parliament, and the leader of the Green Party said, referring to the social media trackers.

Mr. Bayou said he was planning to introduce a bill in October, when the Parliament reconvenes after a summer break, to ban private jets. He added that a ban on other energy-intensive private transportation like yachts would also be considered. ''It's a question of justice and equality,'' he said.

Last year, France passed a climate law that prohibited domestic flights for journeys that can be made by train in less than two and a half hours -- unless they connect to an international flight -- but the ban exempted private jet trips.

Mr. Bayou said that his party had discussed banning private jets in the past but that the proposal had gained momentum only in recent weeks because ''it's perhaps the first time that we see that climate change is profoundly unequal.''

A scorching summer this year has made the reality of the ravages of climate change all too apparent to France, with wildfires ripping through the southeast and the most severe drought on record drying up water reserves in dozens of municipalities.

As the authorities imposed water restrictions in almost all of mainland France, conflicts erupted, with many people questioning what they saw as privileges granted to the wealthy.

Outdoor jacuzzis have been vandalized, and farmers have challenged bans on irrigating their fields. In southern France, climate activists filled golf course holes with cement to protest against the exemption of greens from water bans ''for a bourgeois elite.''

Emmanuel Combet, an economist at the publicly funded French Environment and Energy Management Agency, said there had been a growing debate in France about the role of the wealthiest people in conservation efforts.

A paper released last year that Mr. Combet co-wrote estimated that a household in the richest 10 percent of France emits on average more than twice as much carbon dioxide as a household in the poorest 10 percent. The disparity is even more striking when it comes to transport-related emissions, with the richest group emitting more than three times as much as the poorest.

But he also pointed to the fact that some wealthy households emit less than poorer ones thanks to investments in cleaner energy, such as using electric heating instead of oil.

''Debates on the fairness of the environmental transition must not be limited to the rich-poor divide,'' Mr. Combet said.

President Emmanuel Macron has in the past been criticized for environmental measures that seemed to favor metropolitan elites at the expense of ***working class*** people in rural areas. In late 2018, after the government announced it would raise taxes on gasoline and diesel as part of a move to nudge drivers toward cleaner energy, protests broke out across France, leading to the so-called Yellow Vest movement that convulsed the country.

While Mr. Beaune's proposals are contested by some government officials, his call to crack down on private jets seems intended to signal that the conservation efforts recently called for by Mr. Macron apply to all.

''Private jets have a symbolic value,'' Olivier Véran, a government spokesman, told the radio station France Inter on Tuesday. ''The French must not get the impression that it is always the same people who are asked to make an effort -- that is, the working and middle classes.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/22/world/europe/france-private-jets-restrictions.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/22/world/europe/france-private-jets-restrictions.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A private jet in Nice, France. Such planes are said to cause more pollution per passenger than commercial planes. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEREMY SUYKER/BLOOMBERG)

Bernard Arnault of the luxury giant LVMH aboard a private jet in 2004. His air travels have led to a popular Twitter account called I Fly Bernard. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARC DEVILLE/GAMMA-RAPHO, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** August 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[***As France Swelters, Private Jets Come Under Attack***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:667G-88T1-JBG3-6464-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 25, 2022 Thursday 10:35 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1175 words

**Byline:** Constant Méheut

**Highlight:** Politicians are proposing regulating or banning flights by such planes after a summer of extreme heat and soaring energy prices prompted growing calls to tackle the causes of climate change.

**Body**

Politicians are proposing regulating or banning flights by such planes after a summer of extreme heat and soaring energy prices prompted growing calls to tackle the causes of climate change.

PARIS — As France reels from a summer of [*extreme temperatures*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/11/world/europe/france-wildfires-heat-wave.html) and [*soaring energy prices*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/04/business/france-economy-inflation.html), prompting increasingly urgent calls to rein in polluters contributing to global warming, one high-flying culprit is finding itself in the cross hairs: the private jet.

In recent days, France’s transportation minister called for flights by such planes to be restricted because of their outsize contribution to climate change, while a prominent lawmaker for the Green Party said he would soon introduce a bill to ban them altogether.

The announcements have struck a chord in France, where weeks of [*severe drought*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/05/world/europe/france-drought-europe-heat.html) and wildfires have brought home the realities of global warming, stoking a larger debate about consumer responsibility for addressing climate change.

Calls for better conservation of energy are also growing in France, [*like in much of Europe*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/29/world/europe/europe-germany-ukraine-energy.html), as the [*war in Ukraine*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/ukraine-russia?name=styln-russia-ukraine&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=LegacyCollection&amp;variant=show) squeezes supplies of gas and oil.

“Without resorting to demagogy or launching ad hominem attacks, there is certain behavior that is no longer acceptable,” Clément Beaune, the transportation minister, told [*Le Parisien*](https://www.leparisien.fr/politique/environnement-clement-beaune-veut-reguler-les-vols-en-jet-prive-20-08-2022-ZJ5ZOWIORBHIBIKZTJQQXJMGMQ.php?ts=1661174145028) newspaper on Saturday, as he announced his plan to regulate private jets.

Mr. Beaune’s advisers said he was considering several options, including requiring companies to disclose trips taken on private planes, or expanding the European Union’s [*emissions trading program*](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/eu-emissions-trading-system-eu-ets_en) — which caps how much carbon companies are allowed to emit — to the jets. Mr. Beaune said he would consult with bloc partners on the issue.

The [*aviation sector*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/28/business/energy-environment/airlines-climate-planes-emissions.html) is already considered one of the world’s top carbon emitters. And private jets are estimated to cause five to 14 times as much pollution as commercial planes per passenger, and 50 times as much as trains, [*according to a study*](https://www.transportenvironment.org/discover/private-jets-can-the-super-rich-supercharge-zero-emission-aviation/) published last year by Transport &amp; Environment, a group campaigning for cleaner transportation.

The study showed that France, with a capital city in the north and a Mediterranean Riviera prized by the superrich in the south, had the second-highest level of emissions from private jets in Europe, after Britain. In 2019, one-tenth of all of the country’s outbound flights were with private jets, according to the study.

In recent months, some social media accounts in France have started tracking flights several French billionaires take with the jets, adding to the public outcry over the use of the planes.

On Twitter and Instagram, popular accounts with names like [*I Fly Bernard*](https://twitter.com/i_fly_Bernard) — a reference to Bernard Arnault, the head of the luxury giant LVMH and one of the world’s richest men — have made public the billionaires’ trips and released estimates of their carbon emissions.

On Friday, I Fly Bernard [*wrote on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/i_fly_Bernard/status/1560435713392484354) that the private jet belonging to the company of the French media mogul Vincent Bolloré had made three flights on the same day in a journey between France and Greece, releasing 22 tons of carbon dioxide, the equivalent on average of 10 years of emissions for a car in France, based on figures from the organization Greenpeace.

“This simple little tool is extremely powerful because you suddenly understand that something is wrong,” Julien Bayou, a member of France’s National Assembly, the lower house of Parliament, and the leader of the Green Party said, referring to the social media trackers.

Mr. Bayou said he was planning to introduce a bill in October, when the Parliament reconvenes after a summer break, to ban private jets. He added that a ban on other energy-intensive private transportation like yachts would also be considered. “​​It’s a question of justice and equality,” he said.

Last year, France passed a [*climate law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/19/business/macron-france-climate-bill.html) that prohibited domestic flights for journeys that can be made by train in less than two and a half hours — unless they connect to an international flight — but the ban exempted private jet trips.

Mr. Bayou said that his party had discussed banning private jets in the past but that the proposal had gained momentum only in recent weeks because “it’s perhaps the first time that we see that climate change is profoundly unequal.”

A [*scorching summer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/18/world/europe/paris-trees-global-warming.html) this year has made the reality of the ravages of climate change all too apparent to France, with [*wildfires ripping through the southeast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/19/world/europe/france-wildfires-europe-heat-wave.html) and the [*most severe drought on record*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/05/world/europe/france-drought-europe-heat.html) drying up water reserves in dozens of municipalities.

As the authorities imposed water restrictions in almost all of mainland France, conflicts erupted, with many people questioning what they saw as privileges granted to the wealthy.

Outdoor jacuzzis [*have been vandalized*](https://www.tf1info.fr/justice-faits-divers/video-secheresse-sabotages-en-serie-2229224.html), and farmers have challenged bans on irrigating their fields. In southern France, climate activists filled golf course holes with cement to protest against the exemption of greens from water bans [*“for a bourgeois elite.”*](https://agir.greenvoice.fr/petitions/exigeons-l-interdiction-d-arrosage-des-golfs)

Emmanuel Combet, an economist at the publicly funded French Environment and Energy Management Agency, said there had been a growing debate in France about the role of the wealthiest people in conservation efforts.

A [*paper released last year*](https://feem-media.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/NDL2021-014.pdf) that Mr. Combet co-wrote estimated that a household in the richest 10 percent of France emits on average more than twice as much carbon dioxide as a household in the poorest 10 percent. The disparity is even more striking when it comes to transport-related emissions, with the richest group emitting more than three times as much as the poorest.

But he also pointed to the fact that some wealthy households emit less than poorer ones thanks to investments in cleaner energy, such as using electric heating instead of oil.

“Debates on the fairness of the environmental transition must not be limited to the rich-poor divide,” Mr. Combet said.

President Emmanuel Macron has in the past been criticized for environmental measures that seemed to favor metropolitan elites at the expense of [***working class*** *people*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/france-climate-change-energy-prices.html) in rural areas. In late 2018, after the government announced it would raise taxes on gasoline and diesel as part of a move to nudge drivers toward cleaner energy, protests broke out across France, leading to the so-called [*Yellow Vest movement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/15/business/yellow-vests-movement-inequality.html) that convulsed the country.

While Mr. Beaune’s proposals are contested by some government officials, his call to crack down on private jets seems intended to signal that the conservation efforts recently called for by Mr. Macron apply to all.

“Private jets have a symbolic value,” Olivier Véran, a government spokesman, told the radio station [*France Inter*](https://www.radiofrance.fr/franceinter/podcasts/l-invite-de-8h20-le-grand-entretien/l-invite-de-8h20-le-grand-entretien-du-mardi-23-aout-2022-9777670) on Tuesday. “The French must not get the impression that it is always the same people who are asked to make an effort — that is, the working and middle classes.”

PHOTOS: A private jet in Nice, France. Such planes are said to cause more pollution per passenger than commercial planes. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEREMY SUYKER/BLOOMBERG); Bernard Arnault of the luxury giant LVMH aboard a private jet in 2004. His air travels have led to a popular Twitter account called I Fly Bernard. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARC DEVILLE/GAMMA-RAPHO, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** August 26, 2022

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[***In New York, NIMBYism Finally Outstays Its Welcome***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66H4-YVX1-JBG3-652M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 30, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 26; MARA GAY

**Length:** 1368 words

**Byline:** By Mara Gay

**Body**

Why is it so hard to build housing in New York?

In search of an answer to this question, I spoke with Marjorie Velázquez, the City Council member whose one-woman opposition is being allowed to hold up the construction of a roughly 350-unit housing development in the Throgs Neck section of the Bronx, a project that includes apartments for older people and veterans.

Ms. Velázquez's stated reasons for opposing the project are wide-ranging. She has concerns about crowding in schools. She wants to know ''what kind'' of veterans will live in the development (''I see a lot of groups come in and say, 'Oh we're going to do this, we're going to do that!' and appear to be heroes and they leave our veterans behind,'' she told me). She says the city should be focusing on infrastructure needs in the area. ''We're a transit desert,'' she said.

Then, she talks about the sinkholes that plague Throgs Neck, a community she says has been ignored. ''Do you see what I'm saying?'' she asked, adding that she wanted to ''make sure that it's for us, by us.''

The City Council may vote for a zoning change that would clear the way for the Throgs Neck project anyway. Approving the change over Ms. Velázquez's objection would be a major break in tradition for the Council, setting an important precedent in a city where people are struggling to afford to stay in their homes and communities.

Some of Ms. Velázquez's constituents in Throgs Neck, a tidy neighborhood dotted with single-family homes at the mouth of the East River, have expressed their opposition differently. ''He wants to put low-income drug houses on the corner here!'' one man shouted at a protest over the proposed rezoning in June, according to video of the event posted on Twitter. Whether he was referring to Mayor Eric Adams or someone else is unclear.

In New York, patience for this kind of NIMBYism -- the ''not in my backyard'' phenomenon in which communities oppose badly needed new housing -- is growing thin. Local communities hold enormous power to block development, often through local Council members in New York City, or county executives in the suburbs. As the housing crisis intensifies, there are signs that New York's politicians may finally be willing to stand up to NIMBYism.

''When you say 'not in our backyard,' you are believing your block belongs to you. It belongs to the city,'' Mr. Adams said in a phone conversation. ''I believe local communities should have input, but we all need to take responsibility for the housing crisis we are facing.''

For years, neighborhoods in New York City and the New York suburbs have had near veto power over land-use and housing development decisions. That could soon change. In the 51-seat City Council, momentum is gathering to end a practice known as ''member deference,'' in which the entire body lets a member decide the fate of land-use proposals in his or her district.

''I reject that this will be a Council that says no to housing, given the scale of the crisis we face,'' the Council speaker, Adrienne E. Adams, said in a statement. Ms. Adams said the Council would continue to value community input, but not ''irrational opposition that rejects desperately needed housing.''

The mayor is also backing smaller changes to the citywide zoning code that would make it easier to build housing and don't require the approval of individual Council members. One of those changes, for example, would remove caps on the building of studio apartments. Another would eliminate rules requiring a certain number of parking spaces to be built with housing units. Dan Garodnick, chair of the City Planning Commission, told me his team had found dozens of such regulations that create needless barriers to housing production.

This change in New York politics is part of a nascent but promising movement. As rents rise, the anti-development sentiment that once dominated Democratic politics is giving way to calls to build more housing, fast. Lately, even politicians who count themselves among the most skeptical regarding for-profit developers have thrown their support behind building units to ease the crisis.

Councilwoman Tiffany Cabán, a proudly far-left Democrat, surprised many recently when she voted to site 1,400 new units of housing in her district in Queens. ''Listen, I'm not anti-development,'' she told me. ''We desperately need more housing.'' Ms. Cabán said she had come to believe the city should embrace every possible way to build more housing, from allowing responsible building by for-profit developers to using whatever city-owned land remains to put up apartments.

But solving the housing crisis in New York City will require a regional approach. The city and its suburbs are connected by extensive rail lines allowing residents of Long Island and Westchester to commute to Manhattan. The system is an enormous strength. But for the better part of a century, zoning laws in Westchester and especially Long Island have severely limited the construction of higher-density housing developments.

The zoning laws have their roots in the Jim Crow era of segregation, when they were used to keep Black Americans and others from buying homes in certain areas. The problem is especially acute on Long Island, where the biggest growth took place in the years after World War II, when the federal government backed housing discrimination through preferential treatment in government loans.

Over time, these laws have contributed not only to racial and economic segregation in New York, but also to the affordability crisis by constraining the region's housing supply. Gov. Kathy Hochul and the State Legislature need to challenge suburban zoning laws that make it difficult or virtually impossible to build the multifamily housing the state needs.

Eliminating these restrictions doesn't have to mean the end of suburban life. Indeed, higher-density development in suburban downtowns can invigorate them. It won't be easy. A proposal in the State Legislature that would have allowed for multifamily housing to be built around transit centers on Long Island failed this year after Ms. Hochul backed down in the face of local opposition. If she is re-elected this November, resurrecting that effort would be a worthy priority.

The governor and the State Legislature could also go much further. California last year essentially banned single-family zoning, something that leaders in Albany could consider as well. They could also could make government investment in the suburbs contingent on the elimination of exclusionary zoning. At the very least, state and federal officials could make it clear to communities in Suffolk and Nassau Counties that infrastructure improvements for the Long Island Rail Road will continue only if multifamily housing is built near transit centers.

Several members of New York's congressional delegation support a bill introduced by Senator Elizabeth Warren known as the American Housing and Mobility Act, which would offer federal funding for localities that reform their zoning laws to encourage greater density and the building of moderate- and low-income housing. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, a co-sponsor of the bill, acknowledged that passing the bill would be an uphill battle. ''NIMBYism is real,'' she told me in a phone conversation.

Given the scale of the crisis, these efforts to build more housing are essential and urgent. The median rent in the city has undergone a double-digit percentage increase from prepandemic levels in every borough but Staten Island, according to data from StreetEasy.

The good news is that housing is at long last a political priority. If it doesn't build more housing, and quickly, New York will soon shut out young, ***working-class*** and middle-class people. Only the wealthiest will remain, along with NIMBY holdouts sprinkled across the city. What a lonely, sterile end to New York that would be.

The Times is committed to publishing a diversity of letters to the editor. We'd like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some tips. And here's our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](mailto:letters@nytimes.com)

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/28/opinion/new-york-housing-crisis.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/28/opinion/new-york-housing-crisis.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 30, 2022

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[***Best Sellers: Paperback Nonfiction: Sunday, July 25th 2021***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6378-40H1-JBG3-614M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 25, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 517 words

**Body**

About the Best Sellers:

These lists are an expanded version of those appearing in the July 25, 2021 print edition of the Book Review, reflecting sales for the week ending July 10, 2021. 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: Paperback Nonfiction |
| This | On |  |
| Week | List |  |
| 1 | 142 | THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE, by Bessel van der Kolk. (Penguin) How trauma affects the body and mind, and innovative treatments for recovery. |
| 2 | 65 | BRAIDING SWEETGRASS, by Robin Wall Kimmerer. (Milkweed Editions) A botanist and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation espouses having an understanding and appreciation of plants and animals. |
| 3 | 126 | BORN A CRIME, by Trevor Noah. (One World) A memoir about growing up biracial in apartheid South Africa by the host of ?The Daily Show.? |
| 4 | 2 | THE BEAUTY IN BREAKING, by Michele Harper. (Riverhead) A female African American emergency room physician finds success in a predominantly white male field and examines ways to heal mind, body and spirit. |
| 5 | 336 | OUTLIERS, by Malcolm Gladwell. (Back Bay/Little, Brown) Unexpected factors that explain why some people succeed, such as upbringing, timing and 10,000 hours of deliberate practice. |
| 6 | 152 | SAPIENS, by Yuval Noah Harari. (Harper Perennial) How Homo sapiens became Earth?s dominant species. |
| 7 | 149 | WHITE FRAGILITY, by Robin DiAngelo. (Beacon) Historical and cultural analyses on what causes defensive moves by white people and how this inhibits cross-racial dialogue. |
| 8 | 257 | JUST MERCY, by Bryan Stevenson. (One World) A civil rights lawyer and MacArthur grant recipient?s memoir of his decades of work to free innocent people condemned to death. |
| 9 | 87 | KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON, by David Grann. (Vintage) The story of a murder spree in 1920s Oklahoma that targeted Osage Indians, whose lands contained oil. The fledgling F.B.I. intervened, ineffectively. |
| 10 | 278 | THINKING, FAST AND SLOW, by Daniel Kahneman. (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) When we can and cannot trust our intuitions in making business and personal decisions. |
| 11 | 20 | HOW TO CHANGE YOUR MIND, by Michael Pollan. (Penguin) A personal account of how psychedelics might help the mentally ill and people dealing with everyday challenges. |
| 12 | 76 | THE WARMTH OF OTHER SUNS, by Isabel Wilkerson. (Vintage) An account of the Great Migration of 1915-70, in which six million African-Americans abandoned the South. |
| 13 | 19 | 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. |
| 14 | 65 | HILLBILLY ELEGY, by J.D. Vance. (Harper) A Yale Law School graduate looks at the struggles of the white ***working class*** through the story of his own childhood. |
| 15 | 85 | GRIT, by Angela Duckworth. (Scribner) The MacArthur Fellow argues that passion and perseverance are more important than innate talent in creating success. |

**Load-Date:** July 26, 2021

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[***Forces Palin Unleashed Have Left Her Behind***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66Y3-GR21-JBG3-61PY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Jeremy W. Peters

**Body**

The former Alaska governor, once the standard-bearer of the G.O.P.'s dog-whistling, no-apologies culture, was no match for the same forces she rode to national prominence.

It is hard to overstate just how much of a jolt to the political system Sarah Palin delivered when she defeated her first fellow Republican 16 years ago.

He was Frank Murkowski, the sitting governor of Alaska and a towering figure in the 49th state. She was a ''hockey mom'' and the former mayor of a small, ***working-class*** town who vowed to stick it to the ''good ol' boys.'' That race put her on the map with the national Republican Party and set her on a path that would change her life, and the tenor of American politics for years to come.

Then, Ms. Palin was at the vanguard of the dog-whistling, no-apologies political culture that former President Donald J. Trump now embodies.

Today, having lost her bid for Congress after years out of the spotlight, Ms. Palin is a much diminished force.

She was, in many ways, undone by the same political currents she rode to national prominence, first as Senator John McCain's vice-presidential nominee in 2008 and later as a Tea Party luminary and Fox News star. Along the way, she helped redefine the outer limits of what a politician could say as she made dark insinuations about Barack Obama's background and false claims about government ''death panels'' that could deny health care to seniors and people with disabilities.

Now, a generation of Republican stars follows the template she helped create as a hybrid celebrity-politician who relished fighting with elements in her own party as much as fighting with Democrats -- none more so than Mr. Trump, who watched her closely for years before deciding to run for president himself. He ensured this month that he would remain in the spotlight, announcing another bid for the White House in 2024.

But as the next generation rose up, Ms. Palin's brand of politics no longer seemed as novel or as outrageous. Next to Mr. Trump's lies about a huge conspiracy to deny him a second term, or Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene's casual allusions to political violence, Ms. Palin's provocations more than a decade ago can seem almost quaint.

Ms. Palin, 58, started on the road to political fame after her upset victory in the governor's race in Alaska in 2006, when the Republican Party was in need of a fresh face. Republicans had just lost badly in the midterm elections -- what President George W. Bush called a ''thumping.'' The G.O.P.'s conservative base was angry with party leaders over their support for an immigration reform bill. And the broader public was war-weary after five years of conflict in the Middle East with no end in sight.

Ms. Palin was as different from a Bush Republican as they come. She promised to do things as governor that politicians in her party typically didn't, such as restoring social welfare funding and scrutinizing tax breaks her state gave to large corporations. She appealed to Alaskans' insularity, too, channeling mistrust of outsiders like oil companies, fisheries and federal agencies.

She prided herself on being able to work across party lines. One Democrat she developed a relationship with in the state Legislature was Mary Peltola, who has now defeated Ms. Palin twice -- first in a special election over the summer to fill Alaska's lone congressional seat and now for a full two-year term. Ms. Peltola is the first Alaska Native to serve in Congress, and Ms. Palin has spoken of her warmly despite their political rivalry.

But Ms. Palin had long displayed a willingness to make specious claims that her opponents were untrustworthy because they were different, and to insinuate that those differences stemmed from a lack of patriotism or Christian faith. In her victorious race for mayor of Wasilla in 1996, she brought the country's culture wars to the steps of city hall, championing biblical principles and the Second Amendment. She suggested -- falsely -- that electing her would give Wasilla its ''first'' Christian mayor. (Her opponent and the incumbent mayor, John C. Stein, was raised Lutheran.)

Ms. Palin's supporters were always drawn to her not just for the battles she picked and the enemies she made -- the people she denigrated as ''blue bloods'' in the G.O.P. leadership and the ''lame-stream media'' were two favorite targets -- but to her ordinariness. She was a working mother who had a young son with Down syndrome, a teenage daughter who got pregnant right when the Palin family was introduced to the nation in 2008, and a son who served in Iraq.

When Mr. McCain picked her as his running mate, he told advisers at the time that he knew it was a gamble, and said in characteristically colorful terms that that was what he liked about it. It was a Hail Mary pass that fell short in the end. Ms. Palin's youth and freshness balanced out Mr. McCain's image as an aging, decades-long denizen of Washington. But her inexperience in national and world affairs made her a liability. She sometimes struggled to answer basic questions such as what newspapers she read.

But to the legions of followers that seemed to grow larger by the day on the campaign trail -- at one rally in The Villages retirement community in Florida, 60,000 people turned out to see her speak -- the missteps only made her more authentic. And as she became more popular, her language grew sharper and more incendiary.

At one point, with help from McCain campaign speechwriters, she drew widespread condemnation after accusing Mr. Obama of ''palling around with terrorists,'' which many people at the time saw as a barely veiled, racist allegation. (False rumors that Mr. Obama was secretly a Muslim had long circulated among conservatives.) Her rallies started to draw angry outbursts from the crowd when she mentioned Mr. Obama's name. People shouted ''treason!'' and ''Obama bin Laden.''

Many wrote off Ms. Palin for dead politically after Mr. McCain lost and when, a few months later, she resigned as governor. But to many Republicans, especially those outside Washington, she was still the biggest star in the party. She went on to write a best-selling memoir, ''Going Rogue,'' and signed a contract with Fox News worth $1 million a year.

She was initially considered a front-runner for the G.O.P. presidential nomination in 2012, at times beating or slightly trailing the eventual nominee, Mitt Romney, in the polls. And when she embarked on a bus tour up the East Coast over Memorial Day weekend in 2011, she drew so much media attention that news of her stop in New Hampshire pushed Mr. Romney's announcement for president that same day off the front page of the local paper.

It was during that trip she made a fateful visit to Trump Tower at Mr. Trump's invitation, where the two met and posed for the throngs of paparazzi waiting on the sidewalk before stopping at a nearby pizzeria for slices. (Infamously, he ate his with a fork.)

At the time, many political insiders thought the possibility that she could run was very high. But privately, she was already expressing doubts about the toll that another campaign would take on her family. And when a group of Republican activists met with her near her home in Scottsdale, Ariz., to pitch her on the idea of running -- including two future Trump campaign officials, Stephen K. Bannon and David N. Bossie -- she conveyed as much.

Ms. Palin was never truly able to rekindle the same spark she lit during the 2008 campaign, when she was the loose-lipped insurgent to Mr. McCain's elder statesman of the establishment.

In 2016, she declined again to run for the Republican nomination, clearing the path for the next Republican insurgent: Mr. Trump. He asked her for her endorsement before the Iowa caucuses in February, and she obliged. In a column she wrote later that year for Breitbart, Ms. Palin recalled with delight what a friend had told her about why she liked Mr. Trump so much: Liberals, establishment Republicans and the media couldn't stand him. ''I love him because YOU hate him!'' Ms. Palin said her friend told her.

The reversal of Ms. Palin's political fortunes today means that many of the renegades who modeled themselves after her -- and many of her rivals -- have outlasted her. Lisa Murkowski, the daughter of the former Alaska governor Ms. Palin defeated 16 years ago by more than 30 points, has won her bid for another term to the United States Senate. (Ms. Murkowski, a Republican, endorsed Ms. Peltola, the Democrat who beat Ms. Palin on Tuesday.)

Ms. Palin, never one to be especially sentimental about public service, often seemed disengaged during what was supposed to be her comeback campaign and revival as a national conservative icon. Though she went into the race with the highest name recognition of any rival and had Mr. Trump's endorsement, she struggled to raise money toward the end.

And she kept a light schedule. In the final days of the election, with little time left to campaign, she was spotted at a Knicks game in New York.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/23/us/politics/sarah-palin-alaska-house-race.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/23/us/politics/sarah-palin-alaska-house-race.html)

**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page A18.

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[***As Germans Diffuse Votes, Conservatives Lose Standing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63R3-MJ81-DXY4-X1J1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Katrin Bennhold and Melissa Eddy

**Body**

Sunday's defeat has revealed a gasping conservative party. But what that means for Germany's future is not clear as traditional left-right politics are scrambled.

BERLIN -- Chancellor Angela Merkel was standing two paces behind Armin Laschet, her party's candidate to succeed her, stony-faced and with her hands clenched.

The first election results had just come in. The conservative camp had collapsed by 9 percentage points, the Social Democrats were winning -- and Mr. Laschet was vowing to do ''everything'' to form the next government.

To watch the scene on Sunday night at conservative party headquarters was to watch power melt away in real time.

Germany's once-mighty Christian Democratic Union is not used to losing. Five of eight postwar chancellors were conservatives and the current one is leaving office after 16 years as the most popular politician in the country.

But Sunday's defeat, the worst since the party was founded after World War II, has revealed almost overnight a conservative movement not just in crisis and increasingly open revolt, but one fretting about its long-term survival.

''It has raised a question about our very identity,'' Norbert Röttgen, a senior member of the Christian Democratic Union told public television ARD on Monday. ''The last, the only big people's party in Germany. And if this continues, then we will no longer be that.''

Yet beyond the conservatives' disarray, what Germany's messy vote says about the future of the country -- and of Europe -- is still hard to divine. It was an election filled with paradoxes -- and perhaps one in which Germans themselves where unsure what they wanted.

The last government included both traditional parties on the center-right and center-left, making it harder to gauge whether Sunday's vote was in fact a vote for change. Olaf Scholz, the chancellor candidate of the Social Democrats, campaigned against Ms. Merkel's party -- but he has served as Ms. Merkel's finance minister and vice chancellor for the past four years and in many ways ran as an incumbent.

Some of the ''change vote'' went to him, but much of it was split between the progressive Greens and the pro-business Free Democrats whose economic agendas could not be further apart.

Overall, 45.4 percent of votes went to parties on the left -- the Social Democrats, the Greens and the Left Party -- and 45.9 to those on the right, including the C.D.U., the Free Democrats and the far-right Alternative for Germany party.

But even if not a dramatic shift to the left, the devastation the returns have wrought on Ms. Merkel's party are plain. With Ms. Merkel leaving, millions of conservative voters are leaving, too. Nearly 2 million voters shifted their support away from the Christian Democrats to the Social Democrats on Sunday, and more than 1 million defected to each of the Free Democrats and the Greens.

It was a splintered result that revealed a more fragmented society, one that increasingly defies traditional political labeling. And it appeared to spell a definitive end to the long era of Germany's traditional ''Volks''-parties, catchall ''people's'' parties.

In their heyday both Social Democrats and Christian Democrats routinely got over 40 percent of the vote. A ***working-class*** organized in powerful labor unions voted Social Democrat, while a conservative churchgoing electorate voted Christian Democrat.

The Social Democrats lost that status a while ago. With union membership declining and parts of the traditional ***working-class*** constituency abandoning the party, its share of the vote roughly halved since late 1990s. The crisis of social democracy has been a familiar theme over the past decade.

Ms. Merkel's conservatives were insulated from these tectonic shifts for longer. As long as she was in office, her own popularity and appeal reached well beyond a traditional conservative electorate and disguised many of the party's creeping troubles.

Ms. Merkel understood that in a rapidly changing world, where church membership was declining and values evolving, she needed to appeal to voters outside the Christian Democrats' traditional base to keep winning elections.

Since taking office in 2005, she gradually took her party from the conservative right to the center of the political spectrum, not least by co-governing with the Social Democrats for three out of her four terms. It worked, at least for a while.

Ms. Merkel kept the party together, analysts say, but in the process she stripped it of its identity.

''The C.D.U. is hollowed out: it has no leadership and no program,'' said Herfried Münkler, a prominent political scientist and author on German politics. ''The essential ingredient has gone -- and that is Merkel.''

There are many reasons the conservatives performed badly. One was the fact that after 16 years of a conservative-led government, a certain stasis had set in and, particularly among younger voters, a desire for new leadership.

Another was the deep unpopularity and poorly run campaign of Mr. Laschet, who staked his political future on winning the chancellery but is losing support by the day even within his own party.

Since the election, a simmering civil war inside Germany's conservative camp between those eager to cling on to power at any price and those ready to concede defeat and regroup in opposition was increasingly coming into focus.

While Mr. Laschet is still insisting that he will hold talks with the Greens and the Free Democrats to form a majority coalition, many in his own camp have conceded defeat.

On Tuesday one of his main internal rivals, Markus Söder, the swaggering and popular governor of Bavaria who narrowly missed landing the nomination himself in April, went so far as to congratulate Mr. Scholz on the election result.

''Olaf Scholz has the best chance right now of becoming chancellor,'' Mr. Söder told reporters in Berlin on Tuesday.

The regional conservative leader in the northern state of Lower Saxony, Bernd Althusmann, told public broadcaster ARD that voters wanted change. ''We should now humbly and respectfully accept the will of the voters,'' he said.

The pressure on Mr. Laschet to concede the race only increased after he failed to win the support of voters even in his own constituency.

But some said that Ms. Merkel herself shared some blame for her party's abysmal result. In all her years in power, she failed to successfully groom a successor. She tried once; but her attempt to position Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, now the defense minister, proved deeply divisive and ended in Ms. Kramp-Karrenbauer's resignation as party leader after barely a year.

Mr. Laschet, who followed her at the helm of the party, has also failed to bridge the divisions within the party between those who embraced the social changes Ms. Merkel had overseen from parental leave policies and same-sex marriage to welcoming over a million refugees in 2015 and 2016 -- and those nostalgic for the party's conservatism of old.

But the days of uniting both camps under the umbrella of a single party may simply be over, analysts said.

''Conservatism no longer has convincing answers -- or at least not convincing enough to get 40 percent of the voters,'' Mr. Münkler said.

That raises existential questions for the Christian Democrats.

In several neighboring European countries, including France and Italy, traditional center-right parties have already shrunk into irrelevance, struggling to find a message that appeals to voters and ripped apart by internal power struggles.

Most now expect that the Christian Democrats will end up outside of government.

''They might be in opposition for a while,'' said Mr. Münkler, the political scientist, ''and then the question is: Will they survive it?''

Christopher F. Schuetze contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/world/europe/germany-election-merkel.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/world/europe/germany-election-merkel.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Chancellor Angela Merkel with Armin Laschet, her party's choice to succeed her. Support for the party eroded under his watch. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN MEISSNER/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

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[***Where to Stream ‘The Banshees of Inisherin,’ ‘Elvis’ and More 2023 Oscar Nominees***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67CY-KKS1-DXY4-X498-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** MOVIES

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**Byline:** Scott Tobias

**Highlight:** Many of the top contenders can be watched at home. Here’s a guide to help you get a jump on the field.

**Body**

Many of the top contenders can be watched at home. Here’s a guide to help you get a jump on the field.

The [*nominees for the 95th Academy Awards*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/24/movies/2023-oscar-nominees-list.html) were announced this morning, with the absurdist sci-fi comedy “Everything Everywhere All at Once,” the Irish comedy-drama “The Banshees of Inisherin” and the Netflix World War I movie “All Quiet on the Western Front” leading with the most nominations, including best picture. All three of those films and many others are currently available on various platforms, along with many other major nominees for best picture and the various acting and screenplay awards. A handful of titles are still in their theatrical runs, like “Avatar: The Way of Water,” “Women Talking,” “The Whale” and “Living,” though “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” [*makes its way to Disney+ next week.*](https://www.disneyplus.com/movies/black-panther-wakanda-forever/7MAONYZ92wDT) Here’s a complete rundown of where to find all the major awards hopefuls.

‘The Banshees of Inisherin’

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/uRu3zLOJN2c)]

Nominated for: Best picture, director, actor, supporting actor, supporting actress, original screenplay, score, editing.

How to watch: [*Stream it on HBO Max*](https://www.hbomax.com/feature/urn:hbo:feature:GY3vttQpXywnCZwEAAAFm). Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0OJKQ7BJ91VNK6VSMGPIUU8SZ0), [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/the-banshees-of-inisherin/umc.cmc.1t34y7y40m382avdbrvj28q85), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/The_Banshees_of_Inisherin?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=JIbPjcbnORc.P&amp;pli=1), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/The-Banshees-of-Inisherin/2184177?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=bddda8049b3511ed81df030a0a82b838&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_7cab8ff729db48719ad27ad81bfcb10c&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww) and [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wTRbC29tCA).

Reuniting with Colin Farrell and Brendan Gleeson, the stars of his 2008 hit man comedy “In Bruges,” the writer-director Martin McDonagh (“Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri”) once again harnesses the pair’s frisky chemistry for laughs, but with stronger notes of melancholy and political upheaval. On a remote island off the coast of Ireland, which still roils from civil war in 1923, a folk musician (Gleeson) abruptly decides to terminate his friendship with a longtime drinking buddy (Farrell), who naturally doesn’t understand what went wrong. In a place where companionship of any kind is hard to muster, their rift seems especially inexplicable, setting off an escalating series of consequences.

‘Elvis’

Nominated for: Best picture, actor, cinematography, editing, production design, costume design, makeup and hairstyling, sound.

How to watch: [*Stream it on HBO Max*](https://www.hbomax.com/feature/urn:hbo:feature:GYuwmqAnwQZa8kAEAAAE-). Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0JD2YMJDQFN8DU13DNXWNT2IKX/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20), [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/elvis/umc.cmc.4wy1iau6azj038mml796s4nn5), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/Elvis?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=G---HJm7Lns.P), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Elvis/2047382?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=51de9bb09b3911ed83a602f30a82b839&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_36927d595f0b4e8c9f11e3b18bdddf4c&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww) and [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84pqAlp2mLI).

The rise and fall of Elvis Presley may have the familiar arc of a typical musician biopic in “Elvis,” but the director Baz Luhrmann feeds this story through the same whirring pop-culture Cuisinart that fueled anachronistic hits like “Moulin Rouge” and “William Shakespeare’s Romeo + Juliet.” Though Luhrmann explores the King’s childhood roots in Deep South poverty, “Elvis” focuses mainly on the relationship between Presley (Austin Butler) and his controlling manager Col. Tom Parker (Tom Hanks), a shameless huckster who steered the singer to fame and fortune, but took a parasitic toll on his career.

‘Everything Everywhere All at Once’

Nominated for: Best picture, director, actress, supporting actor, supporting actress, original screenplay, editing, costume design, score, song.

How to watch: [*Stream it on Showtime*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0RW6Y46EXV022VWEQKCAK1C7LB/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20).

As the beaten-down, put-upon proprietor of a failing laundromat (the Hong Kong legend Michelle Yeoh) faces the hassles of a Chinese New Year party for her visiting father and a hostile audit from an I.R.S. agent (Jamie Lee Curtis), she discovers that the multiverse has bigger plans for her. Nothing is off the table in this absurdist sci-fi comedy/drama by Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert, a.k.a. Daniels (“Swiss Army Man”), who cast Yeoh as a laundromat owner who’s surprised to discover that only she has the power to keep an interdimensional rupture from consuming the world. Her mission is crazier than it sounds, but affecting, too, in its insights on family and the immigrant experience in America.

‘Tár’

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/6kc2Seh8nKk)]

Nominated for: Best picture, director, actress, original screenplay, cinematography, editing,

How to watch: [*Stream it on Peacock, starting Jan. 27*](https://www.peacocktv.com/stream-movies/tar) Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0FXDMHLI191GBP74SGYY6OR2CC/), [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/tar/umc.cmc.2408z7rnguoz01tcqidacvwc6), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/T%C3%81R?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=Fx78aE4onjY.P), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Tr/2157933?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=5a1e68ed9b4e11ed831f03530a82b820&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_bca4b1d285e9482980432fe0d9a1b3de&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww) and [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbOpUIU_x7k).

The director Todd Field’s first film since “Little Children” (2006) enters the #MeToo and “cancel culture” discourse through a side door, scrutinizing a brilliant conductor at a moment she must face the consequences for her yearslong abuses of power. In a commanding performance, Cate Blanchett plays Lydia Tár, the award-winning maestro of the Berlin Philharmonic, who is promoting a new book and preparing to lead her orchestra through Mahler’s 5th symphony. Her habit of manipulating subordinates and attractive female protégés has long been an open secret, but when the scandal finally surfaces, she’s too myopic to see it coming.

‘The Fabelmans’

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/D1G2iLSzOe8)]

Nominated for: Best picture, director, actress, original screenplay, supporting actor, score, production design.

How to watch: Buy it on [*Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0R5M89EX4U1ZPCJKFMDYU4SFEF/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20), [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/the-fabelmans/umc.cmc.4lgvd75jcuqp79fuar3e9p9zh), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/The_Fabelmans?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=IG-Mv-_cez8.P), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/The-Fabelmans/2157929?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=363dbc469bfc11ed82e300780a82b82a&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_5add758712894870a554ea4b4769d8a7&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww) and [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-mR2u4fgYI).

Though pieces of Steven Spielberg’s childhood have found their way into fantasies like “Close Encounters of the Third Kind” and “E.T. the Extra Terrestrial,” he waited over half a century to address it directly, with a little help from his co-writer Tony Kushner. “The Fabelmans” tracks his young surrogate, Sammy, from his first experience in a movie theater through his precocious filmmaking experiments as a teenager. Sammy’s insight behind the camera — and his blind spots, too — also play a role in processing the turbulent relationship between his parents (Michelle Williams and Paul Dano) and a family friend (Seth Rogen) who’s always hanging around.

‘Top Gun: Maverick’

Nominated for: Best picture, adapted screenplay, editing, sound, song, visual effects.

How to watch: [*Stream it on Paramount+*](https://www.paramountplus.com/movies/video/Alcn0hcGx0HosdhcawKteH8DXh3RiOF7/). Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0SSXASJCFFG34TN8CBQFM0TN90/), [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/top-gun-maverick/umc.cmc.670544bajp6s4pysx4rvctczz), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/Top_Gun_Maverick?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=PnS5p3AmpRE.P), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Top-Gun-Maverick/1196579?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=791a26459b5211ed837f05d20a82b82c&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_d31e37bb922b470c886cfa1aa09b847a&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww) and [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Top+Gun:+Maverick+movie).

It didn’t seem likely that Tom Cruise would make a “Top Gun” sequel more than three decades after the original and it seemed even less likely that it would be nominated for multiple Academy Awards, but “Top Gun: Maverick” is a summer blockbuster of undeniable craft. Cruise reprises his role as a hotshot fighter pilot, but now he returns to an elite Navy training school as an instructor, preparing a new generation of fliers for a dangerous run at a uranium enrichment facility. Cruise’s age gives the character an unfamiliar gravitas, but the old man still feels the need for speed.

‘All Quiet on the Western Front’

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/qFqgmaO15x4)]

Nominated for: Best picture, adapted screenplay, international feature, cinematography, production design, score, sound, visual effects, makeup and hairstyling.

How to watch: [*Stream it on Netflix.*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81260280)

The year after Erich Maria Remarque’s novel “All Quiet on the Western Front” was published in 1929, Lewis Milestone turned it into one of cinema’s most enduring bleak antiwar films, painting the German war effort as a hellish abattoir for idealist young men. This Netflix adaptation, shot in German by the director Edward Berger, adds a modern pictorial slickness to the imagery, but spares none of the brutality. It also balances the on-the-ground experience of an enlistee (Felix Kammerer) in the trenches with cease-fire negotiations between a German armistice chair (Daniel Brühl) and his French counterpart. One story line greatly impacts the other.

‘Triangle of Sadness’

Nominated for: Best picture, director, original screenplay.

How to watch: Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0HKE0PMN77EPOXLCVTDXSHAJYL/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20), [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/triangle-of-sadness/umc.cmc.6oh5rve3nyng22546ojytkc9x), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/Triangle_of_Sadness?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=SoV_3WibxXQ.P), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Triangle-of-Sadness/2145115?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=25647a2d9bfd11ed808130af0a82b821&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_df5fc255772e4867ad670080e2e0a952&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww) and [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-Lg9Swu8Ow).

For his second Palme d’Or-winning satire, Ruben Ostlund follows up the art-world raspberry “The Square” with a savage, at-times stomach-turning comedy about the ultrawealthy that morphs into a wild upending of class structure. Unfolding in three distinct acts, “Triangle of Sadness” follows two models (Harris Dickinson and Charlbi Dean) whose status as social-media influencers lands them a spot on a yacht that caters to captains of industry, a Russian oligarch and various other elites. But when a patch of bad weather comes sweeping through, the boat is only the first thing that gets rocked.

‘Aftersun’

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/G9jOaggGPKQ)]

Nominated for: Best actor.

How to watch: Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0GW557VRRLRJ9VVZBZJM5U25PG/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20), [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/aftersun/umc.cmc.5y4yb2dmuaubbfamqzja4pjry), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/Aftersun?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=e442_OaCipQ.P), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Aftersun/2145007) and [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKI-d-cW9tk).

In a year when filmmakers like Steven Spielberg (“The Fabelmans”) and James Gray (“Armageddon Time”) reflected on their bumpy childhoods from a more mature perspective, Charlotte Wells’s moving debut feature presented a different sort of memory piece, bittersweet yet untouched by nostalgia. “Aftersun” looks back on an 11-year-old girl (Frankie Corio) who vacations with her young father (Paul Mescal) at a downscale resort in Turkey. Amid all the fun they have sightseeing and splashing around in the water, the girl doesn’t have a full sense of the emotional turbulence her loving father does his best to mask.

‘Causeway’

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/VojBOTd6Euo)]

Nominated for: Best supporting actor.

How to watch: [*Stream it on Apple TV+*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/causeway/umc.cmc.30p2zn6vd14159dorn1vo68el).

Two broken characters work to become whole again in this intimate drama, which is about shared trauma, but leavened by the easy chemistry between its stars, who make an unlikely friendship seem like a natural and fateful bond. Jennifer Lawrence stars as Lynsey, a soldier who returns home to New Orleans after an I.E.D. explosion in Afghanistan results in a brain injury and heightens her depressive tendencies. While working as a pool cleaner, Lynsey strikes a up a platonic relationship with an auto mechanic (Brian Tyree Henry) who’s also haunted by a past incident. In the meantime, they take solace in each other’s company, often while floating in the pools of her out-of-town clients.

‘To Leslie’

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/D_k63vvm3mU)]

Nominated for: Best actress.

How to watch: Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0JGWN71B3T1ZH8Y4136IJLAO37/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20), [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/to-leslie/umc.cmc.34cf62tspe6al9pt2o9q8htgf), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/To_Leslie?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=envyqmr3RCo.P), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/To-Leslie/2109333?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=d240c2799bfd11ed800d00c90a82b838&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_ab6dac9b5de64ec0a58324a11de40ba7&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww) and [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WC78Etrl35A).

Casting an English actress like Andrea Riseborough as a ***working-class*** West Texan seems counterintuitive, but the low-budget drama “To Leslie” leans heavily on her tour-de-force performance in the title role. Years after winning $190,000 in the lottery, Leslie’s fortunes have dwindled in every respect, as she’s squandered the money on drugs and liquor and now turns to her estranged 20-year-old son (Owen Teague) for help. Andre Royo, Stephen Root, Marc Maron and Allison Janney all turn up as characters who offer assistance to Leslie in her circuitous route toward sobriety.

‘Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery’

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/gj5ibYSz8C0)]

Nominated for: Best adapted screenplay.

How to watch: [*Stream it on Netflix*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81458416).

After reviving the old-fashioned parlor room whodunit with the star-studded “Knives Out,” the writer-director Rian Johnson brings back his Southern sleuth, Benoit Blanc (Daniel Craig), but rounds up a new batch of suspects for a luxury getaway that turns deadly. When billionaire tech visionary Miles Bron (Edward Norton) sends out elaborate invitations to old friends and “disrupters,” including a politician (Kathryn Hahn), a fashion designer (Kate Hudson) and a men’s rights streamer (Dave Bautista), Benoit turns up as a surprise guest, along with a co-founder (Janelle Monáe) that Miles cut out of company. The weekend goes haywire when Miles’s plans for a murder mystery game drum up real hostility.

Other Major Nominees

‘Argentina, 1985’

Nominated for: Best international feature.

How to watch: [*Stream it on Amazon Prime Video*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0HM2CPRAN241K811SGWRRH09BF/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20).

‘Guillermo del Toro’s Pinocchio’

Nominated for: Best animated feature.

How to watch: [*Stream it on Netflix*](https://www.netflix.com/title/80218455).

‘Marcel the Shell With Shoes On’

Nominated for: Best animated feature.

How to watch: Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0SOMKHDTQZ6Q6LN7QIINDWG0F6/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20), [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/marcel-the-shell-with-shoes-on/umc.cmc.23mlvs843dhgo7ir7bk727xm2), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/Marcel_the_Shell_with_Shoes_On?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=X84jvv_Hdkc.P), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Marcel-the-Shell-With-Shoes-On/2055303?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=507f09219bff11ed800d00d00a82b838&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_4c7055e986b44c169da7b69bd3a3138d&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww) and [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOkvOLj1scU).

‘Puss in Boots: The Last Wish’

Nominated for: Best animated feature.

How to watch: Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0I9MFR534T4ORSGYHGQ1V1FWM0/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20), [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/puss-in-boots-the-last-wish/umc.cmc.3ysvrfdjp7h6q8dt73t3bq23i), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/Puss_in_Boots_The_Last_Wish?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=NIEgNllaHZU.P), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Puss-in-Boots-The-Last-Wish/2193244?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=ab51570b9bff11ed82a400d50a82b82c&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_e41d4a7bb6d84141804bca41593ad7b8&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww) and [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7mW2tCd81M).

‘The Sea Beast’

Nominated for: Best animated feature.

How to watch: [*Stream it on Netflix*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81018682).

‘Turning Red’

Nominated for: Best animated feature.

How to watch: Stream it on [*Disney+*](https://www.disneyplus.com/movies/turning-red/4mFPCXJi7N2m).

‘Fire of Love’

Nominated for: Best documentary feature.

How to watch: [*Stream it on Disney+*](https://www.disneyplus.com/movies/fire-of-love/1hC7erRfsl3B).

‘Navalny’

Nominated for: Best documentary feature.

How to watch: [*Stream it on HBO Max*](https://play.hbomax.com/page/urn:hbo:page:GYmFp9ATv1JSBmwEAAACW:type:feature).

PHOTO: Colin Farrell in “The Banshees of Inisherin.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY Searchlight Pictures/20th Century Studios FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 24, 2023

**End of Document**



[***In New York, NIMBYism Finally Outstays Its Welcome; mara gay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66GT-P8C1-JBG3-636P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 28, 2022 Wednesday 22:47 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1364 words

**Byline:** Mara Gay

**Highlight:** Political momentum is growing for efforts to build more housing, fast.

**Body**

Why is it so hard to build housing in New York?

In search of an answer to this question, I spoke with Marjorie Velázquez, the City Council member whose one-woman opposition is being allowed to hold up the construction of a roughly 350-unit [*housing development*](https://www.thecity.nyc/2022/8/12/23303759/little-support-for-throggs-neck-development) in the Throgs Neck section of the Bronx, a project that includes apartments for older people and veterans.

Ms. Velázquez’s stated reasons for opposing the project are wide-ranging. She has concerns about crowding in schools. She wants to know “what kind” of veterans will live in the development (“I see a lot of groups come in and say, ‘Oh we’re going to do this, we’re going to do that!’ and appear to be heroes and they leave our veterans behind,” she told me). She says the city should be focusing on infrastructure needs in the area. “We’re a transit desert,” she said.

Then, she talks about the sinkholes that plague Throgs Neck, a community she says has been ignored. “Do you see what I’m saying?” she asked, adding that she wanted to “make sure that it’s for us, by us.”

The City Council may vote for a zoning change that would clear the way for the Throgs Neck project anyway. Approving the change over Ms. Velázquez’s objection would be a major break in tradition for the Council, setting an important precedent in a city where people are struggling to afford to stay in their homes and communities.

Some of Ms. Velázquez’s constituents in Throgs Neck, a tidy neighborhood dotted with single-family homes at the mouth of the East River, have expressed their opposition differently. “He wants to put low-income drug houses on the corner here!” one man shouted at a protest over the proposed rezoning in June, according to [*video*](https://twitter.com/WaluigiSoap/status/1536831921547886593?s=20&amp;t=ak1Jtek36qsMcN1QrLVp3g) of the event posted on Twitter. Whether he was referring to Mayor Eric Adams or someone else is unclear.

In New York, patience for this kind of [*NIMBYism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/05/business/economy/california-housing-crisis-nimby.html) — the “not in my backyard” phenomenon in which communities oppose badly needed new housing — is growing thin. Local communities hold enormous power to block development, often through local Council members in New York City, or county executives in the suburbs. As the housing crisis intensifies, there are signs that New York’s politicians may finally be willing to stand up to NIMBYism.

“When you say ‘not in our backyard,’ you are believing your block belongs to you. It belongs to the city,” Mr. Adams said in a phone conversation. “I believe local communities should have input, but we all need to take responsibility for the housing crisis we are facing.”

For years, neighborhoods in New York City and the New York suburbs have had near veto power over land-use and housing development decisions. That could soon change. In the 51-seat City Council, momentum is gathering to end a practice known as “[*member deference*](https://www.gothamgazette.com/city/10932-blood-center-city-council-overrides-member-deference),” in which the entire body lets a member decide the fate of land-use proposals in his or her district.

“I reject that this will be a Council that says no to housing, given the scale of the crisis we face,” the Council speaker, Adrienne E. Adams, said in a statement. Ms. Adams said the Council would continue to value community input, but not “irrational opposition that rejects desperately needed housing.”

The mayor is also backing smaller changes to the citywide zoning code that would make it easier to build housing and don’t require the approval of individual Council members. One of those changes, for example, would remove caps on the building of studio apartments. Another would eliminate rules requiring a certain number of parking spaces to be built with housing units. Dan Garodnick, chair of the City Planning Commission, told me his team had found dozens of such regulations that create needless barriers to housing production.

This change in New York politics is part of a nascent but promising movement. As rents rise, the anti-development sentiment that once dominated Democratic politics is giving way to calls to build more housing, fast. Lately, even politicians who count themselves among the most skeptical regarding for-profit developers have thrown their support behind building units to ease the crisis.

Councilwoman Tiffany Cabán, a proudly far-left Democrat, surprised many recently when she voted to site 1,400 new units of housing in her district in Queens. “Listen, I’m not anti-development,” she told me. “We desperately need more housing.” Ms. Cabán said she had come to believe the city should embrace every possible way to build more housing, from allowing responsible building by for-profit developers to using whatever city-owned land remains to put up apartments.

But solving the housing crisis in New York City will require a regional approach. The city and its suburbs are connected by extensive rail lines allowing residents of Long Island and Westchester to commute to Manhattan. The system is an enormous strength. But for the better part of a century, zoning laws in Westchester and [*especially Long Island*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/opinion/long-island-housing.html) have severely limited the construction of higher-density housing developments.

The zoning laws have their [*roots*](https://projects.newsday.com/long-island/segregation-real-estate-history/) in the Jim Crow era of segregation, when they were used to keep Black Americans and others from buying homes in certain areas. The problem is especially acute on Long Island, where the biggest growth took place in the years after World War II, when the federal government backed housing discrimination through preferential treatment in government loans.

Over time, these laws have contributed not only to racial and economic segregation in New York, but also to the affordability crisis by constraining the region’s housing supply. Gov. Kathy Hochul and the State Legislature need to challenge suburban zoning laws that make it difficult or virtually impossible to build the multifamily housing the state needs.

Eliminating these restrictions doesn’t have to mean the end of suburban life. Indeed, higher-density development in suburban downtowns can invigorate them. It won’t be easy. A proposal in the State Legislature that would have allowed for multifamily housing to be built around transit centers on Long Island failed this year after Ms. Hochul [*backed down*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/opinion/new-york-affordable-housing.html) in the face of local opposition. If she is re-elected this November, resurrecting that effort would be a worthy priority.

The governor and the State Legislature could also go much further. California last year essentially banned single-family zoning, something that leaders in Albany could consider as well. They could also could make government investment in the suburbs contingent on the elimination of exclusionary zoning. At the very least, state and federal officials could make it clear to communities in Suffolk and Nassau Counties that infrastructure improvements for the Long Island Rail Road will continue only if multifamily housing is built near transit centers.

Several members of New York’s congressional delegation support a [*bill*](https://www.warren.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/08/05/2021/warren-and-colleagues-reintroduce-historic-legislation-to-confront-americas-housing-crisis) introduced by Senator Elizabeth Warren known as the American Housing and Mobility Act, which would offer federal funding for localities that reform their zoning laws to encourage greater density and the building of moderate- and low-income housing. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, a co-sponsor of the bill, acknowledged that passing the bill would be an uphill battle. “NIMBYism is real,” she told me in a phone conversation.

Given the scale of the crisis, these efforts to build more housing are essential and urgent. The median rent in the city has undergone a double-digit percentage increase from prepandemic levels in every borough but Staten Island, according to [*data*](https://streeteasy.com/blog/data-dashboard/?agg=Median&amp;metric=Asking%20Rent&amp;type=Rentals&amp;bedrooms=Any%20Bedrooms&amp;property=Any%20Property%20Type&amp;minDate=2010-01-01&amp;maxDate=2022-07-01&amp;area=Flatiron,Brooklyn%20Heights) from StreetEasy.

The good news is that housing is at long last a political priority. If it doesn’t build more housing, and quickly, New York will soon shut out young, ***working-class*** and middle-class people. Only the wealthiest will remain, along with NIMBY holdouts sprinkled across the city. What a lonely, sterile end to New York that would be.

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[***German Election Leaves Merkel’s Conservatives in Disarray***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63PY-S6R1-JBG3-64X6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 28, 2021 Tuesday 09:34 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1315 words

**Byline:** Katrin Bennhold and Melissa Eddy

**Highlight:** Sunday’s defeat has revealed a gasping conservative party. But what that means for Germany’s future is not clear as traditional left-right politics are scrambled.

**Body**

Sunday’s defeat has revealed a gasping conservative party. But what that means for Germany’s future is not clear as traditional left-right politics are scrambled.

BERLIN — Chancellor Angela Merkel was standing two paces behind Armin Laschet, her party’s candidate to succeed her, stony-faced and with her hands clenched.

The first [*election results*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/26/world/europe/germany-election-results-olaf-scholz-merkel-laschet.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article) had just come in. The conservative camp had collapsed by 9 percentage points, the Social Democrats were winning — and Mr. Laschet was vowing to do “everything” to form the next government.

To watch the scene on Sunday night at conservative party headquarters was to watch power melt away in real time.

Germany’s once-mighty Christian Democratic Union is not used to losing. Five of eight postwar chancellors were conservatives and the current one is leaving office after 16 years as the most popular politician in the country.

But Sunday’s defeat, the worst since the party was founded after World War II, has revealed almost overnight a conservative movement not just in crisis and increasingly open revolt, but one fretting about its long-term survival.

“It has raised a question about our very identity,” Norbert Röttgen, a senior member of the Christian Democratic Union told public television ARD on Monday. “The last, the only big people’s party in Germany. And if this continues, then we will no longer be that.”

Yet beyond the conservatives’ disarray, what [*Germany’s messy vote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/26/world/europe/germany-election-results-olaf-scholz-merkel-laschet.html) says about the future of the country — and of Europe — is still hard to divine. It was an [*election*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/09/28/world/japan-party-elections) filled with paradoxes — and perhaps one in which Germans themselves were unsure what they wanted.

The last government included both traditional parties on the center-right and center-left, making it harder to gauge whether Sunday’s vote was in fact a vote for change. [*Olaf Scholz*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/world/europe/germany-election-results-olaf-scholz-spd.html), the chancellor candidate of the Social Democrats, campaigned against Ms. Merkel’s party — but he has served as Ms. Merkel’s finance minister and vice chancellor for the past four years and in many ways ran as an incumbent.

Some of the “change vote” went to him, but much of it was split between the progressive Greens and the pro-business Free Democrats whose economic agendas could not be further apart.

Overall, 45.4 percent of votes went to parties on the left — the Social Democrats, the Greens and the Left Party — and 45.9 to those on the right, including the C.D.U., the Free Democrats and the far-right Alternative for Germany party.

But even if not a dramatic shift to the left, the devastation the returns have wrought on Ms. Merkel’s party are plain. With Ms. Merkel leaving, millions of conservative voters are leaving, too. Nearly 2 million voters shifted their support away from the Christian Democrats to the Social Democrats on Sunday, and more than 1 million defected to each of the Free Democrats and the Greens.

It was a splintered result that revealed [*a more fragmented society*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/25/world/europe/germany-election-merkel.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article), one that increasingly defies traditional political labeling. And it appeared to spell a definitive end to the long era of Germany’s traditional “Volks”-parties, catchall “people’s” parties.

In their heyday both Social Democrats and Christian Democrats routinely got over 40 percent of the vote. A ***working-class*** organized in powerful labor unions voted Social Democrat, while a conservative churchgoing electorate voted Christian Democrat.

The Social Democrats lost that status a while ago. With union membership declining and parts of the traditional ***working-class*** constituency abandoning the party, its share of the vote roughly halved since late 1990s. The crisis of social democracy has been a familiar theme over the past decade.

Ms. Merkel’s conservatives were insulated from these tectonic shifts for longer. As long as she was in office, her own popularity and appeal reached well beyond a traditional conservative electorate and disguised many of the party’s creeping troubles.

Ms. Merkel understood that in a rapidly changing world, where church membership was declining and values evolving, she needed to appeal to voters outside the Christian Democrats’ traditional base to keep winning [*elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/29/world/europe/politics-germany-election-left.html).

Since taking office in 2005, she gradually took her party from the conservative right to the center of the political spectrum, not least by co-governing with the Social Democrats for three out of her four terms. It worked, at least for a while.

Ms. Merkel kept the party together, analysts say, but in the process she stripped it of its identity.

“The C.D.U. is hollowed out: it has no leadership and no program,” said Herfried Münkler, a prominent political scientist and author on German politics. “The essential ingredient has gone — and that is Merkel.”

There are many reasons the conservatives performed badly. One was the fact that after 16 years of a conservative-led government, a certain stasis had set in and, particularly among younger voters, a desire for new leadership.

Another was the deep unpopularity and poorly run campaign of Mr. Laschet, who staked his political future on winning the chancellery but is losing support by the day even within his own party.

Since the election, a simmering civil war inside Germany’s conservative camp between those eager to cling on to power at any price and those ready to concede defeat and regroup in opposition was increasingly coming into focus.

While Mr. Laschet is still insisting that he will hold talks with the Greens and the Free Democrats to form a majority coalition, many in his own camp have conceded defeat.

On Tuesday one of his main internal rivals, Markus Söder, the swaggering and popular governor of Bavaria who narrowly missed landing the nomination himself in April, went so far as to congratulate Mr. Scholz on the election result.

“Olaf Scholz has the best chance right now of becoming chancellor,” Mr. Söder told reporters in Berlin on Tuesday.

The regional conservative leader in the northern state of Lower Saxony, Bernd Althusmann, told public broadcaster ARD that voters wanted change. “We should now humbly and respectfully accept the will of the voters,” he said.

The pressure on Mr. Laschet to concede the race only increased after he failed to win the support of voters even in his own constituency.

But some said that Ms. Merkel herself shared some blame for her party’s abysmal result. In all her years in power, she failed to successfully groom a successor. She tried once; but her attempt to position Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, now the defense minister, proved deeply divisive and ended in Ms. Kramp-Karrenbauer’s resignation as party leader after barely a year.

Mr. Laschet, who followed her at the helm of the party, has also failed to bridge the divisions within the party between those who embraced the social changes Ms. Merkel had overseen from parental leave policies and same-sex marriage to welcoming over a million refugees in 2015 and 2016 — and those nostalgic for the party’s conservatism of old.

But the days of uniting both camps under the umbrella of a single party may simply be over, analysts said.

“Conservatism no longer has convincing answers — or at least not convincing enough to get 40 percent of the voters,” Mr. Münkler said.

That raises existential questions for the Christian Democrats.

In several neighboring European countries, including France and Italy, traditional center-right parties have already shrunk into irrelevance, struggling to find a message that appeals to voters and ripped apart by internal power struggles.

Most now expect that the Christian Democrats will end up outside of government.

“They might be in opposition for a while,” said Mr. Münkler, the political scientist, “and then the question is: Will they survive it?”

Christopher F. Schuetze contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Chancellor Angela Merkel with Armin Laschet, her party’s choice to succeed her. Support for the party eroded under his watch. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN MEISSNER/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Sarah Palin Loses as the Party She Helped Transform Moves Past Her; Political Memo***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66XV-FXV1-JBG3-6195-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 23, 2022 Wednesday 22:22 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1501 words

**Byline:** Jeremy W. Peters

**Highlight:** The former Alaska governor, once the standard-bearer of the G.O.P.’s dog-whistling, no-apologies culture, was no match for the same forces she rode to national prominence.

**Body**

The former Alaska governor, once the standard-bearer of the G.O.P.’s dog-whistling, no-apologies culture, was no match for the same forces she rode to national prominence.

It is hard to overstate just how much of a jolt to the political system Sarah Palin delivered when [*she defeated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/23/washington/24alaskacnd.html) her first fellow Republican 16 years ago.

He was Frank Murkowski, the sitting governor of Alaska and a towering figure in the 49th state. She was a “hockey mom” and the former mayor of a small, ***working-class*** town who vowed to stick it to the “good ol’ boys.” That race put her on the map with the national Republican Party and set her on a path that would change her life, and the tenor of American politics for years to come.

Then, Ms. Palin was at the vanguard of the dog-whistling, no-apologies political culture that former President Donald J. Trump now embodies.

Today, [*having lost her bid for Congress*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/23/us/politics/mary-peltola-alaska-house-race.html) after years out of the spotlight, Ms. Palin is a much diminished force.

She was, in many ways, undone by the same political currents she rode to national prominence, first as Senator John McCain’s vice-presidential nominee in 2008 and later as a Tea Party luminary and Fox News star. Along the way, she helped redefine the outer limits of what a politician could say as she made dark insinuations about Barack Obama’s background and false claims about government “death panels” that could deny health care to seniors and people with disabilities.

Now, a generation of Republican stars follows the template she helped create as a hybrid celebrity-politician who relished fighting with elements in her own party as much as fighting with Democrats — none more so than Mr. Trump, who watched her closely for years before deciding to run for president himself. He ensured this month that he would remain in the spotlight, [*announcing another bid for the White House*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/15/us/election-news-results) in 2024.

But as the next generation rose up, Ms. Palin’s brand of politics no longer seemed as novel or as outrageous. Next to Mr. Trump’s lies about a huge conspiracy to deny him a second term, or Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene’s casual allusions to political violence, Ms. Palin’s provocations more than a decade ago can seem almost quaint.

Ms. Palin, 58, started on the road to political fame after her upset victory in the governor’s race in Alaska in 2006, when the Republican Party was in need of a fresh face. Republicans had just lost badly in the midterm elections — what President George W. Bush called a “[*thumping*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/08/world/americas/08iht-vote.3455173.html).” The G.O.P.’s conservative base was angry with party leaders over their support for an immigration reform bill. And the broader public was war-weary after five years of conflict in the Middle East with no end in sight.

Ms. Palin was as different from a Bush Republican as they come. She promised to do things as governor that politicians in her party typically didn’t, such as restoring social welfare funding and scrutinizing tax breaks her state gave to large corporations. She appealed to Alaskans’ insularity, too, channeling mistrust of outsiders like oil companies, fisheries and federal agencies.

She prided herself on being able to work across party lines. One Democrat she developed a relationship with in the state Legislature was Mary Peltola, who has now defeated Ms. Palin twice — first in [*a special election over the summer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/31/us/politics/mary-peltola-alaska-special-election.html) to fill Alaska’s lone congressional seat and now for a full two-year term. Ms. Peltola is the first Alaska Native to serve in Congress, and Ms. Palin has spoken of her warmly despite their political rivalry.

But Ms. Palin had long displayed a willingness to make specious claims that her opponents were untrustworthy because they were different, and to insinuate that those differences stemmed from a lack of patriotism or Christian faith. In her victorious race for mayor of Wasilla in 1996, she brought the country’s culture wars to the steps of city hall, championing biblical principles and the Second Amendment. [*She suggested*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/03/world/americas/03iht-03wasilla.15849469.html) — falsely — that electing her would give Wasilla its “first” Christian mayor. (Her opponent and the incumbent mayor, John C. Stein, was raised Lutheran.)

Ms. Palin’s supporters were always drawn to her not just for the battles she picked and the enemies she made — the people she denigrated as “blue bloods” in the G.O.P. leadership and the “lame-stream media” were two favorite targets — but to her ordinariness. She was a working mother who had a young son with Down syndrome, a teenage daughter who got pregnant right when the Palin family was introduced to the nation in 2008, and a son who served in Iraq.

When Mr. McCain picked her as his running mate, he told advisers at the time that he knew it was a gamble, and said in characteristically [*colorful terms*](https://www.axios.com/2022/02/06/john-mccain-sarah-palin-f-it) that that was what he liked about it. It was a Hail Mary pass that fell short in the end. Ms. Palin’s youth and freshness balanced out Mr. McCain’s image as an aging, decades-long denizen of Washington. But her inexperience in national and world affairs made her a liability. She sometimes struggled to answer basic questions such as what newspapers she read.

But to the legions of followers that seemed to grow larger by the day on the campaign trail — at one rally in The Villages retirement community in Florida, 60,000 people turned out to see her speak — the missteps only made her more authentic. And as she became more popular, her language grew sharper and more incendiary.

At one point, with help from McCain campaign speechwriters, she drew widespread condemnation after accusing Mr. Obama of “palling around with terrorists,” which many people at the time saw as a barely veiled, racist allegation. (False rumors that Mr. Obama was secretly a Muslim had long circulated among conservatives.) Her rallies started to draw angry outbursts from the crowd when she mentioned Mr. Obama’s name. People shouted “treason!” and “Obama bin Laden.”

Many wrote off Ms. Palin for dead politically after Mr. McCain lost and when, a few months later, she resigned as governor. But to many Republicans, especially those outside Washington, she was still the biggest star in the party. She went on to write a best-selling memoir, “Going Rogue,” and signed a contract with Fox News worth $1 million a year.

She was initially considered a front-runner for the G.O.P. presidential nomination in 2012, at times beating or slightly trailing the eventual nominee, Mitt Romney, in the polls. And when she embarked on a bus tour up the East Coast over Memorial Day weekend in 2011, she drew so much media attention that news of her stop in New Hampshire pushed Mr. Romney’s announcement for president that same day off the front page of the local paper.

It was during that trip she made a fateful visit to Trump Tower at Mr. Trump’s invitation, where the two met and posed for the throngs of paparazzi waiting on the sidewalk before stopping at a nearby pizzeria for slices. (Infamously, he ate his with a fork.)

At the time, many political insiders thought the possibility that she could run was very high. But privately, she was already expressing doubts about the toll that another campaign would take on her family. And when a group of Republican activists met with her near her home in Scottsdale, Ariz., to pitch her on the idea of running — including two future Trump campaign officials, Stephen K. Bannon and David N. Bossie — she conveyed as much.

Ms. Palin was never truly able to rekindle the same spark she lit during the 2008 campaign, when she was the loose-lipped insurgent to Mr. McCain’s elder statesman of the establishment.

In 2016, she declined again to run for the Republican nomination, clearing the path for the next Republican insurgent: Mr. Trump. He asked her for her endorsement before the Iowa caucuses in February, and she obliged. In a column she wrote later that year for Breitbart, Ms. Palin recalled with delight what a friend had told her about why she liked Mr. Trump so much: Liberals, establishment Republicans and the media couldn’t stand him. “I love him because YOU hate him!” Ms. Palin said her friend told her.

The reversal of Ms. Palin’s political fortunes today means that many of the renegades who modeled themselves after her — and many of her rivals — have outlasted her. Lisa Murkowski, the daughter of the former Alaska governor Ms. Palin defeated 16 years ago by more than 30 points, [*has won her bid for another term to the United States Senate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/23/us/politics/lisa-murkowski-alaska-senate-race.html). (Ms. Murkowski, a Republican, endorsed Ms. Peltola, the Democrat who beat Ms. Palin on Tuesday.)

Ms. Palin, never one to be especially sentimental about public service, often seemed disengaged during what was supposed to be her comeback campaign and revival as a national conservative icon. Though she went into the race with the highest name recognition of any rival and had Mr. Trump’s endorsement, she struggled to raise money toward the end.

And she kept a light schedule. In the final days of the election, with little time left to campaign, she was spotted at a Knicks game in New York.

This article appeared in print on page A18.

**Load-Date:** November 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Democrats Make Frantic Call to Action in Governor's Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66R4-50W1-JBG3-60C9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 28, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1457 words

**Byline:** By Luis Ferré-Sadurní and Nicholas Fandos

**Body**

Democrats and their allies are pouring millions of dollars into late-stage ads and get-out-the-vote efforts to help Gov. Kathy Hochul as she fends off her Republican challenger, Lee Zeldin.

You don't need to consult the most recent polls to realize that the race for New York governor between Gov. Kathy Hochul and Representative Lee Zeldin appears to be tightening -- just follow the string of Democrats' calls to action this week.

With just 12 days until Election Day, Democrats and their allies are mounting a frenzied push to keep Ms. Hochul in office, pouring millions of dollars into last-minute ads and staging a whirlwind of campaign rallies to energize their base amid concerns that their typically reliable bedrock of Black and Latino voters might not turn out.

Labor unions have gone into overdrive, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on television and radio ads to cajole those voters to turn up for Ms. Hochul. On the ground, Ms. Hochul is expected to campaign with Representative Hakeem Jeffries, a party power broker whose Brooklyn district provides crucial votes for the Democratic base, as well as in southeast Queens with Mayor Eric Adams over the weekend.

The Hochul campaign has even turned to its former adversaries for help, including progressive lawmakers who opposed her during the Democratic primary in June, and the left-leaning Working Families Party, which called for an ''emergency all-hands-on-deck meeting'' of its leadership earlier this week to mobilize in favor of Ms. Hochul.

Despite Democratic jitters, Ms. Hochul has continued to lead in the most recent major polls, by as little as four points, and as much as 11 points. The governor also still has an overwhelming cash advantage over Mr. Zeldin, as well as an electoral one: Democratic voters outnumber Republicans two to one in New York.

Still, many Democrats have grown uneasy that they have not done enough to excite the party's liberal base in New York, where Ms. Hochul's victory was once presumed safe. And while some of the recent increase in campaign events is typical in a race's final stretch, it is also a reflection of how the race's dynamics have shifted.

Recent public polls show Mr. Zeldin, a Republican congressman from Long Island, drawing closer to Ms. Hochul, and during a head-to-head debate on Tuesday, Mr. Zeldin repeatedly sought to appeal to New Yorkers disenchanted with the economy or fearful of crime.

Much of the Democrats' efforts have focused on New York City, the state's voter-rich Democratic stronghold, which has accounted for about one-third of the total vote in the most recent elections for governor. Democratic strategists believe that if Ms. Hochul can secure enough votes in the city, she will more than offset any gains Mr. Zeldin makes in the suburbs and rural swaths of upstate, where he is more competitive.

''The more Hochul gets out the vote in New York City, the more wiggle room she has with swing voters in the Hudson Valley, in Long Island, and the Buffalo suburbs,'' said Alyssa Cass, a Democratic political strategist who has worked in some of the state's marquee congressional races this year.

Indeed, some political operatives have questioned whether Ms. Hochul, who hails from western New York, has done enough to excite minority voters in the city. Her selection earlier this year of Antonio Delgado, a rising Black star who entered Congress in 2019, as her lieutenant governor was seen as an attempt to diversify her ticket.

Others have raised concerns that her campaign, run largely by out-of-state consultants, has lagged in traditional organizing tactics and mobilizing voters, and may have relied too much on the prestige of the governor's office and not enough on retail politics.

They point to anecdotal evidence, such as an apparent dearth of Hochul lawn signs compared to the Zeldin campaign. Some voters are still unable to pronounce her last name -- it's Hochul, rhymes with local, her campaign likes to say. Others note that Ms. Hochul did not begin to consistently show up at Black churches, traditional campaign stops for Democratic politicians, until very recently.

''Mobilizing and activating African American voters, the backbone of the party in New York and nationally, is crucial these next 10 days,'' said Neal Kwatra, a Democratic consultant. ''These voters, especially downstate, must be engaged and motivated if you're going to win statewide as a Democrat.''

The campaign's efforts have included overtures to the Working Families Party, or W.F.P., a left-wing third party that endorsed one of Ms. Hochul's rivals, Jumaane Williams, the New York City public advocate, during the June primary.

In an email on Monday calling for the emergency meeting of its leadership, the W.F.P. warned that ''depressed progressive turnout could have disastrous consequences for W.F.P.-endorsed down-ballot candidates and the party's ballot line and future.''

''I know that some of us have deep policy disagreements with Kathy Hochul -- that's why we endorsed Jumaane in the primary -- but a Zeldin administration would be entirely destructive to our agenda,'' Sochie Nnaemeka, the party's director in New York, wrote in the email, which was obtained by The New York Times.

The concerns over voter engagement have also led a handful of labor unions to mount a last-minute drive to aid the governor, through expenditures on television and digital ad buys, with many targeting the party's base of minority voters.

Two unions that represent teachers -- the American Federation of Teachers and an affiliate, New York State United Teachers, which represents 600,000 teachers in the state -- are each steering $500,000 into a super PAC, Progress NYS, to finance an ad campaign on television and online.

Another super PAC, Empire State Forward, is expected to receive at least $400,000 from about half a dozen labor unions to air ads on radio that target Black and Caribbean voters, with a focus on public safety and racial justice. (The Hochul campaign also reserved $150,000 worth of ads, which will begin airing Friday, on radio stations with large Black audiences).

Candis Tolliver, the political director for one of the unions, 32BJ SEIU, which represents building service workers, said the ads were meant to speak to many of the union's members, whom she said were typically ''super reliable for Democrats.''

''Making sure we turn out the base is going to be particularly important,'' she said. ''We're realizing there is some apathy among voters and a fear that folks are staying home, and so we want to remind people not to stay home, and what's at stake in this election.''

The Hotel and Gaming Trades Council, which represents hotel workers, is spending $250,000 over the next two weeks on ads in Spanish-language broadcast channels in the downstate region, as well as on YouTube.

Rather than focus on crime or abortion, one 30-second spot homes in on the economy, touting Ms. Hochul's upbringing in a union household and her commitment to helping ***working-class*** families. A voice-over in Spanish tells viewers that Ms. Hochul, who is white and of Irish descent, is ''one of us.''

The focus on Latinos comes in the wake of national trends showing an increasing number of more moderate, Spanish-speaking voters flipping to the Republican Party, and concern among some Democrats that the same may happen in New York this cycle.

The Hochul campaign on Thursday pointed to early signs that Democratic enthusiasm appeared to be strong, citing data from the state party showing that about 60 percent of the more than 167,000 absentee ballots received by election officials so far were from Democrats, even though Republicans are more likely to vote in person.

As early voting begins this weekend, Ms. Hochul is expected to attend a union rally on Long Island, offer remarks at Black churches, and campaign in Buffalo and Rochester alongside Letitia James, the state attorney general. Her surrogates are also hitting the trail: Mr. Delgado is expected to attend a get-out-the-vote rally in the Bronx on Saturday, while Hillary Clinton is reportedly showing up at a ''Women's Rally'' for Ms. Hochul at Barnard College next week.

Next week, Ms. Hochul is expected to campaign in the Inwood neighborhood of Upper Manhattan with Representative Adriano Espaillat, and with Representative Grace Meng in Flushing, Queens. Meanwhile party volunteers will launch canvassing operations across the city, from Fort Greene in Brooklyn to Sunnyside, Queens.

Mr. Zeldin and his lieutenant governor running mate, Alison Esposito, are in the midst of a two-week ''Get Out the Vote Bus Tour'' that will include 25 rallies across the state, including a stop in Erie County on Thursday.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/27/nyregion/hochul-governor-zeldin-democratic.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/27/nyregion/hochul-governor-zeldin-democratic.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Gov. Kathy Hochul's party is stepping up efforts to help as her race against the Republican Lee Zeldin tightens in New York. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNY HOLSTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A16.

**Load-Date:** October 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Adams Aims Endorsements to Influence Policy and Nudge Party to the Center***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:666N-1NY1-DXY4-X206-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 21, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 21

**Length:** 1213 words

**Byline:** By Jeffery C. Mays

**Body**

The mayor has chosen sides in at least 10 primaries this year, as he looks to enact criminal justice changes and defeat left-leaning candidates.

Most big-city mayors, especially those in the relative infancy of their tenures, typically try to avoid wading into fractious party primaries, mindful that their goal is to build consensus.

Mayor Eric Adams of New York City does not subscribe to that theory.

Just seven months into his first term, Mr. Adams, a Democrat, has injected himself into his party's divide, making endorsements in roughly a dozen state legislative primaries.

Mr. Adams has endorsed incumbents, upstart challengers, and even a minister with a history of making antisemitic and homophobic statements.

Behind all the endorsements lies a common theme: The mayor wants to push Albany and his party away from the left, toward the center.

''I just want reasonable thinking lawmakers. I want people that are responding to the constituents,'' Mr. Adams said Thursday. ''The people of this city, they want to support police, they want safe streets, they want to make sure people who are part of the catch-release-repeat system don't continue to hurt innocent New Yorkers.''

In Tuesday's State Senate primary, the mayor has endorsed three candidates facing rivals backed by the Democratic Socialists of America. The mayor said the endorsements are meant to help elect people willing to tighten the state's bail law, a move that he believes is needed to address an uptick in serious crime.

Mr. Adams's most striking endorsement might be his decision to back the Rev. Conrad Tillard, who has disavowed his remarks about gay people and Jews, over incumbent Senator Jabari Brisport, a member of the Democratic Socialists.

The mayor, who proudly hires people with troubled pasts, said Mr. Tillard is a changed man. During a recent interview on WABC radio, Mr. Tillard said that Mr. Adams was elected with a ''mandate'' to make New York City safer.

''I want to join him in Albany, and I want to join other legislators who have common sense, who realize that without safe streets, safe communities, we cannot have a thriving city,'' he said.

The mayor has also held a fund-raiser for Miguelina Camilo, a lawyer running against Senator Gustavo Rivera in the Bronx. Mr. Rivera was endorsed by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who has criticized Mr. Adams for some of his centrist views; Ms. Camilo is the candidate of the Bronx Democratic Party.

In a newly created Senate district that covers parts of Queens, Brooklyn and Manhattan, the mayor has endorsed a moderate Democrat, Elizabeth Crowley, over Kristen Gonzalez, a tech worker who is supported by the Democratic Socialists and the Working Families Party. Mike Corbett, a former City Council staff member, is also running. The race has been flooded with outside money supporting Ms. Crowley.

In Brooklyn, Mr. Adams endorsed incumbent Senator Kevin Parker, who is facing a challenge from Kaegan Mays-Williams, a former Manhattan assistant district attorney, and David Alexis, a former Lyft driver and co-founder of the Drivers Cooperative who also has support from the Democratic Socialists.

Three candidates -- Mr. Brisport, Ms. Gonzalez and Mr. Alexis -- whose rivals were supported by Mr. Adams said they are opposed to revising the bail law to keep more people in jail before their trials.

''When it comes to an issue like bail reform, what we don't want to have is a double standard where if you have enough money you can make bail and get out, but if you are poor or ***working class*** you don't,'' Ms. Gonzalez said.

Mr. Brisport said that the mayor's motive extends beyond bail and criminal justice issues.

Mr. Adams, Mr. Brisport said, is ''making a concerted effort to build a team that will do his bidding in Albany.''

The mayor did not disagree.

In his first dealings with Albany as a mayor, Mr. Adams fell short of accomplishing his legislative agenda. He had some victories, but was displeased with the Legislature's refusal to accommodate his wishes on the bail law or to grant him long-term control of the schools, two issues central to his agenda.

While crime overall remains comparatively low and homicides and shootings are down, other crimes such as robbery, assault and burglary have increased as much as 40 percent compared with this time last year. Without evidence, the mayor has blamed the bail reform law for letting repeat offenders out of jail.

Under pressure from the governor, the Legislature in April made changes to the bail law, but the mayor has repeatedly criticized lawmakers for not going far enough.

''We passed a lot of laws for people who commit crimes, but I just want to see what are the list of laws we pass that deal with a New Yorker who was the victim of a crime,'' Mr. Adams said.

The mayor's strategy is not entirely new. Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg sought influence by donating from his personal fortune to Republicans. Mayor Bill de Blasio embarked on a disastrous fund-raising plan to help Democrats take control of the Senate in 2014. But those mayors were interceding in general elections, not intraparty primaries.

In the June Assembly primaries, Mr. Adams endorsed a handful of incumbents facing upstart challengers from the left. He backed Michael Benedetto, an incumbent from the Bronx who beat back a primary challenge from Jonathan Soto, who worked for, and was endorsed by, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez. Mr. Adams also endorsed Assemblywoman Inez E. Dickens in Central Harlem in her victorious campaign against another candidate backed by Ms. Ocasio-Cortez.

''The jury is still out on how much endorsements matter, but they do matter for the person being endorsed,'' said Olivia Lapeyrolerie, a Democratic political strategist and former aide to Mr. de Blasio. ''It's good to keep your friends close.''

Mr. Adams's influence is not restricted to his endorsements. Striving for a Better New York, a political action committee run by one of his associates, the Rev. Alfred L. Cockfield II, donated $7,500 to Mr. Tillard in May and more than $12,000 to Mr. Parker through August.

The mayor's efforts have come under attack. Michael Gianaris, the deputy majority leader in the Senate, said there is no need to create a new faction in the Senate that is reminiscent of the Independent Democratic Conference, a group of breakaway Democrats that allowed Senate Republicans to control the chamber until they were vanquished in 2018.

''Eric Adams was never very good at Senate politics when he was in the Senate,'' Mr. Gianaris said. ''And apparently he hasn't gotten much better at it.''

It's unclear how much influence Mr. Adams's endorsements will have. Sumathy Kumar, co-chair of the New York City chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America, said that with the mayor's lukewarm approval ratings, she's betting that on-the-ground organizing will be the deciding factor in what is expected to be a low turnout primary.

Mr. Parker said the mayor's endorsement would be influential in his district and supported Mr. Adams's push against the left wing of the party.

''How many times do you have to be attacked by the D.S.A. before you realize you're in a fight and decide to fight back?'' Mr. Parker said.

Emma G. Fitzsimmons contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/20/nyregion/eric-adams-endorsements.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/20/nyregion/eric-adams-endorsements.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mayor Eric Adams was unhappy with Albany on the bail law and the refusal to grant him long-term control of the schools. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CINDY SCHULTZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The City Awakens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62X4-2RB1-DXY4-X07C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 13, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MM; Column 0; Magazine Desk; Pg. 12

**Length:** 467 words

**Body**

Last spring, when New York City was one of the global centers of the coronavirus pandemic, it was almost impossible to imagine the scenes on the following pages. One of the city's greatest qualities -- its delirious density, with so many different people mashed so tightly together -- had become one of its most acute dangers, and most New Yorkers were doing everything they could to avoid one another. That changed gradually, as New Yorkers adjusted to the new reality. But it was not until last month that the reality itself changed. That was when the city's vaccination rate for adults crossed 50 percent and hospitalizations from Covid-19 fell below 1,000. Public health officials eased their rules, and masks started disappearing from faces -- outdoors at first and soon indoors, too. New York was finally emerging from Covid hibernation.

We documented this awakening in May through the eyes of 15 photographers who are 25 or younger (you can see a group portrait of them on Page 6). For 31 days, these young people fanned out around the city to capture the hope and excitement, the release of pent-up social energy, but also the anxiety and uncertainty about what might happen next. We wanted to see all this from the perspective of the city's younger residents, whose lives have been most upended by the past year and who will be most profoundly affected by the renewal and rebirth that will unfold over the next decade.

There is no doubt that the city will bounce back, but in what way? That's the question at the heart of the only article in this issue, an essay by Jonathan Mahler that weaves through the photographs. Even as the pandemic ground urban life to a halt, it revealed the deep inequalities that have steadily worsened since the city pulled itself out of its last major economic crisis, in the 1970s. As Mahler explains, the stark and growing divide between rich and poor, which has increasingly defined the city, was exacerbated by decisions made during that recovery, when New York's leaders turned to the private sector as their fiscal savior. Before that crisis, Mahler observes, a ''sprawling network of public institutions,'' such as subsidized housing and mass transit, formed ''the tent poles of a great ***working-class*** city.'' Gradually, they were recast as ''emblems of the excesses of big government,'' with devastating effects for the city's less affluent residents.

The recovery from the pandemic represents an opportunity, perhaps the best in decades, to address these perennial problems. New York constantly renews itself, and you can feel that rejuvenating energy in these photographs. But as Mahler's essay makes clear, how that renewal happens will determine the lives of New Yorkers for many decades to come. The city has awakened to find itself at a crossroads.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/magazine/the-city-awakens.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/magazine/the-city-awakens.html)

**Load-Date:** June 13, 2021

**End of Document**



[***What New Yorkers See in This Portrait of the Mayor’s Mother***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GW-P8S1-JBG3-609S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1513 words

**Byline:** Sandra E. Garcia

**Highlight:** Dorothy Mae Adams-Streeter posed for a portrait at her 75th birthday party. Her image, floating in a brandy snifter, has a powerful resonance.

**Body**

Dorothy Mae Adams-Streeter posed for a portrait at her 75th birthday party. Her image, floating in a brandy snifter, has a powerful resonance.

On New Year’s Day, when [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/eric-adams-mayor-nyc) was sworn in as the 110th mayor of New York City, in his right hand he raised high above his head a framed portrait of his mother, Dorothy Mae Adams-Streeter, pictured in a brandy snifter. His left hand rested over her Bible, where she kept notes, letters and old pictures.

“I was raising my right hand, lifting her up, as she lifted me up,” Mr. Adams said in an interview. “Who would think that eventually, because of what she instilled in her son, that he would be in Times Square, being sworn in as the mayor and holding up her photo?”

The brandy snifter portrait is as American as hip-hop, acid-washed jeans and plastic-covered sofas. A photo in that style could conjure the same feelings that oversize shoulder pads or a Jheri curl would: cringe. In 2001, the motif was spoofed by “[*Saturday Night Live*](https://www.nbc.com/saturday-night-live/video/put-it-in-a-brandy-snifter/2870520)” in a skit that featured Alec Baldwin and Jimmy Fallon, called “Put It in a Brandy Snifter.”

But in the 1980s and 1990s, the brandy snifter photo was an innovative, attainable luxury, and it became ubiquitous in some communities. Its cultural significance is closely tied to the ambitions of the American ***working class***.

Mr. Adams’s tribute to his mother also honored the countless other people who see that image and immediately recognize and identify with it, as I did. In 1995, my siblings and I had our own brandy snifter portraits taken at our local CTown supermarket on 135th Street and Broadway.

I wore my peach Easter dress from earlier that year. My mother tied my hair in a ponytail and curled my bangs to the side. My siblings wore polo shirts. The day before, I had applied a glow-in-the-dark, temporary tattoo I got in a box of Rude Dudes bubble gum to my cheek. My face has never been scrubbed harder than Mom scrubbed it clean that day.

We had to be spotless. The front of our CTown turned into a photo studio only once a year, from what I remember.

The makeshift studio where a photographer from Sears took our portraits was in an entryway where the shopping carts were usually stored, my mother told me recently. The backdrop was light blue, and the area smelled like bread. When we got the photos back some time later, our small cherubic faces were trapped in brandy snifters and adhered onto a plaque made from a composite that resembled wood. Mom still keeps the plaque on her dresser.

While now it might seem crass to place the portrait of a child in an image of a brandy snifter, for my mother it was an opportunity to provide us with something that she never had: a photo shoot.

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It is the same ambition, that of Black and immigrant ***working-class*** communities, the heart of the [*Democratic base*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/22/opinion/eric-adams-black-new-york.html) and New York City, that won Mr. Adams the mayoral election last year. The photo illustrates what he told voters during his victory speech: “I am you. After years of praying and hoping and struggling and working, we are headed to City Hall.”

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The double exposure trend is one that has made its way around the world several times by now, but in New York, it remains a piece of the Black and immigrant aesthetic.

Ms. Adams-Streeter’s portrait was taken just over eight years ago. She died last year of heart disease. Mr. Adams said the city had betrayed his mother by failing to offer her opportunities and resources, but she had a dogged will not just to prevail but prosper — a perseverance he credits for his success. When he hoisted her brandy snifter portrait in the air as he became the second Black mayor of the city, she too became a part of history.

“African American people, they always put their pictures on a plaque, a glass, a flyer, that’s just what we do,” Mr. Freeman said. “You know, we’re superexquisite.”

PHOTOS: At his inauguration on Jan. 1, Mayor Eric Adams held a brandysnifter picture of his mother, Dorothy Mae Adams-Streeter. (A1); Mayor Eric Adams lofted his mother’s portrait as he was flanked by his partner, Tracey Collins, and his son Jordan Coleman, who was holding the family Bible. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GABRIELA BHASKAR/THE NEW YORK TIMES); A brandy-snifter portrait of the author, left, taken in 1995, has a place of honor on her mother’s bureau. Above, a 1978 example of a snifter portrait. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID ZISER; JUTHARAT PINYODOONYACHET FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** January 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***In Portrait of Mayor's Mother, Many See a Familiar Heirloom***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GW-R391-JBG3-60MY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 9, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1435 words

**Byline:** By Sandra E. Garcia

**Body**

Dorothy Mae Adams-Streeter posed for a portrait at her 75th birthday party. Her image, floating in a brandy snifter, has a powerful resonance.

On New Year's Day, when Eric Adams was sworn in as the 110th mayor of New York City, in his right hand he raised high above his head a framed portrait of his mother, Dorothy Mae Adams-Streeter, pictured in a brandy snifter. His left hand rested over her Bible, where she kept notes, letters and old pictures.

''I was raising my right hand, lifting her up, as she lifted me up,'' Mr. Adams said in an interview. ''Who would think that eventually, because of what she instilled in her son, that he would be in Times Square, being sworn in as the mayor and holding up her photo?''

The brandy snifter portrait is as American as hip-hop, acid-washed jeans and plastic-covered sofas. A photo in that style could conjure the same feelings that oversize shoulder pads or a Jheri curl would: cringe. In 2001, the motif was spoofed by ''Saturday Night Live'' in a skit that featured Alec Baldwin and Jimmy Fallon, called ''Put It in a Brandy Snifter.''

But in the 1980s and 1990s, the brandy snifter photo was an innovative, attainable luxury, and it became ubiquitous in some communities. Its cultural significance is closely tied to the ambitions of the American ***working class***.

Mr. Adams's tribute to his mother also honored the countless other people who see that image and immediately recognize and identify with it, as I did. In 1995, my siblings and I had our own brandy snifter portraits taken at our local CTown supermarket on 135th Street and Broadway.

I wore my peach Easter dress from earlier that year. My mother tied my hair in a ponytail and curled my bangs to the side. My siblings wore polo shirts. The day before, I had applied a glow-in-the-dark, temporary tattoo I got in a box of Rude Dudes bubble gum to my cheek. My face has never been scrubbed harder than Mom scrubbed it clean that day.

We had to be spotless. The front of our CTown turned into a photo studio only once a year, from what I remember.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/08/nyregion/eric-adams-mother-photo.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/08/nyregion/eric-adams-mother-photo.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: At his inauguration on Jan. 1, Mayor Eric Adams held a brandysnifter picture of his mother, Dorothy Mae Adams-Streeter. (A1)

Mayor Eric Adams lofted his mother's portrait as he was flanked by his partner, Tracey Collins, and his son Jordan Coleman, who was holding the family Bible. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GABRIELA BHASKAR/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

A brandy-snifter portrait of the author, left, taken in 1995, has a place of honor on her mother's bureau. Above, a 1978 example of a snifter portrait. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID ZISER

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**Load-Date:** January 9, 2022

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[***Can Anything End the Voting Wars?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6279-YFS1-JBG3-605N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 17, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22

**Length:** 1612 words

**Byline:** By Ross Douthat

**Body**

As battles over voting rules burn hotter, the stakes are still lower than both sides seem to think.

About two years ago I did something foolish: I wrote an optimistic column arguing that a polarizing issue was ripe for de-escalation and compromise.

The issue was voting rights, where Republicans have long championed voter ID laws as a bulwark against alleged voting fraud, while Democrats have countered that such restrictions unfairly burden many Americans, racial minorities especially, in the exercise of their hard-won right to vote.

The good news, I said back then, was that lots of studies suggest that voter ID laws don't do either thing. They don't prevent much (or any) fraud, but they also don't have much (if any) effect on turnout, for minorities or any other group. So conservatives could stop pushing them, liberals could stop freaking out about them, and without either side losing anything substantial, compromise and conciliation could rule the day.

Naturally since then the voting wars have only burned hotter, thanks to the exigencies of the coronavirus era and the arson of Donald Trump. The virus prompted a vast expansion of mail-in voting in the name of public health, Trump blamed vote-by-mail fraud (among other conspiracies) for his defeat, and soon a large swath of conservatives became convinced corrupt balloting had stolen the election.

Now Republicans all over the country are advancing bills that answer the ''theft'' of 2020 with new ID requirements and new limits on absentee and early votes, while Democrats are advancing a national bill that would essentially federalize election law and make certain Republican restrictions impermissible. And each side is talking as if this were an existential fight, with the very concept of fair democratic elections hanging in the balance.

But the facts continue to suggest otherwise, with two new studies adding to the case for compromise and calm.

The first study, from the Democracy and Polarization Lab at Stanford University, looks at the effects of no-excuse absentee voting on the 2020 elections -- the kind of balloting that a lot of states expanded and that many Republican state legislators now want to roll back. Contrary to liberal expectations, easing the voting rules this way seemed to have no effect on turnout: ''States newly implementing no-excuse absentee voting for 2020 did not see larger increases in turnout than states that did not.''

Then contrary to Republican fears, the easement didn't help Democrats at the G.O.P.'s expense: ''No-excuse absentee did not substantially increase Democratic turnout relative to Republican turnout.'' Overall the authors argue that what drove higher turnout in 2020 was simply ''voter interest'' in the elections, not the major voting rule change, which ''mobilized relatively few voters and had at most a muted partisan effect.''

The second study comes from a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Oregon, and it looks further back in time to assess the effects of Shelby County v. Holder, the Supreme Court revision of the Voting Rights Act that made it easier for states to impose voter ID laws and other restrictions. Using data from six federal elections, the author finds no post-Shelby divergence between white and African-American turnout in states affected by the ruling. Indeed, if anything, the jurisdictions saw African-American turnout rise relative to white turnout in the 2016 elections, suggesting that new obstacles to voting prompt swift mobilization in response.

So rule changes favored by Democrats that make it modestly easier to vote probably didn't help Democrats win the 2020 elections, and rule changes favored by Republicans that make it modestly harder to vote probably haven't suppressed minority votes. Great news! I'm sure that now we can call off the voting war and just find a sensible compromise instead.

For instance, my own preferred grand bargain would limit absentee voting but increase funding for polling places and make Election Day a national holiday. This would address reasonable Republican concerns about the civic benefits of having most people vote together, on the same day with the same information, while answering Democratic concerns about long lines and ***working-class*** access to the polls. But there are other possible compromises as well ...

No, ha-ha, just kidding, we aren't going to compromise, not when there's an apocalypse to fund-raise off. And to be clear, Republicans are much more at fault for the needless escalation here. Democrats are guilty of rhetorical exaggeration and policy excess (their big voting rights bill, for instance, includes various traducements of free speech), but Republicans instigated the policy battle and thanks to Trump they've gone deepest into paranoia. At their most sincere, they can seem clueless about how the history of Jim Crow shadows these debates; at their most cynical or Trumpy, they're just indulging a racialized fear of mobs in cities stealing elections from decent white suburbanites. And the deeper they dig in against reasonable critiques, the more the primal conservative suspicion of mass democracy, a ''lower turnout is good, actually'' mentality, has a way of coming out.

Some suspicion of pure democracy is essential to conservatism. But a high-minded case for lower turnout assumes that a smaller electorate will be more politically engaged and therefore more civic-minded. The evidence of recent American history, though, is that highly engaged, high-information voters tend to be zealous and blinkered hyperpartisans, in desperate need of balancing by more chilled-out and conflicted low-information votes.

The cynical conservative case for lower turnout, meanwhile, assumes that conservatism is the natural party of the responsible, always-registered-to-vote upper middle class. But as the G.O.P.'s base has become more populist and ***working-class***, the American right more anti-establishment, this self-interested logic is crumbling. If voter ID rules or absentee ballot limits did reduce turnout among occasional voters, a lot of those no-shows might be Trump supporters.

This is part of why the conservative fixation on hypothetical voter fraud is so exasperating. If the Trump era proved anything, it's that Republicans can hold their ground as turnout rises, that they can be competitive with low-propensity voters and minority voters as well. But instead of taking that as an opportunity to actually reach for majorities again, under the influence of #StoptheSteal the party is effectively telling potential supporters that it doesn't want high turnout, which is basically a way of saying, We don't want your votes.

Then on the Democratic side, the focus on voting rules feeds a persistent misapprehension about the true constraints on liberal power. Liberals are disadvantaged in the American system at the moment, but it's longstanding constitutional structures, the Electoral College and the Senate above all, that give Republicans a modest advantage, not recent innovations in vote suppression. There isn't a vast nonvoting majority that would sweep the left into power if only it were easier to vote, and the push for voter ID on the right isn't actually a replay of Jim Crow. It's a sideshow, fed by conservative paranoia, to the real struggle for power in America.

The shrewder left-wing analogy, offered by Corey Robin a few days ago in The New Yorker, isn't to the Reconstruction-era South but to ''Britain in the years before the Reform Act of 1832,'' when it was antique constitutional structures that stifled democracy, not some sort of dramatic fascist putsch. From a conservative perspective I like this analogy, because it implies that today's Republicans could learn something from Benjamin Disraeli, the opportunistic 19th-century Tory who leaned into democratization and proved the right could win mass ***working-class*** support.

But even Robin's analogy exaggerates the structural limits on liberal power in the United States today. Those limits certainly exist; they delivered Trump the White House in 2016 with a minority of the popular vote. But the Democratic Party of 2021 has power that's only marginally out of proportion to its popular support: Democrats won the national House vote by roughly 51 percent to 48 percent and the presidential popular vote by roughly 51 percent to 47 percent, and the fulcrum of power in Joe Biden's Washington, a 51-50 Senate, is awfully close to those popular-vote splits.

This suggests that like the Republican minority, the Democratic majority runs a risk of letting a fixation on the structures of democracy become an excuse to shirk the more important work of a political party -- which is to persuade the largest possible majority, not just a bare 51 percent, to vote its way. And the intensity of the debates over rules and structures, IDs and absentee ballots, reflects a bipartisan dynamic where neither coalition seems able to imagine being other than what it's become in the last 10 years -- a blocking minority for Republicans, a super-slim majority for Democrats.

Again, I don't expect a compromise to emerge out of this stalemate. Instead, I expect the election rules of the future to be written by the party that recognizes that the surest way to make certain your opponents can't win unfairly is to make sure the election isn't close.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/opinion/voting-republicans-democrats.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/opinion/voting-republicans-democrats.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA GETTY)

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2021

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[***The 10 Best California Books of 2022; California Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6736-01P1-DXY4-X0HD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 14, 2022 Wednesday 09:00 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1725 words

**Byline:** Soumya Karlamangla

**Highlight:** These new works of fiction and nonfiction vividly render the state’s past and present.

**Body**

These new works of fiction and nonfiction vividly render the state’s past and present.

It’s the time of year for “best of” lists.

We’ve got the [*best podcasts of 2022.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/08/arts/best-podcasts-2022.html) The best [*movies.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/06/movies/best-movies-2022.html) The most [*memorable wines.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/08/dining/drinks/best-wines-of-2022.html) The best [*jazz albums*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/30/arts/music/best-jazz-albums.html).

Today I’m sharing my own twist on a “best of” list: the 10 best California books of 2022. Below are superb works of fiction and nonfiction that were reviewed by The New York Times this year and are likely to resonate with readers who live in, or just love, California.

Happy reading.

FICTION

“All My Rage” by Sabaa Tahir

This young adult novel follows two South Asian best friends living in the small California town of Juniper and struggling to see a way out. From our [*review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/01/books/review/sabaa-tahir-all-my-rage.html):

“When I was a teenager, I devoured books like John Green’s ‘The Fault in Our Stars’ and ‘Looking for Alaska.’ They were some of the earliest narratives that taught me about heartbreak, hope and desire. But if I’d also been able to read a book like ‘All My Rage’ back then, I would have gotten all of that, and perhaps also a greater appreciation for my own culture and the understanding that I wasn’t the only brown kid struggling at a mostly white school.”

“Avalon” by Nell Zink

This novel about a girl growing up in Southern California was included in The Times’s [*100 notable books of the year*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/22/books/notable-books.html). From our [*review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/books/review-avalon-nell-zink.html):

“There’s no fudging the rules in ‘Avalon,’ which is the effulgent and clever sort of novel that replicates the experience of learning a new game: You enter its world voluntarily and add your reading effort to Zink’s writing effort with the idea that the sum of these energies will create a zone of mirth and meaning. What fun.”

“Bad Thoughts: Stories” by Nada Alic

In Alic’s debut story collection, sunny facades belie strange dark interiors, [*our reviewer writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/11/books/review/bad-thoughts-nada-alic.html):

“The stories feature a privileged millennial milieu in Los Angeles with all its carefully observed trappings — neutral linens at a baby shower, destination bachelorette weekends, social media obsessions, alternative wellness practices and a chic, spare loft ‘furnished with gray modular furniture resembling life-size Lego pieces.’”

“Heartbroke” by Chelsea Bieker

The Times called this short story collection a “bold, uncanny ode to California’s Central Valley.” From the [*review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/books/review/american-fiction-stories.html):

“Bieker offers an unsentimental view of the hardscrabble lives of the white ***working class*** in a less romanticized region of California. In ‘Raisin Man,’ a father tells his son, ‘God came down and ran His mighty hand on the land, blessed this place.’ The boy retorts: ‘My ma says it’s the deepest hole in hell.’ Bieker’s lucid, compassionate prose makes room for both visions, and more.”

“Mecca” by Susan Straight

Straight, who lives in Riverside, explores inland Southern California, including the desert town of Mecca on which this novel centers, [*our reviewer writes:*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/books/review/mecca-susan-straight.html)

“‘Mecca,’ like much of Straight’s writing, is a love song for a place and its people. She writes lyrically about workers pollinating date palms in the groves as if it were a cosmic dance: ‘It was magic out here, even in the heat. Giant sweeps of golden strands feathered with tiny blooms, four feet long. Like fantastic brooms and the gods could sweep the sky.’”

“Nightcrawling” by Leila Mottley

Mottley’s novel follows Kiara, a teenager, as she tries to make a life in Oakland, “where tech offices and Ubers and yoga studios and cafes and bartenders with all the same tattoos proliferate” as the Bay Area tech boom has flooded the city with money and power, [*our reviewer writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/07/books/review/nightcrawling-leila-mottley.html):

“There are no jobs here for Kiara, who was raised in these streets and in the dealers’ apartments that used to fill them, who uses the yellow pages to find a job because she can’t afford a smartphone or internet.”

“Yerba Buena” by Nina LaCour

LaCour, known for her young adult novels, made her adult debut with this tale of two California women finding themselves, and each other. From [*our review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/31/books/review/yerba-buena-nina-lacour.html):

“The book’s title, which translates to good herb, comes from the native flora of California, and the stories of both characters start there, too: Sara in a redwood grove, finding first love with her best friend amid the ancient trunks, and Emilie in a school garden, seeking refuge from a tumultuous home life in the stalks of verbena and mint.”

NONFICTION

“Embrace Fearlessly the Burning World: Essays” by Barry Lopez

This posthumous collection includes an essay about Lopez’s childhood in the San Fernando Valley, a piece that our reviewer [*calls*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/31/books/review/barry-lopez-embrace-fearlessly-burning-world.html) “one of the finest pieces of writing about Los Angeles that I have read”:

“While living there, he wanted desperately to escape, but after his family moved away, Lopez writes, ‘I missed California to the point of grief.’ The darting of jackrabbits, the crashing surf, the smell of eucalyptus, the ‘surgical sharpness’ of the light — ‘without these things I believe I would have perished.’”

“Indigenous Continent: The Epic Contest for North America” by Pekka Hämäläinen

A Times reviewer [*called*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/19/books/review/military-history-indigenous-continent.html) this retelling of the history of North America from a Native American perspective — which was deemed a top 100 book of 2022 — “the single best book I have ever read on Native American history as well as one of the most innovative narratives about the continent.”

“Tree Thieves: Crime and Survival in North America’s Woods” by Lyndsie Bourgon

In this surprising book, Bourgon, an environmentalist and journalist, casts timber poachers in California and elsewhere not as villains, but as people responding to a lack of economic opportunities. From our [*review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/21/books/review/tree-thieves-lyndsie-bourgon.html):

“Bourgon puts herself in the poacher’s shoes, and the result is a refreshing and compassionate warning about the perils of well-intentioned but overzealous environmentalism.”

For more:

* The [*best poetry of 2022.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/06/books/review/best-poetry-2022.html)

1. [*100 notable books*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/22/books/notable-books.html)of the year.
2. Best [*book covers of 2022.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/09/books/review/best-book-covers-2022.html)

If you read one story, make it this

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory scientists [*announced a breakthrough*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/13/science/nuclear-fusion-energy-breakthrough.html) that’s seen as a milestone toward a clean energy future.

The rest of the news

* Drought: Despite powerful December storms across California, the levels of the state’s largest water reservoirs remain low in many areas and water managers expect to [*impose severe restrictions*](https://calmatters.org/environment/2022/12/california-drought-shortages/) on their customers, CalMatters reports.

1. Opioids: California could receive [*more than $500 million*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-12-13/california-to-receive-500-million-from-opioid-settlement-with-walgreens) from a multistate settlement with Walgreens over the pharmacy’s role in the opioid crisis, The Los Angeles Times reports.
2. The Pelosis: A new documentary directed and produced by Alexandra Pelosi, the youngest of Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s five children, [*follows the career*](https://apnews.com/article/capitol-siege-politics-san-francisco-nancy-pelosi-united-states-house-of-representatives-c079637eafcd2ef1dbf8648c19736cc6) of the congresswoman over three decades, The Associated Press reports.
3. Don Lewis: Lewis, an unsung pioneer of electronic music who taught at Stanford, Berkeley and San Jose State, [*died at 81.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/13/arts/music/don-lewis-dead.html)

* Big Ten backlash: Emails obtained through a records request showed a [*backlash*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/13/sports/ncaafootball/ucla-big-ten-uc-regents.html) to U.C.L.A.’s planned move to the Big Ten among alumni and parents.

1. IMDb: The film and TV database IMDb has handed a win to SAG-AFTRA and other lobbyists after a decades-long fight over the right to [*disclose actors’ ages*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/business/story/2022-12-13/imdb-changes-policies-on-age-in-win-for-sag-aftra-performers), giving those with a profile the option to disclose such information, The Los Angeles Times reports.
2. Homelessness: At its meeting on Tuesday, the Los Angeles City Council [*approved Mayor Karen Bass’s declaration of a homelessness emergency*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-12-13/kdl-mtg), allowing her first major initiative to move forward, The Los Angeles Times reports.

* District 16 election: Melissa Hurtado was elected state senator by a razor-thin margin of 20 votes. [*She was sworn in on Monday*](https://www.recorderonline.com/news/hurtado-sworn-in-as-state-senator-shepard-stated-recount-is-possible/article_355ec314-7b16-11ed-a876-8fac024c97ec.html) and her Republican opponent is still considering a recount, The Porterville Recorder reports.
* Cannabis: Local cannabis growers stuck in legal limbo are considering joining a [*booming underground weed economy*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-12-09/legal-weed-failing-california-county) that was supposed to decline after cannabis was legalized in 2016, The Los Angeles Times reports.

1. Crypto bubble: The parents of Sam Bankman-Fried, the FTX founder who was arrested on Monday, are under scrutiny for their [*connections to their son’s crypto business*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/12/technology/sbf-parents-ftx-collapse.html). They are longtime professors at Stanford Law School.

What we’re eating

[*Fancy egg salad.*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1015703-fancy-egg-salad)

Where we’re traveling

Today’s tip comes from Ava Kearney, who recommends the [*Point Reyes National Seashore:*](https://www.nps.gov/pore/index.htm)

“It abounds with beautiful trails in the hills and on the beach of varying difficulty. I’ve been going there for years and just went this fall. I’m 77 and hike alone most of the time and have always felt safe. The towns in the area are rustic with several good restaurants.”

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.

Tell us

We’re writing about how Californians celebrate the holidays. Do you relax by the beach, visit Disneyland or make tamales with your family? Maybe you always travel to a special spot within the Golden State?

Email us at [*CAtoday@nytimes.com*](mailto:CAtoday@nytimes.com) with your California holiday traditions and memories. Please include your name and the city where you live.

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And before you go, some good news

By one estimate, the Bay Area has 10,000 miles of trails. To determine which ones are the most popular, [*The San Francisco Chronicle sifted through data from AllTrails.com*](https://www.sfchronicle.com/projects/guide/best-bay-area-hikes-alltrails/), which collates user-generated ratings and reviews of hiking routes.

The newspaper found that the three most popular trails were the Dipsea Trail, which begins in Mill Valley; the Pomo Canyon Trail in Sonoma Coast State Park; and a loop beginning with the Tennessee Valley Trail in Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

“What’s unique about the Bay Area is the phenomenal diversity of natural scenery and landscapes that are all so accessible,” Janet McBride, executive director of the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, told The Chronicle. And there’s something for everyone, she added.

“It’s all here, and it’s all close by.”

Thanks for reading. I’ll be back tomorrow. — Soumya

P.S. Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini).

Briana Scalia and Isabella Grullón Paz 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: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Rozalina Burkova FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Democrats Have Embraced Economics. Too Much?; Peter Coy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6668-6MH1-DXY4-X058-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1276 words

**Byline:** Peter Coy

**Highlight:** In her recent book, the sociologist Elizabeth Popp Berman says economists have too much influence.

**Body**

I love this sentence in [*a recent book*](https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691167381/thinking-like-an-economist) by Elizabeth Popp Berman: “For Republicans, economic reasoning remained a means to an end; for Democrats, the values of economics became an end in themselves.”

Let me unpack that apothegm. First, Berman: She’s a sociologist at the University of Michigan. Her latest book, published earlier this year, is “Thinking Like an Economist: How Efficiency Replaced Equality in U.S. Public Policy.”

In it, Berman argues that Republicans embrace economic reasoning when it suits their interests and toss it aside when it doesn’t. “The Reagan administration slashed support for economic analysis in social policy areas, where the president expected it to prop up the welfare state, while expanding it in areas like antitrust and environmental policy, where he thought it would support his preference for less regulation,” she writes.

What Berman says about the 1980s goes double for today’s Republican Party, which has fallen under the control of one man, Donald Trump. The former president is happy with economists when they endorse the tax cuts he favors but rejects their counsel on the issues of free trade and immigration. On Tuesday, Representative Liz Cheney, Republican of Wyoming, lost a primary election because of her opposition to Trump, even though she was more traditionally conservative than her opponent.

Overall, “Thinking Like an Economist” is more about Democrats than Republicans. Berman’s main interest is the second half of the sentence I led with: “for Democrats, the values of economics became an end in themselves.” She says that for Democrats, economics has become a style of thinking that has radiated outward from Ph.D. programs to become deeply embedded in law, policy and business schools, at think tanks, and among congressional staff and other shapers of policy and opinion.

Her description of economists’ not-always-visible influence on Democratic thinking reminds me of what the late, great British economist John Maynard Keynes wrote in 1936, in “The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money”: “Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist.”

The economic style “maintains a deep appreciation of markets as efficient allocators of resources” and “places a very high value on efficiency as the measure of good policy,” Berman writes. The problem, she writes, is that “centering efficiency often means displacing other political values, or ignoring the politics behind the process of identifying efficient policy decisions.”

Berman’s book echoes some themes of “[*The Economists’ Hour: False Prophets, Free Markets and the Fracture of Society*](https://www.amazon.com/Economists-Hour-Prophets-Markets-Fracture/dp/031651232X/ref=tmm_hrd_swatch_0?ots=1&amp;slotNum=2&amp;imprToken=92c158b7-3f0f-1ea5-712&amp;tag=thneyo0f-20&amp;linkCode=w50&amp;_encoding=UTF8&amp;qid=&amp;sr=),” by my colleague Binyamin Appelbaum. The difference is that Appelbaum focused mainly on laissez-faire thinkers such as Milton Friedman and George Stigler, while Berman explores how economic concepts translate into Democratic Party views.

As a non-economist who writes about economics, I felt seen by Berman. I think she’s right that it becomes instinctive for people with an economic style of thinking to whip out economists’ tools such as cost-benefit analysis at every opportunity. Save the rainforests? Hmm. Do the benefits exceed the costs? Make safer baby furniture? Depends. Do the benefits exceed the costs?

On the other hand, I think I like economists and their way of thinking more than Berman does. Sticking with cost-benefit analysis, which Berman extensively reviews: True, it can seem cold to put a dollar value on a child’s life as a means of evaluating some new law or regulation that’s intended to protect her. But it’s kind of inevitable. If you buy a $300 crib instead of a $3,000 crib that’s just slightly safer, you’re potentially weighing one benefit — your infant’s safety — against others, such as freeing up more money for baby formula and her future college education. Economists are the sometimes disliked people who make those implicit trade-offs explicit.

Berman’s book has come in for some criticism. A [*review*](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2022/05/23/the-war-on-economics-elizabeth-popp-berman-thinking-like-an-economist) in The New Yorker said that economic tools can be used, and have been, to advance precisely the sorts of liberal policies that Berman favors — child tax credits, antitrust enforcement, action against climate change. “Berman’s approach to economic analysis is essentially to disregard it unless it confirms what she already thinks,” the reviewer said — echoing, perhaps by chance, what Berman herself said about Republicans.

The Harvard economist Jason Furman, who ran the Council of Economic Advisers during President Barack Obama’s second term, [*wrote*](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/review-essay/2022-06-21/quants-in-the-room) in Foreign Affairs that Berman overstates the influence that he and other economists have on policy. He also says she goes astray in arguing for judging policies on the basis of whether they violate people’s rights, rather than by adding up costs versus benefits. “She ignores the multitude of rights-based approaches that would go against her values, such as the libertarian view that high earners have the right to low taxes,” Furman writes.

I interviewed Berman this week about her book and the reaction it’s received. “It’s been a positive conversation even if people have different takes in the end,” she said.

She acknowledged, “There are certainly people within the discipline — somebody like Angus Deaton comes to mind — who take inequality very seriously, who understand the limitations I talk about.” (Deaton, of Princeton, is a Nobel laureate. He and his wife, the economist Anne Case, who is also a Princeton professor, wrote “Deaths of Despair and the Future of Capitalism,” which its publisher [*describes*](https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691190785/deaths-of-despair-and-the-future-of-capitalism) as “a groundbreaking account of how the flaws in capitalism are fatal for America’s ***working class***.”)

But Berman said Deaton isn’t the “center of gravity” in economics. She criticized master of public policy programs that give students “a little bit of the economics flavor but not enough to think more critically about the tools.”

“Where I would come down is, on the one hand, you can’t take numbers and quantification out of policy,” she said. “There’s benefit and cost. But I would argue that you need to be making the moral calculations much more explicit. Say, the distributional effects of a regulatory decision. Traditionally, the economists’ argument is the distributional effects matter, but it’s a political question whether a wealthy or poor person gets costs and benefits.”

The problem, Berman said, is that the political question about distribution “is not considered later. It doesn’t get considered at all.”

“That has the potential to change,” Berman said, turning optimistic. “The discipline has moved a lot in the last five or 10 years and could move more in the future. People all over the place are dissatisfied with the status quo, more open to asking questions.”

The Readers Write

I live in Delaware. Regarding your Wednesday [*newsletter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/17/opinion/housing-market.html) on housing, no builders here are building median homes that median people can afford. They are building apartments, but they are leased and also unaffordable. The market is broken and getting only worse. Elite economists seem to come from a frame of reference that is not connected to the world that 80 percent of the people live in.

Peter Hartranft

Newark, Del.

Quote of the Day

“That which seems like poison at first, but tastes like nectar in the end, is said to be happiness in the mode of goodness. It is generated by the pure intellect that is situated in self-knowledge.”

— Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 18, Verse 37

Have feedback? Send a note to [*coy-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:coy-newsletter@nytimes.com).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by Jordan Awan for The New York Times; images by CSA Images, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***A Shock of Recognition***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:685W-MDX1-JBG3-635Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 6378 words

**Byline:** By Rachel Cusk

**Body**

Perhaps with no clearer motive than F. Scott Fitzgerald's observation that ''France has the only two things toward which we drift as we grow older -- intelligence and good manners,'' we packed up our possessions during the last dark days of one December and decided to move to Paris. It was pleasant, I had often been told, for a writer to live somewhere where reading and writing were accorded the highest respect, and it was true that -- in Paris at least -- these were semipublic activities: In every park and cafe, on the Metro and on the benches along the Seine, people were openly engaged in what for me had always been the most private and solitary of occupations. Bookstores still held their ground here among the shopfronts, and the deification of French writers living and dead was evinced everywhere in street names and statues and advertising hoardings for new novels. I listened on the radio to an astronaut reading passages aloud from Marguerite Duras from his space station to his earthbound audience below.

Then, last October, the writer Annie Ernaux won the Nobel Prize for Literature, the first Frenchwoman ever to do so. We had been in France for nearly two years, and amid the alternating sensations of regeneration and disarray that this upheaval had inevitably incurred, Annie Ernaux had come to represent for me a troubling point of constancy. During my initial months in Paris, when it seemed for the first time in my life that lying on a sofa reading a book was something I was not only permitted but encouraged to do, I made my way slowly in my clumsy French through one slim text after another: ''A Man's Place,'' ''A Woman's Story,'' ''Simple Passion,'' ''The Possession,'' ''The Years.'' The story they told, rigorously excluding anything that did not directly pertain to it, was that of Annie Duchesne (Ernaux's maiden name), only child of a ***working-class*** French couple who ran a humble café-epicerie in Yvetot, a small town in Normandy.

By means of scholarly excellence, Annie claws her way out of the mire of her origins to teacher-training college, marries the first man who presents himself, is submerged in a bourgeois purgatory as housewife and mother and slowly breaks her way out of that new prison by writing books -- books that try to stop time by questioning and reconstructing as precisely as they can the events that have brought her to the existence she is now leading. Who is she, and where has she come from? Who were her parents, and why did they live as they did? Why did she act in certain ways as she became free of them, and to what degree is her life the consequence of those actions? Has she ever lived consciously even for one minute, or is this task of writing and reconstruction the effort to apply consciousness to blind fate?

Despite the differences -- of nationality, generation, social class, familial situation -- between my own life and that of Annie Ernaux, I found myself plunged as I read into a more and more profound state of recognition. Yet what I seemed to be recognizing were things that no one generally admits. Ernaux's honesty had the effect of illuminating a profound and unsuspected lack of freedom in her reader. How, through the simple story of her origins, had she laid her hand so surely on the human tragedy of our ability to make ourselves unfree? The answer perhaps lay in her faith in writing as a sacred and transcendent activity. She believed in writing as some people believe in religion, as a sphere where the self, the soul, is entitled to find refuge.

Who she was as a writer bore only one very specific relationship to who she was as a woman: They inhabited the same body. It was to this body that she was confined, actually and artistically -- to its social and economic destiny, to its gendered limitations, to its geographical and temporal location. What had happened to and in this body, what it in turn had made happen in the years from its birth to the present moment, was the limit and extent of her material.

France being a nation that holds itself in high esteem for its literary culture, the Nobel news caused a feverish outburst of pride, but also some startling paroxysms of venom. How could a woman who wrote only about herself be awarded the literary world's highest accolade? Madame Ovary, as she was called by one conservative French critic, was the prime example of the erosion of literary art by narratives of self-pity and marginalization. The intelligence -- indeed the sanity -- of the Nobel committee appeared to be questioned. It was explained to me that in France the exposure of unglamorous aspects of female reality -- the complaints of the bonne femme, or housewife -- was widely considered to be distasteful. There was also apparently the matter of jealousy -- of Ernaux's success, of the youthfulness of her readership and now of this greatest of honors -- among the literary male old guard. Yet it seemed to me that such explanations were, in fact, unnecessary: The aggression was simply the evidence that the nerve of truth had been touched.

From the beginning of her 50-year career, the uncompromising candor of Ernaux's voice has wielded a formidable power of shock: the lacerating portrait of motherhood and bourgeois family life in ''A Frozen Woman''; the masterly, pitiless accounts of her parents' lives and deaths -- and therefore of poor, provincial France -- in ''A Man's Place'' and ''A Woman's Story''; her analysis of the extreme subjection at the core of sexual relationships in ''Simple Passion'' and ''The Possession.'' One after another, her works have alienated or dismayed diverse groups across the social and political spectrum, from cultural patriarchs to feminists. It might seem evident that shock is the signifier of truth and reveals more about the people who feel it than about the artistic objectivity that caused it, but in the case of Annie Ernaux, the usual operation of time in reconciling people to truth did not seem entirely to have occurred.

''This summer, for the first time, I watched a pornographic film,'' she writes at the opening of ''Simple Passion.'' She continues:

''The story was incomprehensible; it was impossible to predict any of the actions or movements. The man walked up to the woman. There was a close-up of the woman's genitals, clearly visible among the shimmerings of the screen, then of the man's penis, fully erect, sliding into the woman's vagina. For a long time this coming and going of the two sex organs was shown from several angles. ... No doubt one gets used to such a sight; the first time is shattering. Centuries and centuries, hundreds of generations have gone by and it is only now that one can see this -- a man's penis and a woman's vagina coming together -- something one could barely take in without dying has become as easy to watch as a handshake. It occurred to me that writing should also aim for that -- the impression conveyed by sexual intercourse, the feeling of anxiety and awe, a suspension of moral judgment.''

Reading Annie Ernaux's books one after another was like watching an edifice being built in real time, something raised out of the wet ground and constructed brick by brick. The harrowing beauty and brevity of these books and their apparent simplicity disguised somewhat the punishing cost of their honesty. Never had I seen the supposed freedom -- the ''narcissism,'' as we now like to call it -- of self-examination so exposed in its brutality. Ernaux grasped the depths of isolation and loss she would need to descend to in order to retrieve the original reality of her being. Her art bears no relation to a privileging of personal experience; on the contrary, it is almost a self-violation. What Annie Ernaux understood was that as a female child of the regional laboring classes, her self was her only authentic possession in this world, and thus the sole basis for the legitimacy of her art.

Lying on the sofa, I became slowly immured in the concrete reality of this edifice and of its facts. The girl Annie grows up in an environment of squalor and industry. She is an only child, an older sister having died of diphtheria at age 6. Her father runs the cafe while her mother manages the shop, the two spaces connected by a corridor that functions as the family's kitchen. There is no bathroom, just a toilet for customers and family alike out in the yard.

Over time, her reality takes shape around certain foundations, the mother and father most evidently, and the cramped labyrinth of the cafe and shop with its simple living quarters above -- a world without privacy or solitude, a world in which the observer is as exposed as the observed -- but also around her own nascent exceptionality, which soon becomes the subject of her parents' mingled terror and pride. She begins early on to perform outstandingly at school. It is clear she will go out into the world, but what world is it, and how and to what end will she survive there? Their social conservatism and Catholicism -- immovable features of the provincial ***working-class*** landscape in which they live -- leave the subject of her burgeoning femininity and sexuality entirely opaque. Were she a normal girl, she would marry young with her virginity intact. This scholarly future is a vaguely nunlike destiny, whose risks of ruination include the possibility that -- as a clever oddity -- she might never find a husband. Yet her parents, and especially her mother, don't want her to be like them, economically and socially trapped in a cycle of incessant labor. At school, she quickly becomes aware of her inferiority, but ''at home, on her own territory, the grocer's girl -- as the locals call her -- has all the rights. Helping herself liberally to packets of sweets and boxes of cookies, lying reading in bed until midday during the holidays, never setting the table or cleaning her shoes. She lives and behaves like a queen.'' (I have translated this passage, and the others quoted in this article, from the French.) Her mother's one luxury is reading, a habit Annie acquires from her.

At once cosseted and imprisoned by her parents, burdened with the prospect of her own liberation from everything she knows, the girl tries to contain in herself the violent forces of ignorance and desire, the problem of owing everything to people who can teach her nothing, the growing discomfort of her origins that is matched by the mystery of how one could live differently. Though she doesn't know it, her isolation -- the only tangible result, in fact, of her exceptionality -- is extreme. This exceptionality is the great subject and problem of Annie Ernaux's oeuvre, the Other with which she spars in book after book, sometimes taking the form of guilt or shame, in others of a savage and dizzying freedom. The exceptionality strives to normalize itself at every turn by making her conform, often to things that directly clash with and contradict one another. The conforming, sooner or later, results in rebellion: She is trapped and frees herself, creates and destroys and survives, learning over and over by this arduous and often disastrous route the opposing facts of internal and external reality. The exceptionality is not, in fact, that of intellectual or physical or moral attributes. It is the exceptionality of the artist, of the person who lives to tell the tale.

In 1958, at age 18, she is given the opportunity to work for a month as one of a group of monitors at a children's summer camp in S, a village in the Orne. With this first experience of liberty, the whole unfeasible powder keg of her identity explodes. ''The list of her social ignorances would be interminable,'' Ernaux writes of herself in ''A Girl's Story.'' ''She doesn't know how to use a telephone, has never taken either a shower or a bath. She has no experience of any milieu but her own.'' In the middle-class world of the summer camp, she is by turns gauche and outrageous, short on manners, taste, charm and savoir-faire -- she is, in a word, unacceptable. She alienates both her peers and her superiors, acquires a reputation for sexual availability and even lacks the discrimination to recognize what has happened. Yet she knows too that she is, for those people, entirely forgettable.

''I too wanted to forget that girl,'' Ernaux writes. ''To forget her truly, meaning to have no desire to write about her. Never again to think that I ought to write about her, her desire, her folly, her idiocy and her pride. ... [Yet] there were always phrases in my journal, allusions to 'the girl of S,' 'the girl of 58.' For 20 years I have listed '58' among my book projects. It is always the missing text. Always delayed. The unquantifiable hole.''

During those weeks at the summer camp, she quietly abandons, without quite realizing it, her academic ambitions. She adjusts her expectations: Instead of going to a prestigious university, she will train to become a primary-school teacher. The weeks of summer camp, which at the time she believed to be the threshold of the future, were in fact a turning point back into the past. She would have to account for every moment of that past, both personally and artistically. What she had been programmed to escape was to become, in a very different form, her destiny.

Sometimes, reading, I would experience the curious illusion that this 82-year-old laureate was not my elder but my junior -- that her voice was speaking from a future in which the possibilities for female utterance were bolder, more serious, more liberal. I was as though chagrined by my own compromised femininity in the light of this more evolved future. How had she managed to be so daring, so candid, so autonomous -- so free?

The answer, perhaps, was shame: What Ernaux seemed to have understood from the start is that shame is the obverse side of truth. She uses it as a map, the existence of shame at different points in her history unfailingly leading her to a concealment of self buried beneath it. Besides, shame has an excellent memory, ''more detailed, more indelible than any other. Memory ... is the special gift of shame.''

It was, perhaps, her shame about her origins that resulted in ''A Man's Place,'' the book that first cemented her place in French literary culture. Her voice, so unlike any other, told the story of a France that did not usually presume to express itself. Spare, methodical, relentless, shocking -- ''clinical'' was the word chosen by the Nobel committee -- the severity of its discipline was matched by its unrepentant liberty. This, then, was the strange fruit of the café-epicerie in Yvetot, this voice whose internal stamina was indestructible yet recognized no conventional laws, that was capable of such suffering yet was so good at learning from it, that had escaped the bourgeois conditioning of character and thus was always stronger than the things that confronted it.

Shortly after my arrival in Paris, wanting to improve my French, I was put in touch with a writer who wanted to improve her English, and we began to meet weekly for conversations that switched language at midpoint, like a soccer team changing ends at halftime. The writer was Delphine de Vigan, a novelist around my own age, like me the mother of two grown-up children who is no longer with their father.

At first we were a little shy, a shyness that seemed to spring from our joint practicality. To be taking time in the middle of the afternoon simply to converse was a luxury to which neither of us seemed to feel altogether entitled. We had each been the wage-earners and managers in our households; each of us for years had written in extremis around the interruptions and obligations of motherhood; each of us had the greatest difficulty in considering ourselves to be artists; yet we each, despite or perhaps because of the exigency of our writing conditions, had chosen the hazardous route of self-examination in pursuit of a somehow ineluctable truth, the truth of who we were in the world and why.

Delphine de Vigan's first novel, ''Days Without Hunger,'' was an account of her near-death from anorexia as a young woman, but in the novels that followed she moved determinedly away from autobiographical material, so that that first slim and agonized text remained there like an unanswered question. What had driven her -- what drives anyone -- to starve herself to the point of extinction at the very moment of gaining autonomy? This particularly female form of self-attack seemed to delineate something, a corresponding shadow or a silence, lying centrally across the field of self-expression.

I, too, at certain points, had felt at risk of becoming fundamentally separated from my own material, when my biological life as a woman began to generate conditions and experiences that were alien to and inadmissible in the writing of fiction. How was I to approach as a subject something whose power of nullification was so great that it menaced the very act of representation? To write about motherhood for instance -- to bring objective scrutiny and distance to the biological invasion of the self -- seemed to be not only a practical but also an intellectual impossibility. In order to succeed as an artist -- it seemed -- both the inconvenience and thus the reality of femininity had to be scrupulously concealed.

''My mother was blue, a pale ash-blue, the hands strangely darker than the face, when I found her at her house that January morning,'' begins de Vigan's riveting 2011 memoir, ''Nothing Holds Back the Night.'' ''The hands as though stained with ink, at the folds of the knuckles. She had been dead for several days. I don't know how many seconds or even minutes it took me to understand this, despite the evidence in front of me -- a long time, awkward and febrile, until a cry escaped my lungs. Even today, more than two years later, it remains for me a mystery: By what mechanism was my brain able to hold itself apart from the sight of my mother's corpse, and most of all from its smell, how had it taken so much time to accept the information that was in front of it? It was not the only question that her death left me with.''

With this book, de Vigan spectacularly marked the end of her self-annexation, or rather the point at which the internal pressure of truth forced its content out into the world. Her mother's suicide was a sort of refusal or breakdown of the female narrative. To comprehend it, every aspect of de Vigan's reality had to be dismantled: the entire carapace of self, of history both personal and impersonal, of memory and fact and myth, of the collective life and the individual reality, and most of all of writing -- narration -- and its relationship to being. The book is not so much a reconstruction of her mother's life as a gathering of evidence, by which the private and subjective is made public and accountable. It required a painstaking examination of her wider family -- a formidable and traditionally French clan of aunts and uncles and grandparents -- and therefore of family culture itself. The resulting book is an inquiry into the ''reality'' a child is born into, a domain tyrannized by authority structures and social codes in which the personal binds fatally with the authorized and communal to make a theater of blood relationships.

''To write about one's family,'' de Vigan writes, ''is without doubt the surest means of falling out with them.'' Throughout her narration, she remains terrified and tormented by her power of disclosure, like a child being handed a dangerous weapon. She reveals, among other things, that her mother claimed to have been raped by her own father as a teenager, an accusation the mother made in writing at 32, sending the text to every member of her family. No one ever mentioned it: Life continued as normal, the family meeting regularly for Sunday lunch at the grandparents' country house.

Midway through the book, rived with anxiety about the secrets she is revealing, de Vigan recounts a dream in which such a gathering of the long-dead is occurring. ''Everyone is there, nothing has changed: the collection of porcelain plates on the wall, the serving baskets placed here and there around the table, the smell of roast lamb drifting in the air.'' As the food is being served, a silence suddenly falls, and her dead grandmother turns to her, ''with that sorrowful or disappointed expression that sometimes alters her gaze, without hostility. 'It isn't nice what you're doing, darling,' she says. 'It isn't nice.'''

''Nothing Holds Back the Night'' was published in France to a wave of recognition, selling a million copies and winning numerous prizes. In this literature-loving country, Delphine de Vigan became a modest sort of rock star, yet the aims of her book were in a sense challenging or undermining the tenets of that culture and the story it told about itself. Among other things, what de Vigan -- and the powerful response of her public -- testified to was the personal cost exacted by life in this exalted, beautiful yet patriarchal nation. Her book is a girl's story, her own girlhood as well as that of her mother, yet she finds that there is no template for it. Her mother's pain ''was part of our childhood, and later of our lives as adults,'' she writes. ''Without doubt her pain formed us, my sister and me. Yet any attempt at explanation is bound to fail. Instead I must make do with a writing made of odds and ends, of fragments, of hypotheses.''

After Annie Ernaux won the Nobel Prize, I received a call: I was invited to appear on ''La Grande Librairie'' to talk about her work. ''La Grande Librairie,'' a weekly 90-minute television show about books, had often been cited to me as the emblem of France's exceptional relationship to literary culture. Once a week, the country sat down to watch a special-effects-free sequence of interviews and debates with the writers of the moment. The prestige and sales figures of these writers were considerably advanced by an appearance on ''La Grande Librairie'' -- an invitation was among the most fiercely desired laurels for the contemporary French writer. It was unusual, I had been told, for a foreign or non-French-speaking author to be invited; the need for an interpreter slowed things down too much.

On the phone, I explained that my French was not good enough to accept the invitation. There was silence on the other end -- evidently no one refused such an offer; it simply wasn't possible. What wasn't possible, I continued, was that I would speak French on national television when I was still capable of making basic errors ordering a baguette in a boulangerie. It was explained to me that not only would I do so, I would do so very well. A special edition of the program had been put together for Annie Ernaux: The author herself would be there. My appearance would be a nice surprise for her, and besides, they needed someone to give the international perspective.

The near-hysterical national pride one might have anticipated at the Nobel accolade had, it seemed, been accompanied by some self-reproach. There was a general feeling that Annie Ernaux had somehow escaped appreciation, had been denied justice in her own country. Despite the French reverence for literature, it had required non-French eyes to see her true worth. The Anglophone world, for instance, had long understood her importance -- it was seemingly as a witness to this debatable notion that I was invited to participate in the special edition of ''La Grande Librairie.''

I went to ask Delphine de Vigan's advice, but she, too, seemed to be inhabiting this other reality, in which I could discuss literary matters in French before an audience of a million people. You'll be fine, she said. She offered to help me practice. Afterward we sat and talked about writing, about the blankness and terror that sometimes overcome each of us at the idea of having to write another book, as though it were some awful duty. Would either of us write again, if we had sufficient means not to? It seemed to me that for each of us it was this binding of writing with practicality -- which for years had lent legitimacy to an apparently impractical activity -- that now darkened the prospect of exercising our craft. I felt sure that neither of us knew any greater joy than that of doing our work, yet the framing of it as a job rather than art had become habitual.

After the startling success of ''Nothing Holds Back the Night,'' Delphine de Vigan wrote a clever, tenebrous faux-memoir called ''Based on a True Story,'' in which the splitting of herself, first by writing the book about her mother and then by the extraordinary fame it brought her, is incarnated in a woman she meets at a party who insinuates herself into her life and nearly destroys it. While writing this book, she felt, she says now, the most crippling self-consciousness and anxiety, as though a goblin critic were sitting on her shoulder laughing cruelly at every line she set down. She was certain it was a failure and nearly didn't publish it at all: It was a huge success and won the prestigious Prix Renaudot, as well as the Prix Goncourt des Lycéens.

This fear of writing, which is not perhaps a fear of failure so much as a deep and half-unconscious belief that writing is socially and morally wrong, seemed to me to be the very reverse of Annie Ernaux's vocational objectivity. ''It is the absence of a sense of what one is living at the moment one lives it that multiplies the possibilities of writing,'' Ernaux writes in ''A Girl's Story.'' ''To explore the gulf between the frightening reality of what happens, at the moment it happens, and the strange unreality, years later, of what happened.''

On the set of ''La Grande Librairie,'' amid the cameras and wires and blinding lights, where an atmosphere of sustained nervous frenzy was running through everything like an electric charge, Annie Ernaux was sitting among the other participants on a plush sofa -- small and still and composed, like a statue depicting sanity. It was before the eyes of this sanity, rather than those of x million French people, that I would consider myself to be judged.

For me, the conversation was like a ball being thrown very fast from one participant to another. I could understand very little of what was being said: My strategy had been to learn by heart a number of all-purpose lines, which I delivered every time the direction of the others' eyes indicated the ball was being thrown to me. Afterward I was ready to faint. The producer and presenter congratulated me. You see? they said. We told you it would be fine!

There was a small drinks reception for us all downstairs, and I was surprised to see Ernaux, proud and elegant, standing there alone, away from the talking groups. Her solitude and apartness seemed like things she carried with her wherever she went. I approached her and said hello, and she took my hand and patted it. Hers was soft and warm. Her eyes were like searchlights. We stood there, our hands clasped together. I would be very glad, she said after a while, if in a week's time everyone could forget this had ever happened.

A few weeks later, Delphine de Vigan and I drove out to Cergy, where Ernaux lives. It is the suburb she describes in ''The Years,'' the 2008 novel that finally carried her reputation outside France. ''The Years'' is a longer and more ambitious book than its predecessors: The familiar facts of Ernaux's life are there, but this time they are integrated into a broader context of social history, political and cultural events, and most of all the advance of capitalism into every aspect of life in the second half of the 20th century. For the first time Ernaux sees herself not as the anomaly from Yvetot but as part of the wave of history, a gendered organism shaped and driven by forces both seen and unseen, forces whose operation around individual consciousness and destiny has been far more powerful and fundamental than the myth of self-will and personality would seem to allow.

The Oise River, seen from the rise behind Ernaux's house, winds shining through the valley below among groves of bare trees. It is a square, somber house in a large, sloping garden: Its broad and unimpeded view of the river is startling. Along the lanes and cul-de-sacs we passed on the way the houses are closely packed, their territories demarcated with walls and hedges and security gates that block one another's line of sight and leave no space empty. Ernaux's ample shaggy lawn and trailing trees giving way to a wide perspective of sky and valley seem the fruits not of privilege but of artistic and moral consistency: She has lived in this house for 40 years, during which time the world has filled in all the space around her.

Standing outside her front door, I was conscious that we were in one of her literary sites, the home that was the stage set for the woman she became, burning with oppression and desire and her indefatigable power of truth. ''From September last year, I did nothing else but wait for a man,'' she writes in ''Simple Passion,'' the story of her midlife affair with a married Eastern European diplomat. ''For him to call me and come round to my place ... I had no future other than the telephone call fixing our next appointment. I would try to leave the house as little as possible, except for professional reasons . . . forever fearing that he might call in my absence. I would also avoid using the vacuum cleaner or the hair dryer as they would have prevented me from hearing the sound of the telephone. Every time it rang, I was consumed with hope, which usually only lasted the time it took me slowly to pick up the receiver and say hello. When I realized it wasn't him, I felt so utterly dejected that I began to loathe the person who was on the line.''

Ernaux was widely upbraided by her feminist readers for this portrayal of female dependency on male sexual attention: The clinical spotlight of her regard, so revelatory when it illuminates that which one is willing to see, becomes distinctly uncomfortable when it falls too close to home. Those same readers may later have found themselves forced to salute her for ''The Young Man,'' her account of her relationship in her late 50s with a man 30 years her junior. She describes encountering, when out with the young man in public places, ''the looks of heavy disapproval from people around us. Looks which, far from causing me to feel shame, reinforced my determination not to hide my liaison with a man 'young enough to be my son,' when any man in his 50s could be seen with a girl who was evidently not his daughter without arousing the slightest reprobation.''

She answered the door, beaming with welcome. Inside the house was filled with cold, clear light. It was uncluttered and tidy, modestly and tastefully furnished with antiques, yet it was evident that very little had changed here: The small, spare kitchen where she prepared coffee for us was a kitchen from 40 years ago. Yet the house seemed expressive of a double achievement: her rise from the café-epicerie and her stoical resistance of the temptation to falsify or adorn the facts that surround her. We sat at the table in the sunny dining room. She talked about the imminent Nobel Prize ceremony, for which she needed to travel to Stockholm. Her main concern was her descent, before the audience, of a long staircase: At 82, she was worried she'd fall over. We asked whether someone couldn't accompany her down, and she instantly looked startled. Later, I realized that this well-meaning suggestion was rather tactless: Her autonomy, her uncompromising independence from everyone and everything she has met with in life, was the reason she was going to Stockholm in the first place.

When she talked about her age, and the handful of years she imagines are left to her, the luminosity of her countenance was arresting, and I was struck by the sheer aliveness of this creature and by her undimmed force of inquiry. The question, she said, is how to live when life is nearly over. What, in that context, can life mean? A few months earlier, she and her son David made a documentary, ''Les Années Super 8,'' that is a collage of the home movies of their family life shot by her then-husband, Philippe, from 1972 to 1981. The images, so indelibly dated, put the past into a long and almost unbearable perspective. Talking now about the film, and about the clarity with which it summons back her past selves as a young wife and mother, she recalled the secret life that the images did not show: her determination, amid the detritus and preoccupations of conventional family life, to record her inner world in writing.

She wrote her first novel, ''Cleaned Out,'' in secret and mailed it to a publisher in Paris, giving only the address of the school where she was teaching at the time. She didn't even enclose a cover letter. The weeks during which she waited for a response were filled with the weighty sense of what she had done. Talking about it now, all these years later, she even recalled the dates: of the mailing of the parcel, of the stages of the wait -- fevered expectation followed by doubt followed by the beginnings of resignation -- and of the receipt finally of the letter of acceptance. When the news came, she realized that this was not to be a covert contract with the world, of news smuggled out of her domestic entrapment in an envelope -- the people who knew her, most of all her husband and mother, would also read it. She feared her husband's reaction, sure enough, to this written betrayal of their shared life, but it was, she says now, her mother's response to the book that was in fact the only one that mattered to her.

Her mother had come to live with them after her father's death, and she took the book with her into her bedroom and closed the door. Ernaux recalls going to that door several times during the night and seeing the light still burning through the crack. In the morning, her mother came down to breakfast and didn't say a word about what she had read, a silence that signaled her acceptance of the situation. It is extraordinary that this tough and humble woman, whose existence had been led under the severest constraints of a reality in which the breaking of social codes could have catastrophic consequences, could approve her daughter's actions in publicly smashing the bourgeois veneer of her family life.

Proud as her mother was, Ernaux says now, of her daughter's achievement in securing for herself the undreamed-of accouterments of a conventional middle-class existence, she was prouder of her writing. In the past, on discovering them, she had burned Ernaux's diaries and notebooks, doubtless out of terror at what their content implied for her daughter's future. But in the official acceptance by a publisher she recognized legitimacy.

In the bright, tranquil silence of Ernaux's dining room, I was struck by the force and meaning of this story, the power that a mother's acceptance could bestow on a woman artist, arming her against the whole world. After an hour or so, we took our leave. In the car on the way home, de Vigan and I spoke about the palpable and forceful aura that emanates from Ernaux and her home, an aura of unbreakable and radiant autonomy. It is rare, we agreed, to encounter someone of such strength. De Vigan wondered whether it was her survival over the years of the attacks on her work and persona -- beginning, to my mind, with the dismay of her husband, who, unlike her mother, could not surmount his embarrassment from her manuscript -- that have fortified her. I disagreed: It was, in my opinion, the fruit of love. From the beginning, her parents believed in her fiercely, passionately, as the most important thing in the world. The fact that they were the owners of a provincial corner store makes no difference.

It is something neither of us had, I said, this unbreakable gift of love, the mother-love that extends even to forgiving the betrayal that is writing. Her own mother, de Vigan said, tried her best to be supportive of her work but was very hurt and embarrassed by the portrayal of the mother in ''Days Without Hunger.'' It is, I surmised, the reason each of us have struggled to contain the splintering of our creative energies around personal truth, this elemental fear of disapproval, rejection, abandonment -- the grandmother's suggestion that what we're doing isn't very nice.

I was told that the venom directed toward Annie Ernaux on social media after her Nobel win had become so uncontrolled that it was the subject of an editorial in L'Obs, the French news weekly. When I next saw de Vigan, she was bewildered and upset by such hatred -- where did it come from, and why? She admitted she had been slow to recognize the flourishing problem of misogyny in today's world -- like me, she belongs to a generation who grew up believing that feminism had somehow already occurred, that the concepts of social justice and equality were as subject to progress as the evolution of science and technology. Yet if it seems that in our time we have discovered new ways of hating, this belief in the illusion of progress may be the cause. Misogyny, the oldest hatred of them all, plays cat and mouse with this illusion from one generation to the next, to the extent that the experience of misogyny, both private and public, could be said almost to have become a subjective state. If it remains difficult for women to make art about their own lives, it is because femininity still has no stable place in culture. Ernaux recognized and weaponized, as it were, the enforced subjectivity of the female voice. Her mechanism of honesty is highly trustworthy -- but honesty, like certain talents, isn't heritable by the next generation.

In the days that followed, I thought often of Annie Ernaux in Stockholm, descending the staircase alone. Her body, that which has been both her container and her subject, which has been the fragile, mortal basis of her empire, stepping forward into empty space.

Rachel Cusk is the author of several novels, most recently ''Second Place.'' She has written for the magazine about the female voice in the visual arts.

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCUS SCHAEFER) (MM31)

Ernaux in January 1984. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SOPHIE BASSOULS, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (MM33) This article appeared in print on page MM30, MM31, MM32, MM33, MM44, MM45, MM46.

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[***Ethnic Breakthrough by a Man of Wealth***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66PG-7KT1-JBG3-611H-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1322 words

**Byline:** By Megan Specia and Isabella Kwai

**Body**

Rishi Sunak's ascent to the prime minister's office is a significant milestone for Britain's Indian diaspora. But for many, his immense personal wealth has made him less relatable.

LONDON -- In northwest London, home to one of Britain's largest Hindu communities, celebrations for Diwali, a festive holiday, were well underway on Monday. Children tossed small fireworks that popped as they slammed into the sidewalk. Bright lights strung across the street twinkled overhead. Families bought sweets and candles.

But many who were gathered with their families said that they suddenly had something new to celebrate -- the news that Rishi Sunak, the eldest son of a doctor and pharmacist of Indian descent, will become prime minister, the first person of color to hold Britain's highest political office.

Britain is home to a vibrant and diverse community of people with roots in India, which it ruled as a colony for nearly a century before India won independence in 1947. As many as 1.5 million people of Indian descent live in England and Wales, making them the largest ethnic group after white Britons.

That makes Mr. Sunak's triumph a significant milestone for Britain's Indian diaspora, whose long struggle against racism and prejudice is rarely a prominent issue in British politics.

''We are so proud and happy,'' said Hemal Joshi, 43, who lives in northwest London with his wife and son. ''I've got so many messages from India already. So he has a lot of expectation now from all over the world. Let's see what he will do.''

Mr. Sunak, 42, has always expressed pride in his Indian roots, and he regularly points to his upbringing as the son of immigrants. But he has not put his heritage at the center of his political message, focusing instead on his experience in finance, and the British news media has not dwelled on his ethnicity.

Instead, it is Mr. Sunak's elite education and extreme wealth that have drawn scrutiny -- and become something of a political liability in a society famously divided by tensions over class.

Mr. Sunak is also a practicing Hindu, and when he took his oath of office as a member of Parliament, he did so on the Gita, a book of Hindu scripture. As chancellor of the Exchequer, he celebrated Diwali, known as the festival of lights, by putting lights outside his official residence at 11 Downing St.

''We are very proud and very excited, being Hindus from India,'' said Priya Gohil, who was just leaving the temple with her family in the borough of Harrow after offering Diwali prayers. ''It's just very relatable.''

What was less relatable to many was the air of privilege attached to him.

Mr. Sunak attended the elite Winchester College, a private boarding school in Britain, then went to Oxford University and Stanford. He made a fortune in finance, working for Goldman Sachs and two hedge funds before his political career began. He is also married to Akshata Murty, the daughter of one of India's wealthiest men.

Skepticism about his wealth has followed him throughout his bid for the leadership of the Conservative Party, though many of his predecessors have also come from privileged backgrounds. The issue remains resonant even after he emerged on Monday as the winner of the contest to lead the country.

''I think it's great that we have a person of color as the prime minister for the first time,'' said Shivani Dasani, 22, who was leaving a temple in northwest London. But she added, ''He's a rich, upper-class man, so he can't speak for the entire community in that way.''

Those concerns persisted beyond London's Indian communities. In some neighborhoods, many people were too busy finishing the workday to even know that Mr. Sunak had been chosen as prime minister. But those who did cited Mr. Sunak's sizable wealth as one of the only things they knew about him, even as they hoped he would address the problems of inflation and soaring housing prices.

''He won't know how normal people live -- the ***working class***,'' said Samuel Shan, who was sweeping the floor near his fruit and vegetable stall at a market in Dalston, a diverse neighborhood that has become more gentrified in recent years. ''We'll see what he can do for us.''

Brano Gabani, a council worker originally from Slovakia, laughed humorlessly as he noted that he had ''no choice'' in the selection of Mr. Sunak. He said he did not know enough about the incoming prime minister's character to assess him. But, like many others, he pointed to slow wage growth and the rising cost of living as major issues.

''Every month we lose salary; we are more poor,'' he said. ''I want to see him doing something, something for English people.''

Narendra H. Thakrar, the chairman of the Shri Sanatan Hindu Mandir temple in the Wembley area of London, said he believed that Mr. Sunak was the right man to steer the nation during a time of uncertainty, and that his appeal transcended any particular ethnic or religious community.

''There are many difficulties this country is facing at the moment economically, and I think that Rishi Sunak is the right person to take over as prime minister,'' he said. ''He has proved himself to be a good chancellor, and let's hope he will do justice to the country. I am sure he will.''

As he stood alongside the tan, intricately carved sandstone temple on Monday, Mr. Thakrar rejoiced in the confluence of the Diwali holiday and Mr. Sunak's victory, calling it ''a great day.'' Mr. Sunak, he said, was ''a devout Hindu and he loves his community.''

Around the same time, India's prime minister, Narendra Modi, was congratulating Mr. Sunak and describing the Indian community in Britain as a ''living bridge'' between the two nations.

Zubaida Haque, the former executive director of the Equality Trust, a British charity, said that the pride Mr. Sunak's victory might inspire needed to be placed in context. While representation matters, ''that doesn't mean that Britain has great social mobility,'' she said, pointing to his wealthy upbringing.

''It's still a great achievement that Rishi Sunak will get the top job in this country, but let's not pretend that racial inequality is no longer a barrier,'' she said.

Ms. Dasani, who was at the temple in Wembley with her family, expressed a similar sentiment, saying she believed that the earlier leadership race lost by Mr. Sunak brought to light ''a lot of racism that still exists in the U.K.''

She said she felt that people questioned his Britishness in a way they never did with his white counterparts.

Ms. Dasani also cited Conservative Party policies that she said were hostile to immigrants and asylum seekers. Human rights groups, for example, condemned a policy initiated under Mr. Johnson aimed at sending some refugees arriving in Britain to Rwanda.

But she said she still believed that having broader cultural representation on such a prominent stage could have a positive effect on the national psyche.

''I think there is a worry among South Asian people in the U.K. that if we are too loud about our culture people will see us as not properly British,'' she said. ''So I think it is a good thing that he is so open about his culture and his religion.''

Halima Begum, chief executive of Runnymede Trust, a research institute focusing on racial equality, called Mr. Sunak's triumph a defining moment.

''It is a poignant and symbolic moment for a grandchild of the British Empire to take up the highest office of the land,'' she said.

Still, Dr. Begum said that she hoped Mr. Sunak would put his skills as former chancellor to use to address problems affecting minority ethnic groups in Britain, including inflation and rising interest rates that have driven up household mortgages.

''The rest of the British public will be looking at what immediate actions Sunak will take to weather the storm,'' she said.

Mujib Mashal contributed reporting from New Delhi.Mujib Mashal contributed reporting from New Delhi.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/24/world/europe/uk-rishi-sunak.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/24/world/europe/uk-rishi-sunak.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Britain's next prime minister, Rishi Sunak, center, outside the Conservative Party's headquarters in London on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRY NICHOLLS/REUTERS) (A1)

The news that Rishi Sunak will become prime minister added to the Diwali celebrations in Wembley in northwest London. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

TOLGA AKMEN/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK) (A10-A11) This article appeared in print on page A1, A10, A11.

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[***Let’s Talk About the Economic Roots of White Supremacy; Jamelle Bouie***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66FX-FMF1-DXY4-X1CP-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1355 words

**Byline:** Jamelle Bouie

**Highlight:** It’s not just about racism.

**Body**

[*In my Tuesday column*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/20/opinion/glenn-youngkin-midterms-trump.html) on the political incentives within the Republican Party, I made an analogy to the struggle over civil rights in the midcentury Democratic Party. I brought up the Dixiecrats and mentioned their opposition to labor rights as well as civil rights.

Let’s talk about that.

Most Americans tend to think of Jim Crow almost exclusively in terms of racist oppression of Black Americans, but the Jim Crow system was as much about the preservation of a particular economic order as it was about the racist subjugation of Black people. In fact, the two were intertwined. By disenfranchising, segregating and terrorizing Black people, Southern elites could fragment and segment the entire ***working class*** as well as maintain a large pool of exploited, low-wage labor.

Yes, most ordinary white Southerners were also invested in a racist social order. But the degree of that investment — the extent to which it was either challenged or nurtured — was structured by the reality of institutional white supremacy. Jim Crow helped produce racists (and reproduce racist ideologies) as much as it was produced by them.

But that’s a bit of a sidebar. The larger point is that Southern elites were both virulently racist and fanatically opposed to organized labor, especially the broad-based industrial unions that tried to organize across racial lines. By even attempting to organize Black workers alongside white ones, unions like the Industrial Workers of the World in the early part of the 20th century and the Congress of Industrial Organizations during the period of the New Deal threatened to undermine the entire Jim Crow system, which rested on the total domination of the economic order by capital as well as racial segregation. (The C.I.O.’s postwar effort to unionize the South, “Operation Dixie,” failed for many reasons, not the least the ferocious opposition of white business and political elites in the region.)

The anti-union South Carolina governor (and later U.S. senator) Strom Thurmond, the Dixiecrats’ candidate for president against Harry Truman in the 1948 election, embodied these two pillars of the Jim Crow system. A staunch segregationist who condemned civil rights laws as a “totalitarian” imposition on states’ rights, Thurmond was also, his biographer Joseph Crespino [*writes*](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Strom_Thurmond_s_America/uCAPbSeruPEC?hl=en&amp;gbpv=1&amp;bsq=labor), “one of the Senate’s most determined foes of labor unions and one of its greatest friends to business interests. His disdain for labor bosses became interchangeable with his loathing for civil rights.”

If we understand Jim Crow as a system of labor suppression as well as racial oppression, we can see more clearly how key elements of the Jim Crow order survived the end of formal segregation and racist disenfranchisement. “In the end,” writes the labor scholar Michael Goldfield in “[*The Southern Key*](https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-southern-key-9780190079321?cc=us&amp;lang=en&amp;): Class, Race, &amp; Radicalism in the 1930s &amp; 1940s,” “the civil rights movement, for all its heroic struggles and important successes, was not able to confront the economic roots of white supremacy.”

Which is to say that the economy of the South would retain its low-wage, exploitative character, and its politics would remain, for the most part, in the hands of powerful business interests. And while the region would see real economic growth and the rise of a Black middle class, it would also continue to see vast inequality structured by race hierarchy, with segregated Black communities bearing the brunt of disinvestment, deindustrialization and capital flight.

Put another way, [*the high unemployment rates of the Black Belt*](https://www.al.com/news/2020/09/black-belt-2020-to-improve-unemployment-black-belt-must-accept-our-own-responsibilities.html) are as much a legacy of Jim Crow as the persistent efforts to keep Black Americans away from the ballot box are.

What I Wrote

[*My Tuesday column*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/20/opinion/glenn-youngkin-midterms-trump.html) was on the structural forces and internal incentives that have pushed ambitious Republicans to make common cause with MAGA election deniers.

There is no equivalent to northern Black voters in the Trumpified Republican Party. Put differently, there is no large and pivotal group of Republicans who can exert cross-pressure on MAGA voters. Instead, the further the Republican Party goes down the rabbit hole of “stop the steal” and other conspiracy theories, the more it loses voters who could serve to apply that pressure.

[*My Friday column*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/23/opinion/cannon-trump-federal-judges.html) was on the cadre of hyperpartisan, pro-Trump judges who threaten to fatally undermine rule of law, and what to do about them.

The issue with this convention, as we’ve seen in the legal drama over the classified materials found in President Donald Trump’s home at Mar-a-Lago, is that it isn’t equipped to deal with the problem of hyperpartisan, ideological judges who are less committed to the rule of law than to their presidential patron. In particular, this way of thinking about federal courts isn’t equipped to deal with the problem of Trump judges.

And in [*the latest episode*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/white-sands/id1592411580?i=1000580135443) of my podcast with John Ganz, we discussed the 1992 crime thriller “White Sands.”

Now Reading

[*Charlotte Shane*](https://harpers.org/archive/2022/10/the-right-to-not-be-pregnant-asserting-an-essential-right/) on the right to not be pregnant for Harper’s Magazine.

[*Moira Donegan*](https://moiradonegan.substack.com/p/hard-choices) on “choice feminism” for her Substack newsletter.

[*Verlyn Klinkenborg*](https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2022/10/06/endless-summer-brian-wilson-long-promised-road/) on Brian Wilson for The New York Review of Books.

[*Michelle Chen*](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/workers-of-the-world) on international labor solidarity for Dissent magazine.

[*Gabriel Winant*](https://www.nplusonemag.com/online-only/online-only/on-barbara-ehrenreich/) on Barbara Ehrenreich for n+1 magazine.

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://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/wFtqk_0eBlM_AncPaw58qQ~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRkmSKgP0SiaHR0cHM6Ly90d2l0dGVyLmNvbS9qYm91aWU_Y2FtcGFpZ25faWQ9MCZlbWM9ZWRpdF9qYm9fMjAyMjA2MjUmaW5zdGFuY2VfaWQ9MCZubD1qYW1lbGxlLWJvdWllJnJlZ2lfaWQ9MCZzZWdtZW50X2lkPTAmdGU9MSZ1c2VyX2lkPTJjY2UzMzc5MDY2YTQ3ZDVjMmJmZGJkNTYzODFiNDNjVwNueXRCCmKYoJ22Ytstgn9SD2tvYkBueXRpbWVzLmNvbVgEAAAAAA~~)), [*Instagram*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/SWjnXroFMrNwMSxeg02QMA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRkmSKgP0SpaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuaW5zdGFncmFtLmNvbS9qYm91aWUvP2NhbXBhaWduX2lkPTAmZW1jPWVkaXRfamJvXzIwMjIwNjI1Jmluc3RhbmNlX2lkPTAmbmw9amFtZWxsZS1ib3VpZSZyZWdpX2lkPTAmc2VnbWVudF9pZD0wJnRlPTEmdXNlcl9pZD0yY2NlMzM3OTA2NmE0N2Q1YzJiZmRiZDU2MzgxYjQzY1cDbnl0QgpimKCdtmLbLYJ_Ug9rb2JAbnl0aW1lcy5jb21YBAAAAAA~) and [*TikTok*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/odvvwRQJessrEjootZE1qA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRkmSKgP0SsaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cudGlrdG9rLmNvbS9AamFtZWxsZWJvdWllP2NhbXBhaWduX2lkPTAmZW1jPWVkaXRfamJvXzIwMjIwNjI1Jmluc3RhbmNlX2lkPTAmbmw9amFtZWxsZS1ib3VpZSZyZWdpX2lkPTAmc2VnbWVudF9pZD0wJnRlPTEmdXNlcl9pZD0yY2NlMzM3OTA2NmE0N2Q1YzJiZmRiZDU2MzgxYjQzY1cDbnl0QgpimKCdtmLbLYJ_Ug9rb2JAbnl0aW1lcy5jb21YBAAAAAA~).

Photo of the Week

I was recently in Philadelphia and spent the better part of a morning taking a walk through the city. I had my camera and obviously took pictures. Here is one of them.

Now Eating: Sheet-Pan Paneer Tikka

I would file this one under “extremely easy and very good.” As always when I share a paneer recipe, I recommend that you make your own; it is easier than you think and cheaper than store-bought. You can find directions for making paneer [*here*](https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/aarti-sequeira/paneer-homemade-indian-cheese-recipe-1927608). [*Recipe*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023474-sheet-pan-paneer-tikka?action=click&amp;region=Sam%20Sifton%27s%20Suggestions&amp;rank=2) comes from NYT Cooking. Makes about 5 servings.

Ingredients

* 1\xC2 pounds paneer (fresh or store-bought), cut into 1-inch cubes

1. 3 tablespoons neutral oil like sunflower or canola
2. 3 tablespoons full-fat Greek yogurt
3. 1 tablespoon ginger paste or finely grated ginger (from about a 2-inch piece)
4. 1 tablespoon garlic paste or finely grated garlic (from about 6 cloves)
5. 1 tablespoon coriander powder
6. 1 tablespoon garam masala
7. 1 teaspoon Kashmiri or other red chile powder
8. \xC2 teaspoon turmeric powder
9. Salt
10. 2 medium bell peppers, seeded and chopped into 1-inch pieces
11. 1 medium red onion, quartered, with each quarter then cut into halves
12. 2 tablespoons melted ghee or butter for basting
13. \xC2 lemon, juiced (about 4 teaspoons)
14. Roti and chutney (for serving)

Directions

If using store-bought paneer, soak it in hot water for 10 minutes and drain. Arrange one oven rack in the center of the oven and a second one closest to the broiler heating element. Heat oven to 450 degrees. Line a large sheet pan with foil and brush it with 1 tablespoon oil. Set aside.

In a large bowl, mix the rest of the oil with yogurt, ginger paste, garlic paste, coriander powder, garam masala, red chile powder, turmeric powder and 1 teaspoon salt to make the marinade.

Add paneer, bell peppers and onion to the bowl with the marinade and mix until evenly coated. (If you have the time, marinate the paneer and vegetables for 20 minutes and up to 2 hours for even more flavor.)

On the prepared sheet pan, evenly spread out the marinated paneer and vegetables, and bake on the middle oven rack until the paneer edges start to turn golden, about 8 minutes.

Take the pan out of the oven and brush the paneer with melted ghee. Turn the oven to broil, place the paneer and vegetables on the top rack and broil on high until the paneer turns golden, 1 to 2 minutes. Take the paneer and vegetables out of the oven and sprinkle with lemon juice and additional salt, if desired. Serve with roti and chutney or by itself.

PHOTO: The Dixiecrats: College students at the 1948 Southern Democratic Convention. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Bettmann/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 25, 2022

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[***Can Anything End the Voting Wars?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6273-PW21-DXY4-X54D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 16, 2021 Tuesday 01:32 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1607 words

**Byline:** Ross Douthat

**Highlight:** As battles over voting rules burn hotter, the stakes are still lower than both sides seem to think.

**Body**

As battles over voting rules burn hotter, the stakes are still lower than both sides seem to think.

About two years ago I did something foolish: I wrote an [*optimistic column*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html) arguing that a polarizing issue was ripe for de-escalation and compromise.

The issue was voting rights, where Republicans have long championed voter ID laws as a bulwark against alleged voting fraud, while Democrats have countered that such restrictions unfairly burden many Americans, racial minorities especially, in the exercise of their hard-won right to vote.

The good news, I said back then, was that lots of studies suggest that voter ID laws don’t do either thing. They don’t prevent much (or any) fraud, but they also don’t have much (if any) effect on turnout, for minorities or any other group. So conservatives could stop pushing them, liberals could stop freaking out about them, and without either side losing anything substantial, compromise and conciliation could rule the day.

Naturally since then the voting wars have only burned hotter, thanks to the exigencies of the coronavirus era and the arson of Donald Trump. The virus prompted a vast expansion of mail-in voting in the name of public health, Trump blamed vote-by-mail fraud (among other conspiracies) for his defeat, and soon a large swath of conservatives became convinced corrupt balloting had stolen the election.

Now Republicans all over the country are advancing bills that answer the “theft” of 2020 with new ID requirements and new limits on absentee and early votes, while Democrats are advancing a national bill that would essentially federalize election law and make certain Republican restrictions impermissible. And each side is talking as if this were an [*existential fight*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html), with the very concept of fair democratic elections hanging in the balance.

But the facts continue to suggest otherwise, with two new studies adding to the case for compromise and calm.

The first [*study*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html), from the Democracy and Polarization Lab at Stanford University, looks at the effects of no-excuse absentee voting on the 2020 elections — the kind of balloting that a lot of states expanded and that many Republican state legislators now want to roll back. Contrary to liberal expectations, easing the voting rules this way seemed to have no effect on turnout: “States newly implementing no-excuse absentee voting for 2020 did not see larger increases in turnout than states that did not.”

Then contrary to Republican fears, the easement didn’t help Democrats at the G.O.P.’s expense: “No-excuse absentee did not substantially increase Democratic turnout relative to Republican turnout.” Overall the authors argue that what drove higher turnout in 2020 was simply “voter interest” in the elections, not the major voting rule change, which “mobilized relatively few voters and had at most a muted partisan effect.”

The second [*study*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html) comes from a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Oregon, and it looks further back in time to assess the effects of Shelby County v. Holder, the Supreme Court revision of the Voting Rights Act that made it easier for states to impose voter ID laws and other restrictions. Using data from six federal elections, the author finds no post-Shelby divergence between white and African-American turnout in states affected by the ruling. Indeed, if anything, the jurisdictions saw African-American turnout rise relative to white turnout in the 2016 elections, suggesting that new obstacles to voting prompt swift mobilization in response.

So rule changes favored by Democrats that make it modestly easier to vote probably didn’t help Democrats win the 2020 elections, and rule changes favored by Republicans that make it modestly harder to vote probably haven’t suppressed minority votes. Great news! I’m sure that now we can call off the voting war and just find a sensible compromise instead.

For instance, my own preferred grand bargain would limit absentee voting but increase funding for polling places and make Election Day a national holiday. This would address reasonable Republican concerns about the civic benefits of having most people vote together, on the same day with the same information, while answering Democratic concerns about long lines and ***working-class*** access to the polls. But there are other possible compromises as well …

No, ha-ha, just kidding, we aren’t going to compromise, not when there’s an apocalypse to fund-raise off. And to be clear, Republicans are much more at fault for the needless escalation here. Democrats are guilty of rhetorical exaggeration and policy excess (their big voting rights bill, for instance, includes [*various traducements of free speech*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html)), but Republicans instigated the policy battle and thanks to Trump they’ve gone deepest into paranoia. At their most sincere, they can seem clueless about how the history of Jim Crow shadows these debates; at their most cynical or Trumpy, they’re just indulging a racialized fear of mobs in cities stealing elections from decent white suburbanites. And the deeper they dig in against reasonable critiques, the more the primal conservative suspicion of mass democracy, a “[*lower turnout is good, actually*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html)” mentality, has a way of coming out.

Some suspicion of pure democracy is essential to conservatism. But a high-minded case for lower turnout assumes that a smaller electorate will be more politically engaged and therefore more civic-minded. The evidence of recent American history, though, is that highly engaged, high-information voters tend to be [*zealous and blinkered*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html) hyperpartisans, in desperate need of balancing by more chilled-out and conflicted low-information votes.

The cynical conservative case for lower turnout, meanwhile, assumes that conservatism is the natural party of the responsible, always-registered-to-vote upper middle class. But as the G.O.P.’s base has become more populist and ***working-class***, the American right more anti-establishment, this self-interested logic is crumbling. If voter ID rules or absentee ballot limits did reduce turnout among occasional voters, a lot of those no-shows might be Trump supporters.

This is part of why the conservative fixation on hypothetical voter fraud is so exasperating. If the Trump era proved anything, it’s that Republicans can hold their ground as turnout rises, that they can be competitive with low-propensity voters and minority voters as well. But instead of taking that as an opportunity to actually reach for majorities again, under the influence of #StoptheSteal the party is effectively telling potential supporters that it doesn’t want high turnout, which is basically a way of saying, We don’t want your votes.

Then on the Democratic side, the focus on voting rules feeds a persistent misapprehension about the true constraints on liberal power. Liberals are disadvantaged in the American system at the moment, but it’s longstanding constitutional structures, the Electoral College and the Senate above all, that give Republicans a modest advantage, not recent innovations in vote suppression. There isn’t a vast nonvoting majority that would sweep the left into power if only it were easier to vote, and the push for voter ID on the right isn’t actually a replay of Jim Crow. It’s a sideshow, fed by conservative paranoia, to the real struggle for power in America.

The shrewder left-wing analogy, [*offered*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html) by Corey Robin a few days ago in The New Yorker, isn’t to the Reconstruction-era South but to “Britain in the years before the Reform Act of 1832,” when it was antique constitutional structures that stifled democracy, not some sort of dramatic fascist putsch. From a conservative perspective I like this analogy, because it implies that today’s Republicans could learn something from Benjamin Disraeli, the opportunistic 19th-century Tory who leaned into democratization and proved the right could win mass ***working-class*** support.

But even Robin’s analogy exaggerates the structural limits on liberal power in the United States today. Those limits certainly exist; they delivered Trump the White House in 2016 with a minority of the popular vote. But the Democratic Party of 2021 has power that’s only marginally out of proportion to its popular support: Democrats won the national House vote by roughly 51 percent to 48 percent and the presidential popular vote by roughly 51 percent to 47 percent, and the fulcrum of power in Joe Biden’s Washington, a 51-50 Senate, is awfully close to those popular-vote splits.

This suggests that like the Republican minority, the Democratic majority runs a risk of letting a fixation on the structures of democracy become an excuse to shirk the more important work of a political party — which is to persuade the largest possible majority, not just a bare 51 percent, to vote its way. And the intensity of the debates over rules and structures, IDs and absentee ballots, reflects a bipartisan dynamic where neither coalition seems able to imagine being other than what it’s become in the last 10 years — a blocking minority for Republicans, a super-slim majority for Democrats.

Again, I don’t expect a compromise to emerge out of this stalemate. Instead, I expect the election rules of the future to be written by the party that recognizes that the surest way to make certain your opponents can’t win unfairly is to make sure the election isn’t close.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.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/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html).

Follow The New York Times Opinion section on [*Facebook*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html), [*Twitter (@NYTOpinion)*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html) and [*Instagram*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/opinion/voter-id-study-republicans-democrats.html).

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA GETTY)

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2021

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[***Why the California Dream Long Included a Lawn; California today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6661-5G41-DXY4-X3JR-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Jill Cowan

**Highlight:** More homeowners are ripping out their lawns, marking the twilight of a signature symbol of Southern California homeownership.

**Body**

More homeowners are ripping out their lawns, marking the twilight of a signature symbol of Southern California homeownership.

As Southern California’s water supplies run perilously low, more and more homeowners are doing something they might not have imagined even a few years ago: ripping out their lawns.

[*As I reported this week*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/15/us/los-angeles-lawn-watering-drought.html), the shift away from thirsty grass toward native plants and artificial turf marks the twilight of one of Los Angeles’s most iconic fantasies — a vision of suburban homesteading that evolved over centuries.

American lawns have their roots in 18th-century England, where wealthy people started to accumulate land and private property. Setting a mansion amid a grassy expanse became an early demonstration that one could afford to have land that wasn’t farmed, said Christopher Sellers, a historian with Stony Brook University who has written about the rise of lawns in the United States.

In the late 19th century, the lawn was imported to the East Coast by Gilded Age capitalists building their own versions of English country estates on Long Island and in Newport, R.I. The northeastern United States got 15 to 20 inches less rainfall per year than England, but horticulturalists developed heartier grass hybrids, including some that were previously considered weeds, Sellers said. And a house with a well-tended lawn became both an aspiration and a baseline for a ballooning middle class.

“It becomes a cultural norm, the expectation,” Sellers said.

The opening of the Los Angeles Aqueduct in 1913 made the remote waters of the Owens River available to fuel the growth that would eventually make the city the second largest in the country, said William Deverell, a history professor at the University of Southern California focusing on California and the West.

As Americans moved West to an arid landscape, they brought with them visions of a form of nature tamed by suburbia: lush carpets of grass that could, with enough water, be kept green year-round.

“It allowed people to bring a lot of water to the landscape,” he said. “You get some good hoses and sprinklers, and you’ve got the ability to indulge this other impulse: Midwestern uniformity in private property display.”

Then, that image of a suburban paradise was magnified and projected by Hollywood.

“The T.V. and film industry using Southern California, as they have since the beginning, as a great, big set — that’s going to influence what you think you do as a successful ***working-class*** or middle-class person,” Deverell said.

But as early as the 1960s, at the dawn of California’s nation-leading environmental movement, some Californians began to recognize the fragility of the Los Angeles Basin, Deverell said. There was an inkling that the water couldn’t last forever.

“The fact that we’re talking about lawns a lot is a recognition of these bigger, deeper problems around the perception of infinite resources,” Deverell said. “Lawns are a symptom.”

Now, he said, the movement to replace grass with native gardens is, “in a way, going back to the future.”

For more:

* Read about the Angelenos who are [*finally letting their lawns go.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/15/us/los-angeles-lawn-watering-drought.html)

1. New restrictions on [*pumping from the Colorado River*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/16/climate/colorado-river-lake-mead-water-drought.html) loom as water levels reach some of their lowest points ever.
2. Take a tour of the [*Carlsbad Desalination Plant*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/29/us/san-diego-drinking-water.html), where seawater becomes drinking water.

If you read one story, make it this

Schools across the country have been caught up in spirited debates over what students should learn about U.S. history. We talked to social studies teachers about [*what they actually teach.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/08/17/us/teaching-critical-race-theory.html)

The rest of the news

* School boards: California’s Republican Party is starting its most ambitious program to win [*local school board elections*](https://calmatters.org/politics/2022/08/california-republicans-school-board-races/) — which are nonpartisan — by capitalizing on parents’ pandemic concerns over “critical race theory” and other school issues, CalMatters reports.

1. Tomato shortage: The worst drought to ever hit California is making it [*increasingly hard for farmers to grow tomatoes*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-08-13/spaghetti-sauce-is-under-threat-as-water-crisis-slams-tomatoes), driving up the price of tomato-based products worldwide, Bloomberg reports.

* Los Angeles City Council: Mitchell Englander, a former Los Angeles city councilman, has been [*fined $79,830*](https://apnews.com/article/floods-california-animals-deserts-d0f8375f3ac4ffc6918a0e9a92964a04) for accepting a free hotel room, expensive liquor and an envelope containing $10,000, The Los Angeles Times reports.

1. Flash flood damage: Timelines for repairing roads damaged by flash floods in Joshua Tree and Death Valley National Parks [*are being extended*](https://apnews.com/article/floods-california-animals-deserts-d0f8375f3ac4ffc6918a0e9a92964a04) as monsoonal rains cause new problems, The Associated Press reports.

* Fraud: Former Representative Terrance John Cox of Fresno blamed “politics” for [*his 28 federal charges*](https://www.fresnobee.com/news/local/article264587306.html) — which include wire fraud, money laundering, financial institution fraud and campaign contribution fraud, The Fresno Bee reports.

1. Monkeypox: Monkeypox resources [*are scarce*](https://calmatters.org/health/2022/08/california-monkeypox-2/) in the Central Valley, CalMatters reports.

* Pandemic regulations: The Calvary Chapel in San Jose [*will not have to pay $200,000*](https://apnews.com/article/covid-us-supreme-court-health-public-california-9df918cb3ac4039c6cdf1b6d090732f6) for violating safety regulations during the Covid-19 pandemic by holding large religious services, The Associated Press reports.

What we’re eating

Chocolate zucchini [*loaf cake.*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023356-chocolate-zucchini-loaf-cake)

Where we’re traveling

Today’s tip comes from Lorna Flynn, who recommends Calaveras Big Trees State Park. Ninety miles southeast of Sacramento, the park preserves two groves of giant sequoias:

“To stand next to one of these giants with furry bark is to set your place on this planet. You can stand on the edge of the Grand Canyon and get that sense, but the canyon isn’t living.”

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.

Tell us

Parents, children and teachers: How are you feeling about the start of the school year?

Email us at [*CAtoday@nytimes.com*](mailto:CAtoday@nytimes.com) with your hopes, fears and stories. Please include your name and the city that you live in.

And before you go, some good news

After a two-year pandemic pause, the [*Santa Cruz Mountain Jam*](https://santacruzmountainjam.org/) returns this weekend.

The free outdoor concert in the Santa Cruz Mountains began in 2013 as a way to raise money for children in Santa Cruz to study music. Proceeds from this year’s event, held on Saturday, will benefit music programs at local elementary and middle schools.

“For us, it’s kind of a way of paying back the community,” the concert organizer, Louis Niemann, [*told The Santa Cruz Sentinel.*](https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2022/07/31/santa-cruz-mountain-jam-raises-money-for-youth-music-program/) “We just want to have a really fun musical event that everybody can enjoy.”

Thanks for reading. We’ll be back tomorrow.

P.S. Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Nevertheless, \_\_\_ persisted” (3 letters).

Soumya Karlamangla, Isabella Grullón Paz and Briana Scalia 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: Inspired by neighbors, Camilla Jessen and Alex Hoffmaster recently replaced their dead lawn with environmentally friendly landscaping that included decomposed granite and native plants. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jenna Schoenefeld for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Surprise Winner of Kentucky Derby Won't Run in the Preakness***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65F9-2251-JBG3-633J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 13, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Sports Desk; Pg. 9

**Length:** 774 words

**Byline:** By Joe Drape

**Body**

Rich Strike's owner said he had decided not to push the horse to run only two weeks after he came out of nowhere to win at Churchill Downs.

There will be no Triple Crown champion this year after the owner of the Kentucky Derby winner Rich Strike announced Thursday that his colt would skip the Preakness Stakes and run instead in the Belmont Stakes.

The owner, Rick Dawson, said Rich Strike came out of the Derby in fine shape on Saturday. But he said that he and the trainer, Eric Reed, had decided not to push the colt into the second leg of the Triple Crown in Baltimore on May 21 after only two weeks of rest, especially after winning America's most famous horse race (and a legion of fans) as an 80-1 shot.

The colt did not even draw into the Derby field until the day before the race, when Ethereal Road was scratched.

''Our original plan for Rich Strike was contingent on the Kentucky Derby. Should we not run in the Derby we would point toward the Preakness,'' Dawson said in a statement. ''Should we run in the Derby, subject to the race outcome and the condition of our horse, we would give him more recovery time.''

Dawson said one possible plan was to run the horse, nicknamed Ritchie, in the Belmont Stakes in New York on June 11, but in any event to give him five to six weeks between races.

''Obviously, with our tremendous effort and win in the Derby, it's very, very tempting to alter our course and run in the Preakness at Pimlico, which would be a great honor for all our group,'' Dawson said. ''However, after much discussion and consideration with my trainer, Eric Reed, and a few others, we are going to stay with our plan of what's best for Ritchie is what's best for our group, and pass on running in the Preakness, and point toward the Belmont in approximately five weeks.''

In a statement, Reed said of the horse: ''What matters most is what's best for him. We hate the decision we had to make but it was the right one.''

It is unusual for the Derby winner to skip the middle leg of the series and forfeit an opportunity to capture the Triple Crown by finishing first at the Derby, the Preakness and the Belmont.

But Dawson and Reed had cautioned that sending Rich Strike to Baltimore was no sure thing. At Churchill Downs, the home of the Derby in Louisville, Ky., the colt was on a racetrack where he had won before (by 17 lengths). The track is conducive to Rich Strike's late-closing style.

The Preakness is one-sixteenth of a mile shorter than the Derby, and the configuration of Pimlico Race Course features tighter turns and demands more agility.

There also figures to be far fewer horses than the 20 that showed up in Louisville and none is likely to set the same blistering early pace that complemented Rich Strike's late turn of foot. In the Derby, the colt caught Epicenter and Zandon, who were tiring after tracking the early leaders.

The defection of Rich Strike means Epicenter, who finished second in the Derby and is committed to the Preakness, is now the likely favorite to win the second jewel in the Triple Crown.

The mile-and-a-half Belmont Stakes, with its big sweeping turns, should help Rich Strike turn in his best effort, especially after five weeks' rest.

Or at least that is what Dawson and Reed are betting.

They proved canny when they set their sights on getting Rich Strike into the Derby, as did bettors who believed in the colt. Rich Strike paid $163.60 on a $2 bet to win. Only Donerail in 1913 had a higher payout, at $184.90.

Still, it is always disappointing for horse racing enthusiasts when a Triple Crown bid is not on the table. And Rich Strike had a particularly compelling back story that touched even those who are not fans of the sport.

He was purchased in a claiming race for $30,000. The colt is the only horse Dawson has in training. Rich Strike's rider, Sonny Leon, a 32-year-old from Venezuela, also has a ***working-class*** pedigree. He was the 11th-ranked rider in the nation last year, but piled up those victories mostly at backwater tracks in Ohio. He had never won a graded stakes race before the Derby, and Dawson, Reed and Leon were all making their Derby debuts.

In 2019, Country House became the first Kentucky Derby winner to skip the second leg of the Triple Crown since Grindstone in 1996. Country House had finished second in the Derby but was elevated to first after racing officials disqualified Maximum Security, who crossed the line first, for interfering with several horses.

Bill Mott, who trained Country House, said the colt had developed a cough. The Derby turned out to be the colt's last race. He now stands as a stallion in Kentucky.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/12/sports/horse-racing/rich-strike-preaknesss.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/12/sports/horse-racing/rich-strike-preaknesss.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Rich Strike, above, winning the Kentucky Derby. From far left, his jockey, Sonny Leon

trainer, Eric Reed

and owner, Rick Dawson, who said Thursday the colt will skip the Preakness. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY XAVIER BURRELL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ANDY LYONS/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** May 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Sunak’s Ascent Is a Breakthrough for Diversity, With Privilege Attached***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66PB-Y321-JBG3-60VJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 24, 2022 Monday 10:21 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1377 words

**Byline:** Megan Specia and Isabella Kwai

**Highlight:** Rishi Sunak’s ascent to the prime minister’s office is a significant milestone for Britain’s Indian diaspora. But for many, his immense personal wealth has made him less relatable.

**Body**

Rishi Sunak’s ascent to the prime minister’s office is a significant milestone for Britain’s Indian diaspora. But for many, his immense personal wealth has made him less relatable.

LONDON — In northwest London, home to one of Britain’s largest Hindu communities, celebrations for Diwali, a festive holiday, were well underway on Monday. Children tossed small fireworks that popped as they slammed into the sidewalk. Bright lights strung across the street twinkled overhead. Families bought sweets and candles.

But many who were gathered with their families said that they suddenly had something new to celebrate — the news that [*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/10/24/world/uk-prime-minister), the eldest son of a doctor and pharmacist of Indian descent, will become prime minister, the first person of color to hold Britain’s highest political office.

Britain is home to a vibrant and diverse community of people with roots in India, which it ruled as a colony for nearly a century before India won independence in 1947. As many as 1.5 million people of Indian descent live in England and Wales, making them the largest ethnic group after white Britons.

That makes Mr. Sunak’s triumph a significant milestone for Britain’s Indian diaspora, whose long struggle against racism and prejudice is rarely a prominent issue in British politics.

“We are so proud and happy,” said Hemal Joshi, 43, who lives in northwest London with his wife and son. “I’ve got so many messages from India already. So he has a lot of expectation now from all over the world. Let’s see what he will do.”

Mr. Sunak, 42, has always expressed pride in his Indian roots, and he regularly points to his upbringing as the son of immigrants. But he has not put his heritage at the center of his political message, focusing instead on his experience in finance, and the British news media has not dwelled on his ethnicity.

Instead, it is Mr. Sunak’s elite education and extreme wealth that have drawn scrutiny — and become something of a political liability in a society famously divided by tensions over class.

Mr. Sunak is also a practicing Hindu, and when [*he took his oath of office as a member of Parliament, he did so on the Gita*](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2022/09/21/raise-right-hand-solemnly-swearthere-no-infidels-no-good/), a book of Hindu scripture. As chancellor of the Exchequer, he celebrated Diwali, known as the festival of lights, by putting lights outside his official residence at 11 Downing St.

“We are very proud and very excited, being Hindus from India,” said Priya Gohil, who was just leaving the temple with her family in the borough of Harrow after offering Diwali prayers. “It’s just very relatable.”

What was less relatable to many was the air of privilege attached to him.

Mr. Sunak attended the elite Winchester College, a private boarding school in Britain, then went to Oxford University and Stanford. He made a fortune in finance, working for Goldman Sachs and two hedge funds before his political career began. He is also married to Akshata Murty, the daughter of one of India’s wealthiest men.

Skepticism about his wealth has followed him throughout his bid for the leadership of the Conservative Party, though many of his predecessors have also come from privileged backgrounds. The issue remains resonant even [*after he emerged on Monday as the winner of the contest to lead the country.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/24/world/europe/rishi-sunak-uk-prime-minister.html)

“I think it’s great that we have a person of color as the prime minister for the first time,” said Shivani Dasani, 22, who was leaving a temple in northwest London. But she added, “He’s a rich, upper-class man, so he can’t speak for the entire community in that way.”

Those concerns persisted beyond London’s Indian communities. In some neighborhoods, many people were too busy finishing the workday to even know that Mr. Sunak had been chosen as prime minister. But those who did cited Mr. Sunak’s sizable wealth as one of the only things they knew about him, even as they hoped he would address the problems of inflation and soaring housing prices.

“He won’t know how normal people live — the ***working class***,” said Samuel Shan, who was sweeping the floor near his fruit and vegetable stall at a market in Dalston, a diverse neighborhood that has become more gentrified in recent years. “We’ll see what he can do for us.”

Brano Gabani, a council worker originally from Slovakia, laughed humorlessly as he noted that he had “no choice” in the selection of Mr. Sunak. He said he did not know enough about the incoming prime minister’s character to assess him. But, like many others, he pointed to slow wage growth and the rising cost of living as major issues.

“Every month we lose salary; we are more poor,” he said. “I want to see him doing something, something for English people.”

Narendra H. Thakrar, the chairman of the Shri Sanatan Hindu Mandir temple in the Wembley area of London, said he believed that Mr. Sunak was the right man to steer the nation during a time of uncertainty, and that his appeal transcended any particular ethnic or religious community.

“There are many difficulties this country is facing at the moment economically, and I think that Rishi Sunak is the right person to take over as prime minister,” he said. “He has proved himself to be a good chancellor, and let’s hope he will do justice to the country. I am sure he will.”

As he stood alongside the tan, intricately carved sandstone temple on Monday, Mr. Thakrar rejoiced in the confluence of the Diwali holiday and Mr. Sunak’s victory, calling it “a great day.” Mr. Sunak, he said, was “a devout Hindu and he loves his community.”

Around the same time, India’s prime minister, Narendra Modi, was congratulating Mr. Sunak and describing the Indian community in Britain as a “living bridge” between the two nations.

Zubaida Haque, the former executive director of the Equality Trust, a British charity, said that the pride Mr. Sunak’s victory might inspire needed to be placed in context. While representation matters, “that doesn’t mean that Britain has great social mobility,” she said, pointing to his wealthy upbringing.

“It’s still a great achievement that Rishi Sunak will get the top job in this country, but let’s not pretend that racial inequality is no longer a barrier,” she said.

Ms. Dasani, who was at the temple in Wembley with her family, expressed a similar sentiment, saying she believed that the earlier leadership race lost by Mr. Sunak brought to light “a lot of racism that still exists in the U.K.”

She said she felt that people questioned his Britishness in a way they never did with his white counterparts.

Ms. Dasani also cited Conservative Party policies that she said were hostile to immigrants and asylum seekers. Human rights groups, for example, condemned a policy initiated under Mr. Johnson aimed at sending some refugees arriving in Britain to Rwanda.

But she said she still believed that having broader cultural representation on such a prominent stage could have a positive effect on the national psyche.

“I think there is a worry among South Asian people in the U.K. that if we are too loud about our culture people will see us as not properly British,” she said. “So I think it is a good thing that he is so open about his culture and his religion.”

Halima Begum, chief executive of Runnymede Trust, a research institute focusing on racial equality, called Mr. Sunak’s triumph a defining moment.

“It is a poignant and symbolic moment for a grandchild of the British Empire to take up the highest office of the land,” she said.

Still, Dr. Begum said that she hoped Mr. Sunak would put his skills as former chancellor to use to address problems affecting minority ethnic groups in Britain, including inflation and rising interest rates that have driven up household mortgages.

“The rest of the British public will be looking at what immediate actions Sunak will take to weather the storm,” she said.

Mujib Mashal contributed reporting from New Delhi.

Mujib Mashal contributed reporting from New Delhi.

PHOTOS: Britain’s next prime minister, Rishi Sunak, center, outside the Conservative Party’s headquarters in London on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRY NICHOLLS/REUTERS) (A1); The news that Rishi Sunak will become prime minister added to the Diwali celebrations in Wembley in northwest London. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; TOLGA AKMEN/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK) (A10-A11) This article appeared in print on page A1, A10, A11.

**Load-Date:** October 25, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Surprise Winner of the Kentucky Derby Will Skip the Preakness***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65F4-VDP1-DXY4-X1NN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 12, 2022 Thursday 19:10 EST

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**Section:** SPORTS; horse-racing

**Length:** 811 words

**Byline:** Joe Drape

**Highlight:** Rich Strike’s owner said he had decided not to push the horse to run only two weeks after he came out of nowhere to win at Churchill Downs.

**Body**

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There will be no Triple Crown champion this year after the owner of the Kentucky Derby winner Rich Strike announced Thursday that his colt would skip the Preakness Stakes and run instead in the Belmont Stakes.

The owner, Rick Dawson, said Rich Strike came out of the Derby in fine shape on Saturday. But he said that he and the trainer, Eric Reed, had decided not to push the colt into the second leg of the Triple Crown in Baltimore on May 21 after only two weeks of rest, especially after [*winning America’s most famous horse race*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/07/sports/kentucky-derby-horse-race) (and [*a legion of fans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/08/sports/horse-racing/rich-strike-kentucky-derby.html)) as an 80-1 shot.

The colt did not even draw into the Derby field until the day before the race, when Ethereal Road was scratched.

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It is unusual for the Derby winner to skip the middle leg of the series and forfeit an opportunity to [*capture the Triple Crown by finishing first at the Derby, the Preakness and the Belmont*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/triple-crown-horse-races.html).

But Dawson and Reed had cautioned that sending Rich Strike to Baltimore was no sure thing. At Churchill Downs, the home of the Derby in Louisville, Ky., the colt was on a racetrack where he had won before (by 17 lengths). The track is conducive to Rich Strike’s late-closing style.

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Bill Mott, who trained Country House, said the colt had developed a cough. The Derby turned out to be the colt’s last race. He now stands as a stallion in Kentucky.

PHOTOS: Rich Strike, above, winning the Kentucky Derby. From far left, his jockey, Sonny Leon; trainer, Eric Reed; and owner, Rick Dawson, who said Thursday the colt will skip the Preakness. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY XAVIER BURRELL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ANDY LYONS/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** May 6, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Progressive Democrat Enters Ohio’s Senate Race, Challenging Tim Ryan***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63D5-XYJ1-JBG3-621F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 18, 2021 Wednesday 09:21 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 533 words

**Byline:** Trip Gabriel

**Highlight:** Morgan Harper, 38, ran a high-profile primary challenge last year for a congressional seat with the backing of national progressive groups.

**Body**

Morgan Harper, 38, ran a high-profile primary challenge last year for a congressional seat with the backing of national progressive groups.

While Republicans are running [*a hotly competitive primary race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/08/us/politics/jd-vance-trump-ohio.html) for Ohio’s open Senate seat next year, the Democratic side had been owned by a single candidate: Representative Tim Ryan from the Youngstown area.

But that equation changed on Wednesday with the entry into the race of a second viable Democrat, [*Morgan Harper,*](https://morganharper.org/) who ran [*a high-profile primary challenge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/13/us/politics/morgan-harper-ohio-joyce-beatty.html) last year for a congressional seat with the backing of national progressive groups.

Ms. Harper, a former adviser at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, said in an interview she would run a campaign aimed at turning out Black voters, women and young people with a populist message of getting “the economy on the side of working people.’’

The Democratic brand has been badly tarnished in Ohio since President Barack Obama twice carried the state. In contests as recently as this summer, Ms. Harper’s left-wing vision of her party has failed to revive it. College-educated suburban voters in Ohio may have swung to Democrats in the Trump era, but Republicans more than made up the difference by winning legions of white ***working-class*** voters.

Earlier this month, Shontel Brown, a moderate who embraced President Biden, [*won a special election primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/03/us/politics/shontel-brown-ohio-election-winner.html) for an Ohio congressional seat against Nina Turner, a nationally known surrogate for Senator Bernie Sanders in his presidential races.

The election was the latest in [*a series of contests this year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/04/us/politics/biden-democrats.html) pitting Democrats’ ideological wings against one another, including New York City, Virginia and Louisiana, and in all cases, the moderates prevailed.

Ms. Harper, 38, canvassed for Ms. Turner in the Cleveland-based special election. She said that contest should not be seen as a forerunner of a statewide Democratic Senate primary in 2022.

“I respect and endorsed Nina Turner, but that race is very different from this one,’’ she said. Democrats “are losing a lot of people” in Ohio, she added, noting that to win them back, she would run as a candidate “with a track record of standing up to corporate interests.”

A native of Columbus, Ms. Harper was raised by a single mother and earned a master’s degree from Princeton and a law degree from Stanford. She co-founded a group to drive voters to the polls, which [*this year offered rides to vaccination sites*](https://news.wosu.org/news/2021-02-12/columbus-grassroots-group-offers-free-rides-to-covid-19-vaccine-appointments#stream/0).

She lost her April 2020 primary challenge to Representative Joyce Beatty, now the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. Ms. Harper, who was endorsed in the race by Justice Democrats, raised [*an impressive $858,000*](https://www.fec.gov/data/candidate/H0OH03103/) for her race and hoped to follow in the footsteps of left-wing populists like Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, who knocked out incumbent Democrats.

But Ms. Beatty easily won. This month, she endorsed Mr. Ryan, who at the end of June had $2.6 million on hand for his Senate race. “I’ve seen firsthand how he shows up every day to fight for working people,’’ Ms. Beatty said in a statement.

PHOTO: Morgan Harper speaking with supporters at her campaign headquarters in Columbus, Ohio, in 2019. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Brooke LaValley for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Statue of Famed Writer Is at Center of France's Race Debate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6771-9MJ1-DXY4-X0PS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 1, 2023 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1685 words

**Byline:** By Catherine Porter

**Body**

After a restoration darkened the hue of a statue at the birthplace of the French writer, complaints ensued -- then vandalism.

BESANÇON, France -- The statue of Victor Hugo has loomed outside the city hall of his birthplace, situated on the Esplanade for Human Rights, since 2003, his white beard knotty, his black suit rumpled, his face cast down at his pocket watch.

Over the years, the colored bronze began to fade, turning to brown and green, until the mayor's office recently hired an expert to do a restoration.

And that is when the seemingly unremarkable refurbishment of a statue turned into another controversy in France about race, identity and the importation of American ''woke'' ideas about racial injustice -- what the French call ''le wokisme.''

The city hall's Facebook site announced the statue had been restored to reflect the original work by the celebrated Senegalese sculptor Ousmane Sow, who, it said, liked color and was not keen on ''simple bronzes.'' The comments rolled in, some positive, others critical with one focus -- the color of Hugo's skin.

''We've gone from Victor Hugo to Morgan Freeman,'' wrote one commentator.

Mr. Sow, who was often called the Auguste Rodin of Senegal, died in 2016. A reporter from the Besançon newspaper called Béatrice Soulé, Mr. Sow's widowed partner in Dakar, Senegal's capital.

She agreed that the restoration was flawed, saying that the statue ''looks like a Black Victor Hugo, which was never Ousmane's intention.''

In a later interview with The New York Times, Ms. Soulé said that perhaps she spoke too freely. ''It was a sentence I should never have spoken,'' she said. ''And it let off a powder keg.''

After another attempt at restoration, the color of the statue was returned to what Ms. Soulé considered ''magnificent'' and an ''exact replica of the original,'' which reflected a man of light-brown skin. But what might have been forgiven as part of a complicated restoration process -- and quietly corrected -- was immediately sucked up into an ugly, protracted battle over social media.

Right-wing politicians accused the city's Green party mayor of literally trying to paint her politically correct views onto a French hero.

''Just how far will #wokisme and stupidity go?'' Max Brisson, a senator with the center-right party, Les Républicains, wrote on Twitter.

National radio and newspapers picked up the story.

The town hall's switchboard was flooded by so many furious calls it was shut down.

Two nights after the town hall's initial Facebook post, masked men vandalized the statue, repainting Victor Hugo's face ''a beautiful white color,'' as they called it online, adding that it was now ''truly French, truly from Besançon.'' On the photograph they took of their work, they added a Celtic cross and the words ''white power.''

Two days later, the face of another statue created by Mr. Sow -- this one erected near the war memorial to represent ''hope'' -- was similarly vandalized with white paint.

''It signifies a sickness, a crisis in our society in relation to themes of immigration and racism,'' Mayor Anne Vignot said in an interview in her office in the city hall, which faces the Hugo statue. She was not involved in the statue's renovation beyond ordering it, she said, and she was still smarting at how discussion of race and identity had been weaponized in France to dismiss ideals she thinks should be upheld.

''I will always fight against discrimination,'' she said. ''So, for me, if wokism is the fight against discrimination, then I reaffirm, I am woke.''

On the other side are those like Xavier-Laurent Salvador, who co-directs the Observatory of Colonialism and Identity Ideologies, set up to challenge the use of critical race and gender theories in France.

He said the real danger was not far-right vigilantes, but attempts by a government to impose its race-centered view on society.

''Instead of removing the statues, we smear them, we repaint them to match something that is more in tune with the times,'' said Mr. Salvador, an associate professor of modern literature at Université Sorbonne Paris Nord. ''It's a symbolic violence.''

Mr. Salvador said he believed that the mayor and restorer had been trying to impose a race-centered view on society perverting the country's traditional universalist view where color and race are considered irrelevant, which he said both Mr. Sow and Hugo adhered to.

And the political storm had stopped them.

Unlike in the United States and other Western countries, statues in France were never toppled after George Floyd's murder in 2020 in Minneapolis and the global Black Lives Matter protests that ensued. President Emmanuel Macron of France rejected the idea, stating instead that the country would ''look at all of our history together with lucidity.''

However, many high-profile intellectuals, academics and members of Mr. Macron's government have viscerally rejected the progressive systemic theories on race, gender and post-colonialism as American imports that undermine French society, which considers itself colorblind.

''We are in denial of our colonial history,'' said Fabrice Riceputi, a historian in Besançon who specializes on the country's troubled colonial history in Algeria, which ended 60 years ago after a brutal war of independence that left 500,000 dead by French estimates, and 1.5 million by Algerian ones.

''Calling someone woke is a way of outright disqualifying all critical looks at history, all anti-racist actions, and it can degenerate into a witch hunt,'' he added. ''And it legitimizes little minds, like the ones who did this in Besançon, whose actions can be violent.''

Many were baffled at how the debate had come to Hugo's birthplace, and had targeted this statue in particular.

There are few writers as celebrated as Hugo in France. The 19th-century author of ''The Hunchback of Notre-Dame'' and ''Les Misérables'' was born in this city close to the Swiss border. He stayed for only six weeks before his father's military regiment was moved and never returned. Still, Besançon has capitalized on those precious six weeks, naming Victor Hugo schools, a Victor Hugo square, erecting many Victor Hugo busts and statues, and opening a Victor Hugo museum in the stone townhouse where he was born.

There, Hugo is celebrated as a human rights crusader, who was exiled from the country for 19 years during the reign of Napoleon III, and who fought for freedom, liberty and the rights of people who were often excluded at the time, including slaves, prisoners, women and children.

''This political storm was the opposite of the Victor Hugo we show here,'' said Lise Lézennec, the cultural and scientific manager at the museum. ''If the definition of being woke is awaken to discrimination, and combating against it, then we can say he was woke.''

What Mr. Sow would make of the debate encircling his work is another question.

He was never a French citizen, but he became the first African to be named to France's prestigious Academy of Fine Arts. Long before that, he grew up in a ***working-class*** neighborhood of Dakar, when Senegal was still a French colony. When Mr. Sow first arrived in Paris in his early 20s, he had no money and was offered places to sleep in police stations and breakfast by bakers.

''He knew a France that was a land of welcome. He passionately loved France,'' Ms. Soulé said from Dakar, where she has established a museum dedicated to his work. The fight over his sculpture ''would have bothered him,'' she added, ''but he would have moved onto other things.''

The process of adding color to bronze requires heating the metal with a blowtorch while painting on pigmented copper nitrate solution over many stages, explained Carlos Alves Ferreira, a bronze patina and restoration expert who carried out the restoration. It is finicky, and usually done in the privacy of an atelier.

Mr. Ferreira said he had sent Ms. Soulé photographs of his initial work by email and had been waiting for her approval when the political storm erupted. So he went back to do it again.

''I worked with Ousmane Sow for 20 years. Colors were part of his identity,'' said Mr. Ferreira. ''I didn't want to betray him.''

A week later, another Hugo statue that Mr. Ferreira had worked on was delivered to the city's Museum of Fine Arts and Archaeology. This one featured the town hero completely nude, cast entirely in a traditional black bronze. It was done by the French sculptor Auguste Rodin. There was no uproar.

''They didn't attack Rodin, a white French sculptor,'' Mr. Ferreira said. ''He could make Victor Hugo completely nude. But a Senegalese sculptor, who made Victor Hugo look human, they think it's not a sculpture.''

The perpetrators who vandalized Mr. Sow's Hugo statue were arrested. The two young men -- students at the local university -- were leaders of the far-right student group Cocarde Étudiante, said the Besançon prosecutor Étienne Manteaux. They face charges for vandalizing public property with racist motivations. While they have admitted to the vandalism, they do not believe what they did was a racist act. ''It will be up to the court of Besançon to decide,'' Mr. Manteaux said.

No one has been arrested for vandalizing the second statue by Mr. Sow.

After the arrests, few of the people who had originally commented about the restoration denounced the racism on social media.

''Let me say now, it's horrible. It's eminently condemnable,'' Mr. Salvador said in an interview, adding that the men should go to prison.

On a recent sunny afternoon, many people stopped on the Esplanade of Human Rights to admire Hugo in his latest form, and to take photographs before it.

After Mr. Ferreira returned again, his face was a shade lighter, looking down at his pocket watch, as time was passing.

At his feet is engraved a line from one of his famous letters. ''I condemn slavery,'' it begins, ''I chase away extreme poverty. I teach ignorance, I treat sickness. I illuminate the night.''

It ends with, ''I hate hate.''

Tom Nouvian contributed research.Tom Nouvian contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/31/world/europe/victor-hugo-france.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/31/world/europe/victor-hugo-france.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, a statue of Victor Hugo in Besançon, France, created by the Senegalese sculptor Ousmane Sow, above in 2015. After a restoration darkened its features, the statue was defaced. Fabrice Riceputi, left, a French teacher and historian, says France is in denial of its colonial history. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

XAVIER LEOTY/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

A view of the statute from below, left. A nude of Hugo by Auguste Rodin at the Besançon Museum of Fine Arts and Archaeology, right. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A6.

**Load-Date:** January 1, 2023

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[***Democrats See Adams at Root Of State Losses***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66WK-KFB1-DXY4-X2MJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 18, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1595 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons and Jeffery C. Mays

**Body**

The New York City mayor focuses relentlessly on crime, and critics say he lent legitimacy to Republicans who played up the issue in their midterms campaigns.

As New York Democrats sought to spread blame for their dismal performance in the midterm elections, a fair share was directed toward someone who wasn't even running: Mayor Eric Adams of New York City.

One Democratic strategist wrote on Twitter that Mr. Adams had ''betrayed'' his party by elevating ''the Republicans' crime panic narrative.'' The Working Families Party accused him of ''fearmongering'' tactics that may have swung suburbanites to vote Republican.

And when Mr. Adams suggested that the state's revised bail law was the reason for the Democrats' poor performance, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez offered a curt reply: ''Nope.''

Mr. Adams, a former police officer, couldn't care less. He sees the election results in New York as a validation of his message and an opportunity to proselytize to national Democrats that they should embrace his brand of moderate politics rather than critique it.

''I think those who stated, 'Don't talk about crime,' it was an insult to Black and brown communities where a lot of this crime was playing out,'' Mr. Adams said in an interview.

He suggested that Democrats should treat the midterms as a teachable moment -- a recognition that they mistakenly allowed Republicans to seize the narrative over public safety and crime.

''We're strong on crime,'' he said. ''We voted for sensible gun laws. We voted to fund police officers, which the president has done, and yet we've allowed others to state that we're just the opposite.''

In his first year as mayor, Mr. Adams has certainly tried to control the narrative on crime in the city. He constantly talks about public safety, visiting crime scenes and repeatedly pushing state lawmakers at news conferences to change bail laws to make it easier to keep people in jail.

The heightened fear over crime in New York City is a bit of a chicken-and-egg conundrum: Are people more worried because Mr. Adams calls attention to nearly every high-profile crime and focuses on offenders returning to the streets? Or are New Yorkers genuinely more scared based on their experiences, and the mayor is responding to that?

Polls consistently showed that crime was a major issue in New York during the midterms. Roughly 42 percent of Republicans and 31 percent of independent voters listed it as their top issue, much higher than inflation and protecting democracy, according to a Quinnipiac University poll.

Sochie Nnaemeka, the director of the Working Families Party in New York, said Mr. Adams's comments about crime were particularly damaging because the public considers him a potent and credible messenger on the issue.

''What we see, especially because of the bully pulpit of the mayor, because of his lived experience as a former police officer, as a Black man, real badges of credibility in our communities, is that he accelerated a fear-based vision of the world that coincides exactly with what the G.O.P. strategy was,'' Ms. Nnaemeka said. ''It left many voters looking to the G.O.P. to solve the issue.''

Indeed, while Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat, held off a challenge from Representative Lee Zeldin, a Republican, her margin of victory was narrower than any governor in the state in three decades. And the party's losses in several swing congressional races in New York helped Republicans take control of the House.

Ms. Hochul did well in New York City, where Democrats far outnumber Republicans. But in the Long Island suburbs, where television ads depicted the city as a lawless hellscape, Mr. Zeldin won 55 percent of the vote and Republicans flipped two Democratic House seats. Some Democratic state lawmakers in more conservative neighborhoods like Brighton Beach and Dyker Heights in Brooklyn also lost their seats.

In those neighborhoods and in Floral Park on Long Island, along the Queens-Nassau County border, numerous voters said that concerns over crime influenced their choice of candidates, but no one said that Mr. Adams's relentless messaging was a factor.

''He's trying to do a decent job,'' Joan Jones, 67, who lives in Floral Park, said of Mr. Adams.

Ms. Jones, who said she voted for Republicans for governor and Congress, said that crime and inflation were the two most important issues to her and that she wants to see harsher punishments for criminals.

''There has to be more consequences,'' she said. ''I'm afraid to ride the subway. It's a shame.''

Crime has risen in New York City since the pandemic began, but the city is much safer than it was in the 1990s, when there were more than 2,000 murders each year. Murders are down this year by 13 percent, and shootings are down 15 percent, according to city data. But major crimes are up this year by 28 percent, driven by robberies and assaults.

In 2019, state lawmakers in New York rewrote bail law so that fewer people awaiting trial landed behind bars because they could not afford to post bail.

There is no clear evidence that those changes contributed to an increase in crime. Critics and supporters of bail reform have pointed to data and particular cases to advance their argument, but the research is inconclusive.

Mr. Adams has nonetheless blamed some of that crime uptick on those changes -- a position that found him more closely aligned with Mr. Zeldin. In August, Mr. Adams held a news conference to hammer home that message, providing specific examples of people who have been arrested repeatedly with guns, and Mr. Zeldin applauded him.

Ms. Hochul held her own news conference that day and appeared visibly peeved at the broadside from Mr. Adams, her ostensible political ally. Still, Mr. Adams campaigned for Ms. Hochul and sought to help her, holding a joint event shortly before the election to announce more police officers for the subway -- though a $10,000 donation to Mr. Zeldin from a political action committee run by a key Adams ally did raise questions about his loyalty.

The bail issue was so contentious that Mr. Adams began to soften his rhetoric in late October after attending a summit on crime organized by Norman Siegel, the former head of the New York Civil Liberties Union. Bail reform was such a divisive issue that participants agreed to not address it and to instead seek common ground.

At a subsequent news conference with Ms. Hochul, Mr. Adams sought to broaden his message.

''Everyone wants to point one word to dealing with the criminal justice issue we have. Bail reform, bail reform, bail reform,'' Mr. Adams said. ''No, it's more than that. There are many rivers that feed the sea of violence.''

Bruce Gyory, a veteran Democratic political strategist, said that Mr. Adams did help legitimize the Republicans' messaging on crime, but that it would have been a major issue even without the mayor's frequent comments.

''Adams did far more to help Hochul than to hurt her,'' Mr. Gyory said.

Plenty of Democrats support the mayor's approach. Representative Adriano Espaillat, a Democrat who represents northern Manhattan and the Bronx, said that Mr. Adams had sent more police officers to violent places in his district, and that voters were concerned about public safety.

''The No. 1 issue people came up to me about was crime,'' he said in an interview. ''He's doing the right thing to address it.''

Representative Ritchie Torres, a Democrat from the Bronx who did not support Mr. Adams during last year's mayoral primary, said in an interview that he believed the mayor's influence in the midterms was overstated. People do feel less safe, he said, especially in communities of color.

''It was clear that The New York Post was on a crusade against Hochul regardless of what Eric Adams was saying,'' he said.

As for Mr. Adams, his crusade continues. In one national television appearance two days after the election, the mayor harped on the importance of tightening bail restrictions. ''This catch, repeat, release system is just destroying the foundation of our country,'' he said on MSNBC's ''Morning Joe.'' ''That's why we are losing this election.''

He wrote an opinion piece for USA Today last week, arguing that Democrats should focus more on the present-day needs of ***working class*** voters who are concerned about the economy, crime and inflation.

Now left-leaning Democrats like Jumaane Williams, the city's public advocate, are worried that Mr. Adams and other elected officials will push for more changes to bail laws during the next state legislative session in January, and the issue will again dominate headlines.

''When you hyperfocus on something such as bail, it can take away resources and discussion about how you create public safety in the city and state,'' Mr. Williams said.

In the aftermath of the midterms, New York's Democratic power brokers flocked to Puerto Rico for an annual gathering. Mr. Adams and Ms. Hochul met privately for nearly half an hour at the Royal Sonesta Hotel on Friday. The hotel served cookies, which Mr. Adams declined to eat because they were not vegan, and the pair discussed legislative priorities for January.

Mr. Adams would not say whether they talked about bail laws, but he said that he and the governor were closer than ever despite meddling by Mr. Zeldin's supporters.

''People who supported him used everything they could to create a wedge between Kathy and Eric,'' the mayor said. ''Thank goodness the two of us didn't bite. We didn't fall into the trap.''

Nate Schweber contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/17/nyregion/eric-adams-midterms-democrats-crime.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/17/nyregion/eric-adams-midterms-democrats-crime.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mayor Eric Adams views the election results in New York as validation of his messaging on crime. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH BLESENER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17) This article appeared in print on page A1, A17.

**Load-Date:** November 18, 2022

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[***Victor Hugo Statue Takes a Prominent Place in France’s Debate on Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:676S-TSX1-DXY4-X4VK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 31, 2022 Saturday 17:52 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1762 words

**Byline:** Catherine Porter

**Highlight:** After a restoration darkened the hue of a statue at the birthplace of the French writer, complaints ensued — then vandalism.

**Body**

After a restoration darkened the hue of a statue at the birthplace of the French writer, complaints ensued — then vandalism.

BESANÇON, France — The statue of Victor Hugo has loomed outside the city hall of his birthplace, situated on the Esplanade for Human Rights, since 2003, his white beard knotty, his black suit rumpled, his face cast down at his pocket watch.

Over the years, the colored bronze began to fade, turning to brown and green, until the mayor’s office recently hired an expert to do a restoration.

And that is when the seemingly unremarkable refurbishment of a statue turned into another controversy in France about race, identity and the importation of American “woke” ideas about racial injustice — what the French call “le wokisme.”

The city hall’s [*Facebook site*](https://www.facebook.com/mairiedebesancon) announced the statue had been restored to reflect the original work by the celebrated Senegalese sculptor Ousmane Sow, who, it said, liked color and was not keen on “simple bronzes.” The comments rolled in, some positive, others critical with one focus — the color of Hugo’s skin.

“We’ve gone from Victor Hugo to Morgan Freeman,” wrote one commentator.

Mr. Sow, who was often called the Auguste Rodin of Senegal, [*died in 2016*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/01/arts/ousmane-sow-dead-senegal-sculptor.html). A reporter from the Besançon newspaper called Béatrice Soulé, Mr. Sow’s widowed partner in Dakar, Senegal’s capital.

She agreed that the restoration was flawed, saying that the statue “looks like a Black Victor Hugo, which was never Ousmane’s intention.”

In a later interview with The New York Times, Ms. Soulé said that perhaps she spoke too freely. “It was a sentence I should never have spoken,” she said. “And it let off a powder keg.”

After another attempt at restoration, the color of the statue was returned to what Ms. Soulé considered “magnificent” and an “exact replica of the original,” which reflected a man of light-brown skin. But what might have been forgiven as part of a complicated restoration process — and quietly corrected — was immediately sucked up into an ugly, protracted battle over social media.

Right-wing politicians accused the city’s Green party mayor of literally trying to paint her politically correct views onto a French hero.

“Just how far will [*#wokisme*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/wokisme?src=hashtag_click) and stupidity go?” Max Brisson, a senator with the center-right party, Les Républicains, [*wrote on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/max_brisson/status/1594953239182598144).

National radio and newspapers picked up the story.

The town hall’s switchboard was flooded by so many furious calls it was shut down.

Two nights after the town hall’s initial Facebook post, masked men vandalized the statue, repainting Victor Hugo’s face “a beautiful white color,” as they called it online, adding that it was now “truly French, truly from Besançon.” On the photograph they took of their work, they added a Celtic cross and the words “white power.”

Two days later, the face of another statue created by Mr. Sow — this one erected near the war memorial to represent “hope” — was similarly vandalized with white paint.

“It signifies a sickness, a crisis in our society in relation to themes of immigration and racism,” Mayor Anne Vignot said in an interview in her office in the city hall, which faces the Hugo statue. She was not involved in the statue’s renovation beyond ordering it, she said, and she was still smarting at how discussion of race and identity had been weaponized in France to dismiss ideals she thinks should be upheld.

“I will always fight against discrimination,” she said. “So, for me, if wokism is the fight against discrimination, then I reaffirm, I am woke.”

On the other side are those like Xavier-Laurent Salvador, who co-directs the [*Observatory of Decolonialism and Identity Ideologies*](https://decolonialisme.fr/), set up to challenge the use of critical race and gender theories in France.

He said the real danger was not far-right vigilantes, but attempts by a government to impose its race-centered view on society.

“Instead of removing the statues, we smear them, we repaint them to match something that is more in tune with the times,” said Mr. Salvador, an associate professor of modern literature at Université Sorbonne Paris Nord. “It’s a symbolic violence.”

Mr. Salvador said he believed that the mayor and restorer had been trying to impose a race-centered view on society perverting the country’s traditional universalist view where color and race are considered irrelevant, which he said both Mr. Sow and Hugo adhered to.

And the political storm had stopped them.

Unlike in the United States and other Western countries, statues in France were never toppled after [*George Floyd’s murder in 2020 in Minneapolis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html) and the global Black Lives Matter protests that ensued. President Emmanuel Macron of France [*rejected the idea,*](https://apnews.com/article/police-health-ap-top-news-paris-virus-outbreak-8825a7fce7d07e4d91b4d248fa411a8a) stating instead that the country would “look at all of our history together with lucidity.”

However, many high-profile intellectuals, academics and members of Mr. Macron’s government have [*viscerally rejected the progressive systemic theories*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/09/world/europe/france-threat-american-universities.html) on race, gender and post-colonialism as American imports that undermine French society, which considers itself colorblind.

“We are in denial of our colonial history,” said Fabrice Riceputi, a historian in Besançon who specializes on the country’s troubled colonial history in Algeria, which ended 60 years ago after a brutal war of independence that left 500,000 dead by French estimates, and 1.5 million by Algerian ones.

“Calling someone woke is a way of outright disqualifying all critical looks at history, all anti-racist actions, and it can degenerate into a witch hunt,” he added. “And it legitimizes little minds, like the ones who did this in Besançon, whose actions can be violent.”

Many were baffled at how the debate had come to Hugo’s birthplace, and had targeted this statue in particular.

There are few writers as celebrated as Hugo in France. The 19th-century author of “The Hunchback of Notre-Dame” and “Les Misérables” was born in this city close to the Swiss border. He stayed for only six weeks before his father’s military regiment was moved and never returned. Still, Besançon has capitalized on those precious six weeks, naming Victor Hugo schools, a Victor Hugo square, erecting many Victor Hugo busts and statues, and opening a Victor Hugo museum in the stone townhouse where he was born.

There, Hugo is celebrated as a human rights crusader, who was exiled from the country for 19 years during the reign of Napoleon III, and who fought for freedom, liberty and the rights of people who were often excluded at the time, including slaves, prisoners, women and children.

“This political storm was the opposite of the Victor Hugo we show here,” said Lise Lézennec, the cultural and scientific manager at the museum. “If the definition of being woke is awaken to discrimination, and combating against it, then we can say he was woke.”

What Mr. Sow would make of the debate encircling his work is another question.

He was never a French citizen, but he became the first African to be named to France’s prestigious Academy of Fine Arts. Long before that, he grew up in a ***working-class*** neighborhood of Dakar, when Senegal was still a French colony. When Mr. Sow first arrived in Paris in his early 20s, he had no money and was offered places to sleep in police stations and breakfast by bakers.

“He knew a France that was a land of welcome. He passionately loved France,” Ms. Soulé said from Dakar, where she has established a museum dedicated to his work. The fight over his sculpture “would have bothered him,” she added, “but he would have moved onto other things.”

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“I worked with Ousmane Sow for 20 years. Colors were part of his identity,” said Mr. Ferreira. “I didn’t want to betray him.”

A week later, another Hugo statue that Mr. Ferreira had worked on [*was delivered*](https://actualitte.com/article/109012/politique-publique/degradations-inauguration-les-statues-de-victor-hugo-chahutees) to the city’s Museum of Fine Arts and Archaeology. This one featured the town hero completely nude, cast entirely in a traditional black bronze. It was done by the French sculptor Auguste Rodin. There was no uproar.

“They didn’t attack Rodin, a white French sculptor,” Mr. Ferreira said. “He could make Victor Hugo completely nude. But a Senegalese sculptor, who made Victor Hugo look human, they think it’s not a sculpture.”

The perpetrators who vandalized Mr. Sow’s Hugo statue were arrested. The two young men — students at the local university — were leaders of the far-right student group Cocarde Étudiante, said the Besançon prosecutor Étienne Manteaux. They face charges for vandalizing public property with racist motivations. While they have admitted to the vandalism, they do not believe what they did was a racist act. “It will be up to the court of Besançon to decide,” Mr. Manteaux said.

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It ends with, “I hate hate.”

Tom Nouvian contributed research.

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PHOTOS: Top, a statue of Victor Hugo in Besançon, France, created by the Senegalese sculptor Ousmane Sow, above in 2015. After a restoration darkened its features, the statue was defaced. Fabrice Riceputi, left, a French teacher and historian, says France is in denial of its colonial history. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; XAVIER LEOTY/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES); A view of the statute from below, left. A nude of Hugo by Auguste Rodin at the Besançon Museum of Fine Arts and Archaeology, right. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A6.

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2023

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[***With the Far Right Rising, Sweden Is Becoming Unbearable***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66F7-7GG1-JBG3-6007-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1333 words

**Byline:** By Elisabeth Asbrink

**Body**

STOCKHOLM -- ''Helg seger.''

Those two words, spoken by Rebecka Fallenkvist, a 27-year-old media figure and politician from the Sweden Democrats, the far-right party that took 20 percent in Sweden's general election last week, sent shivers down spines throughout the country. It's not the phrase, which is odd and means ''weekend victory.'' It's the sound: one letter away from ''Hell seger,'' the Swedish translation of the Nazi salute ''Sieg Heil,'' and the war cry of Swedish Nazis for decades.

Ms. Fallenkvist was quick to disavow any Nazi associations. She meant to declare the weekend a victorious one, she said, but the words came out in the wrong order. Perhaps that's true. But the statement would be entirely in keeping with the party Ms. Fallenkvist represents, which, after a steady rise, is now likely to play a major role in the next government.

For Sweden, a country that trades on being a bastion of social democracy, tolerance and fairness, it's a shock. But perhaps it shouldn't be. Steadily rising for the past decade, the Swedish far right has profited from the country's growing inequalities, fostering an obsession with crime and an antipathy to migrants. Its advance marks the end of Swedish exceptionalism, the idea that the country stood out both morally and materially.

There's no doubt about the party's Nazi origins. The Sweden Democrats was created in 1988 out of a neo-Nazi group called B.S.S., or Keep Sweden Swedish, and of the party's 30 founding fathers, 18 had Nazi affiliations, according to a historian and former party member, Tony Gustaffson. Some of the founding fathers had even served in Hitler's Waffen SS.

Step by step the party changed its image -- in 1995 uniforms were forbidden -- but the core ideology remained: Immigrants should be persuaded to go home, Swedish culture should be protected and neither Jews nor the Indigenous Sami people were to be considered ''real Swedes.'' Not even the soccer star Zlatan Ibrahimovic secured the party's approval, although he was born in the country and is the national team's record goal scorer. The stances of the current leadership, which has sought to sanitize the party's reputation, are equally worrying.

Take Linus Bylund, the party's chief of staff in the Swedish Parliament. In an interview in 2020, he declared that journalists for the national public service radio and television ought to be ''punished'' if their reporting was biased. Such people, he stated previously, would be ''enemies of the nation.'' Proximity to power hasn't softened his views. The day after the recent election, a reporter asked him what he now looked forward to. ''Journalist-rugby,'' he replied.

Jimmie Akesson, the party's leader, also surprised a television audience in mid-February when he refused to choose between Joe Biden and Vladimir Putin. It's of a piece with the party's accommodating stance on Russia: The Swedish Parliament was so concerned about a journalist who used to work in the party's office and had contact with Russian intelligence that it denied the journalist accreditation. Add in a cohort of representatives more prosecuted for crimes than any other, organized troll campaigns against opponents and even attempts to undermine faith in the electoral system, and you have the image of a deeply unsavory party.

Even so, the Sweden Democrats' rise is an impressive right-wing success story. The party entered the Parliament in 2010 with just over 5 percent of the vote -- but, under the leadership of Mr. Akesson, it built an efficient, nationwide organization. It more than doubled its share of the vote in 2014 and, after Sweden admitted over 160,000 Syrian refugees, grew even more in the 2018 election. But it's in this vote that Sweden Democrats secured a sought-after breakthrough with a stunning 20.6 percent of the votes, surpassing the conservative Moderaterna, which had been Sweden's second biggest party for over 40 years. Now only the Social Democratic Party, Sweden's historic party of government, has more support.

This monumental rise is thanks to the dramatic changes in Swedish life over the past three decades. Once one of the most economically equal countries in the world, Sweden has seen the privatization of hospitals, schools and care homes, leading to a notable rise in inequality and a sense of profound loss. The idea of Sweden as a land of equal opportunity, safe from the plagues of extreme left and extreme right, is gone. This obscure collective feeling was waiting for a political response -- and the Sweden Democrats have been the most successful in providing it. It was better in the good old days, they say, and people believe them. Back to red cottages and apple trees, to law and order, to women being women and men being men.

For opening this door, the major parties have themselves to blame. Bit by bit, the traditional parties have adopted the point of view and rhetoric on crime and immigrations of the Sweden Democrats Party -- but this strategy hasn't won back any votes. On the contrary, it seems to have helped the far right. In a little more than 12 years, Sweden Democrats has managed to compete with the Social Democrats for ***working-class*** voters, with Moderaterna for the support of entrepreneurs and with the Centre Party among the rural population.

The media is culpable, too. In an attempt to protect traditional Swedish democratic values, the mainstream media has often shunned and canceled Sweden Democrats officials and supporters, especially in the party's early years. But now it seems that this response actually might have had the opposite effect. Individuals leaning toward the Sweden Democrats for various reasons have felt stigmatized: Some haven't been invited to family gatherings, and in a few cases have even lost their jobs. This has not only fed the party's self-image as a martyr but also nurtured even more loyalty among its supporters.

One could argue that the traditional parties have had their part in creating the perfect storm. The Social Democratic Party has named the Sweden Democrats their main enemy in the election campaign, making other alternatives almost invisible in the public debate. Us or them, was the strategy. Many, predominantly male Swedes, chose the Sweden Democrats. As for a conservative party like Moderaterna, they have seen their voters abandon them for Sweden Democrats, and so Moderaterna reacted by emphasizing the similarities between the two parties until it reached a point where it became hard to distinguish any differences at all.

The result is now plain to see. The Social Democrats, though the largest party, are unable to form a government. Instead, a conservative bloc, led by Ulf Kristersson from Moderaterna, will attempt to take office -- as long as it has the support of the Sweden Democrats. Effectively a kingmaker, the party is now one of the most successful far-right parties in Europe since World War II.

It's a terrifying truth. But we must bear in mind that the majority of the country's population is not among the Sweden Democrats' ranks. These people want solutions to real problems -- such as a worrying spike in gang and drug-related shootings in several cities -- without recourse to ethnic blame games and the vilification of ''un-Swedish'' culture. As a liberal democrat I will never approve of a party that celebrates its success with references to Hitler's Nazi ideology, no matter the claim that only by sheer coincidence was the exclamation ''Helg Seger'' just one letter apart from a Nazi war cry.

Elisabeth Asbrink is the author of ''1947: Where Now Begins,'' ''Made in Sweden: 25 Ideas That Created a Country'' and ''And in Wienerwald the Trees Remain.''

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: Supporters of the Sweden Democrats political party during its election night rally. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JONATHAN NACKSTRAND/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

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[***Tuition Aid Plan Leaves Out Thousands Who Require Help***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642P-GFD1-JBG3-6425-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Erica L. Green

**Body**

Critics say a little-noticed provision would hurt the very constituencies -- people of color, the ***working class***, low-income Americans -- that the party typically champions.

WASHINGTON -- When Megan Kern decided she wanted to enroll in Pima Medical Institute, in Phoenix last year, its tax status was the furthest thing from her mind.

The 37-year-old single mother was focused on finding a school that would prepare her for a stable career after struggling to raise her daughter on her own. She settled on Pima, a for-profit institution, after finding it a better match for her aspirations, and its staff more warm and welcoming, than the four-year and community colleges she had explored.

''Showing my daughter that even at 37 years old, you can still go out there, get a good education and follow your dreams, meant everything to me,'' said Ms. Kern, who is studying to become a surgical technologist. ''I chose Pima because they were very concerned about what I wanted to do, where I wanted to go and how I could get there.''

That choice may now come at a cost. Ms. Kern is one of about 900,000 low-income students attending for-profit colleges who get federal Pell Grants and could lose out on a $550 increase that House Democrats have proposed in the latest version of the social spending and climate package making its way through Congress. In a little-noticed provision, lawmakers have stipulated that the increase proposed for the grants, the largest federal aid program for low-income students, can only be used at public and private nonprofit colleges and universities, covering about five million students.

The exception tracks with Democrats' longstanding efforts to limit the tax dollars flowing to the scandal-scarred for-profit college industry. The sector became notorious when two massive chains, ITT Technical Institute and Corinthian Colleges, collapsed and left hundreds of thousands of students saddled with debt, worthless degrees and bleak job prospects. Since then, a series of school closures, and multiple investigations that found the schools employed fraudulent and predatory practices, have cost the government billions in loan forgiveness and other remedies.

''Fraudulent and deceptive practices at certain for-profit institutions have already cost taxpayers more than $2.5 billion in this year alone,'' said Representative Robert C. Scott, Democrat of Virginia and chair of the House Education and Labor Committee, which crafted the provision.

For-profit industry leaders and Republicans say the provision is misguided and discriminatory. Settling an ideological score with the institutions, they say, will penalize the very constituencies -- people of color, the ***working class*** and low-income Americans -- that Democrats typically champion.

The bill is still being negotiated and will need every Democrat's support to pass the Senate under special budget rules. In a letter sent to congressional leaders last week, more than a dozen Democratic members of Congress agreed.

''Make no mistake, this proposal hurts students, not institutions,'' the members wrote. ''And worse yet, the proposal will have a disparate impact on minority and first-generation students, which runs contrary to the policy goals of the Build Back Better agenda.''

''We need to do more to bring accountability to all sectors of higher education,'' they added. ''However, punishing students does not accomplish that objective.''

Supporters of the provision argue that the Pell grant is a coveted pot of funding -- it is for the poorest students, does not have to be paid back, and covers the gamut of college expenses, including tuition, fees and room and board -- that for-profit schools already eat up, with high costs and little return on investment.

Research also shows that tuition at for-profits is four times as high as at public community colleges, and that their students carry significantly more debt that they are less likely to be able to pay back. Some students, for instance, who went to culinary school found themselves with as much as $50,000 in debt after graduation while earning only minimum wage.

The problem of high debt and low wages is by no means limited to proprietary schools. But unlike other sectors, for-profit colleges are beholden to shareholders and have been found to hike up tuition to match financial aid increases, according to Stephanie Riegg Cellini, a professor of public policy and economics at George Washington University. ''We have research showing again and again that for-profits operate differently, their incentives are different and the response to student aid is different,'' she said.

Democrats and some experts also stress that the long-awaited Pell increase in the social spending bill should be invested carefully; it is already less than half the $1,400 per student that President Biden had wanted.

''The Build Back Better Act's investments in higher education are targeted to provide the greatest value to students and communities,'' Mr. Scott said.

Jason Altmire, the president and chief executive of Career Education Colleges and Universities, a trade group, argued that the Pell provision stood to undermine a crucial part of Mr. Biden's agenda: to rebuild the nation's infrastructure.

The organization's member institutions train and certify tens of thousands of nurses, welders, truck drivers and maintenance workers each year -- just the type of workers who will be needed to fill the millions of jobs that Mr. Biden has promised to create through his plans.

''If you want to do a $1 trillion effort to rebuild America, those are our graduates,'' Mr. Altmire said. ''You're going to disadvantage the very students you're going to need to carry out this work.''

The decision has also divided some experts in the higher education community who have long advocated a Pell increase.

Kate Tromble, the vice president at the Institute for College Access and Success, which advocates making college more affordable, said it was time for Congress to start using its legislative levers to steer students toward higher-quality schools. She noted that since the 2009-10 school year, about $9 billion in Pell funding has gone to for-profit schools that have closed; Corinthian and ITT received more than $4 billion.

''The federal government is providing trillions of dollars in financial aid to help students attend school; it should have an opinion about the quality of the school, the amount of debt and the ability of the program to produce labor market outcomes,'' she said. ''The idea that we're starting to articulate that in federal policy is not a bad thing.''

Justin Draeger, the president of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, said in a statement that the organization was concerned to see the Pell Grant increase limited to certain schools, saying it would ''add new complexity to a financial-aid system on the verge of much-needed simplification.'' He added that concerns about quality and accountability in the for-profit sector should be addressed through regulatory changes to the Higher Education Act; such changes are currently underway at the Education Department.

Stacey Nottingham, the campus director of Pima's Phoenix campus, where Ms. Kern attends, said she hoped that the 68 percent of its roughly 700 students who are Pell grant recipients were not penalized for others institutions' past mistakes. ''There's a perception that private colleges are not good stewards of taxpayer dollars, when we're held to the same, if not higher standards, as other institutions in higher ed,'' Ms. Nottingham said.

According to the latest federal data, the average cost of Pima's largest program is $18,715, and students graduate with a median debt of $7,600 to $9,500. Two years after entering repayment, 34 percent of borrowers are making progress on repaying their loans, 19 percent are not, and 9 percent have either defaulted or have delinquent accounts. The average income of its graduates is $20,000 to $29,000.

Ms. Kern, who has a job at Kohl's, while also working on campus through the federal work-study program, said she struggled to see how Congress was acting in her best interest. Soon, she will start an externship in operating rooms and will not be able to hold other jobs, making the Pell grant crucial.

''That $550 may not seem like a lot to a lot of people, but that's less money I have to worry about on my student loan, and less worry about what we'll have to eat,'' she said. ''Life is hard enough as it is already. Why would they want to make it harder for those of us who want to better our lives, just based on the schools we choose?''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/12/us/politics/pell-grants-for-profit-colleges-aid.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/12/us/politics/pell-grants-for-profit-colleges-aid.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The ITT Technical Institute was one of Americas's largest for-profit schools before it went under. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SANDY HUFFAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** November 13, 2021

**End of Document**



[***As New Leaders Take Office, Los Angeles Struggles With Ongoing Wounds***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:672G-6V91-DXY4-X0V2-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Shawn Hubler and Soumya Karlamangla

**Highlight:** An altercation and City Council protest indicate the city still has a long way to go to overcome divisions that erupted this year.

**Body**

An altercation and City Council protest indicate the city still has a long way to go to overcome divisions that erupted this year.

LOS ANGELES — Come Monday evening, Kevin de León will be the lone Los Angeles politician still in his job among the four leaders who discussed local politics in racist terms on a recording that has roiled the nation’s second most populous city since October, [*when it surfaced online*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/20/us/la-city-council-politics-black-hispanic.html).

If anyone thought a new mayor, a new City Council class and two months of time would defuse tensions, perhaps giving Mr. de León, a veteran Democrat, a path to political redemption, a string of events on Friday signaled otherwise.

When he unexpectedly attempted to return to the council dais after an absence of weeks, demonstrators shouted and screamed, three colleagues walked out in protest, and the council recessed until Mr. de León left the chambers.

That was only the prelude to an uglier confrontation hours later. On Friday evening, as a food and toy giveaway wrapped up in his district, Mr. de León, wearing a Santa hat, got into a skirmish with a well-known local activist who has called for months for the councilman’s resignation.

Another recording — this time a [*cellphone video*](https://twitter.com/roots_action/status/1601435163472236545?s=46&amp;t=sjnjrBmd11uuMxyv5T3DYg) released by activists — showed Mr. de León and the activist, Jason Reedy, confronting each other, their faces inches apart, then the two of them wrestling in a nearby corridor, with Mr. de León shoving Mr. Reedy in one corner. Each man has accused the other of starting the altercation.

The upheaval underscored the ongoing challenges facing Karen Bass, who was sworn in on Sunday as the first female mayor of Los Angeles, and five new City Council members as they begin work this week. They will confront a city [*exhausted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/07/us/la-mayor-karen-bass-rick-caruso.html)by mounting homelessness, crime, costs of living and ethnic divisions.

Angelenos have welcomed the new leadership, but the political confrontations on Friday dimmed hopes for a quick return to civility. The latest developments epitomized the acrimony that has plagued the city’s governance, said Fernando Guerra, whose Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University regularly surveys residents.

“None of this was surprising at all,” Mr. Guerra said. “Kevin de León, the protesters — it could have been scripted exactly as it happened. It was almost a symbolic end that sums up this whole City Council. And it remains to be seen whether the next City Council can make a new beginning.”

The leadership turnover in Los Angeles will be among the most comprehensive in a generation. Ms. Bass’s predecessor, Eric Garcetti, led the city for nearly a decade, and a third of the 15-member City Council will be replaced.

Yet another council vacancy will be filled with a new leader early next year, when a special election is held to fill the office of the former council president, Nury Martinez, who resigned in the aftermath of the audio scandal. On the recording, Ms. Martinez, who is Mexican American, made disparaging and racist remarks about the Black son of a fellow council member, as well as Oaxacan immigrants and other ethnic groups.

Still more turmoil awaits City Hall as court proceedings unfold in public corruption cases involving [*one former council member*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-11-10/huizar-family-los-angeles-bribes-developer-trial#:~:text=It%20was%20convicted%20Thursday%20of,proposed%20skyscraper%20in%20downtown%20L.A.&amp;text=After%20less%20than%20three%20hours,three%20counts%20of%20wire%20fraud.) and another [*who has been suspended*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-12-07/los-angeles-will-restore-taxpayer-salary-for-indicted-councilmember-mark-ridley-thomas).

Ms. Bass, who has represented Los Angeles for years in the State Legislature and Congress, campaigned on a vow to help lead the city to consensus, building coalitions in the diverse and teeming metropolis of four million people. But the challenge is formidable as the city continues to grapple with [*quality of life issues that have festered*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/us/los-angeles-mayor-race.html) since the pandemic, reflecting a struggle that has [*occurred nationally.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/03/us/midterm-elections-republicans-crime.html)

Tent camps dot sidewalks citywide — one downtown encampment, in fact, [*was dismantled last week*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-12-08/homeless-encampments-inauguration), its occupants moved to hotel rooms, to make room for a celebration of Ms. Bass’s inauguration before incoming storms forced the festivities indoors at L.A. Live, a downtown entertainment complex. In her inauguration speech, Ms. Bass said her first act as mayor will be to declare a state of emergency on homelessness, a step toward creating a citywide strategy to “move people inside for good.”

Crime rates, while far lower than their peak in the 1990s, have risen, and a [*citywide poll*](https://lmu.app.box.com/s/xdygo5u048h8pw4s4sx193aiyzhlv7m9) done this year by Mr. Guerra’s research center found that for the first time since 2012, a majority of Angelenos felt the city was going in the wrong direction.

And that was before Mr. de León, Ms. Martinez and a third Latino council member, Gil Cedillo, were [*caught on a recording*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/11/us/los-angeles-city-council-race.html) last year strategizing in blunt and occasionally bigoted terms to consolidate power for themselves and the city’s Latino communities as the city’s redistricting maps were being redrawn.

The group believed that their conversation, which included a powerful local labor leader who also resigned, was private, but it was being secretly recorded and was later uploaded to Reddit. Mr. Cedillo, who lost a bid for re-election before the recording’s emergence, has apologized for not cutting the conversation short but has not stepped down and will leave office on Monday. He has not returned to the council chambers since the scandal, and investigations have since ensued into the unlawful recording, the leak and the city’s redistricting process.

Of the four participants in the recorded conversation, only Mr. de León will remain in office after Monday. He has apologized profusely but refused to step down, saying his remarks were less caustic than those of Ms. Martinez, for example, and that what he did say had been misunderstood and that his resignation would leave his constituents, many of whom are poor or ***working class***, without adequate representation.

On Tuesday, political opponents who have tried unsuccessfully to recall Mr. de León received approval from the city clerk to begin collecting signatures for a fresh recall petition. To qualify for the ballot, organizers of the campaign must collect more than 20,000 signatures from registered voters in his district by the end of March.

In an interview last week, before Friday’s unsettling events, Mr. Garcetti, the outgoing mayor, reiterated calls for Mr. de León to resign.

“He seems determined to come back, and I’ve told him, ‘Look, the way back is by doing the hard work. And that can’t be by holding the institution of the council hostage, which essentially is what he’s doing by not resigning,” Mr. Garcetti said. “You have to listen to the communities you’ve hurt.”

Mr. Garcetti, who has been nominated to an ambassador post in India by the Biden administration and is awaiting Senate confirmation, said he was unswayed by the argument, raised both by Mr. de León and Mr. Cedillo, that their remarks on the audio had not been overtly racist.

“Just because you’ve crossed the line by a couple inches and somebody does it by a couple of feet, doesn’t mean you haven’t crossed the line,” Mr. Garcetti said.

He and Mr. Guerra also both faulted the protesters who for the past several years have escalated disruptions at council meetings. Mr. Guerra noted that the ongoing practice of shouting council members down has not worked and has become increasingly counterproductive, undercutting support for progressive causes. And Mr. Garcetti denounced the corrosion of respect the demonstrations have caused at the City Council.

As Mr. de León struggled to return to City Hall on Friday, another council member, Paul Koretz, whose term just ended, used his farewell remarks at the meeting to bid an [*uncharacteristically profane goodbye*](https://twitter.com/UnrigLA/status/1601332863794024450)to local activists who have, he said, “done their best to make it difficult for us to do our work in the last 2\xC2 years.” The 67-year-old councilman then signed off with one of the demonstrators’ most frequently deployed epithets.

Friday’s holiday party confrontation, according to Mr. de León and an aide, spiraled out of control after Mr. Reedy and his crew blocked the exits, head-butted the councilman and elbowed his aide in the face.

“Kids were crying, parents were horrified. It was stunning. They crossed every line imaginable,” Mr. de León said in an interview on Friday. “Verbal assaults have escalated to political violence, and that’s not good. It’s not good for society, it’s not good for democracy.”

An attorney for Mr. Reedy said in an email that the councilman’s supporters initiated the assault, shoving Mr. Reedy after he criticized Mr. de León and called for his resignation.

The attorney, Shakeer Rahman, also shared a statement from Mr. Reedy, defending the ongoing demonstrations. “We are the only reason Kevin de León hasn’t returned to City Council meetings,” the statement said. “If it weren’t for the protests, the same politicians who demanded his resignation and censured him would have moved on. People in power will never like the protests they face.”

Despite current tensions, Mr. Garcetti said the leak of the recording will result in needed, lasting reforms in Los Angeles. He said he was pleasantly surprised by how much the reaction solidified coalitions in the city, as opposed to deepening racial and ethnic divides.

“It’s kind of like an earthquake shows you how strong your buildings are,” he said. “This was a metaphor for that. There was an earthquake, and we didn’t fall down.”

Jill Cowan contributed reporting from Los Angeles.

Jill Cowan contributed reporting from Los Angeles.

PHOTOS: Jason Reedy, a well-known activist in Los Angeles, speaking at the City Council meeting on Friday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MYUNG J. CHUN / LOS ANGELES TIMES VIA GETTY IMAGES); Mr. Reedy later got into an altercation with Kevin de León, above, a councilman who had been part of a racially charged discussion. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RINGO H.W. CHIU/ASSOCIATED PRESS) This article appeared in print on page A11.

**Load-Date:** December 11, 2022

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[***Leaving Party, Sinema Rattles A Race in 2024***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6729-2N81-JBG3-617R-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Reid J. Epstein, Jennifer Medina and Katie Glueck

**Body**

Senator Kyrsten Sinema's announcement that she would become an independent left Democrats in her state, many of whom have long wanted to defeat her in a primary, facing a new political calculus.

The one constant in Senator Kyrsten Sinema's political career, from her start as a left-wing rabble rouser and Ralph Nader aide to her announcement on Friday that she was leaving the Democratic Party to become an independent, is her boundless ability to draw attention to herself.

Less than 72 hours after Democrats celebrated winning Georgia's Senate race and the presumed 51st vote in the chamber, Ms. Sinema yanked the focus of the political world in Washington and Arizona back to her.

This time, it was not another agenda-stymieing disagreement with the party that spent millions electing her to office, but instead a declaration that she was breaking with Democrats entirely, at least in name.

''I'm going to be the same person I've always been. That's who I am,'' Ms. Sinema said in a two-minute video on Twitter on Friday morning, adding, ''Nothing is going to change for me.''

Democrats believe -- or hope -- that little will change in Congress, where Ms. Sinema will keep her Democratic committee assignments and where her defection will not change her former party's control of the Senate.

But in Arizona's Democratic circles, distaste for the senator runs deep, and her announcement immediately shifted the spotlight to the 2024 race for her Senate seat.

Democrats in the state have long presumed that she would run for re-election and that she was all but certain to face a difficult primary challenge, possibly from Representative Ruben Gallego, who has regularly criticized her over the past two years, or from Representative Greg Stanton, who signaled his interest on Friday. Ms. Sinema, however, left her potential rivals guessing, batting away questions about future bids for office.

Hannah Hurley, a spokeswoman for Ms. Sinema, suggested that the senator had long promised to be an independent voice for the state, citing an ad from her 2018 campaign that emphasized a ''fiercely independent record'' and a ''reputation for working across the aisle.''

''Independent, just like Arizona,'' the spot said.

''She is not focused at all on campaign politics,'' Ms. Hurley said of Ms. Sinema, who declined an interview on Friday afternoon.

Democrats in Arizona signaled on Friday that they still planned to support a candidate against Ms. Sinema, whether it ends up being Mr. Gallego, Mr. Stanton or someone else. National Democratic leaders were cagey on Friday about how they would approach the 2024 race or a potential independent Sinema campaign. One main worry for Democrats is that running a strong candidate against Ms. Sinema in the general election might inadvertently help elect a Republican.

Representatives for Senate Democrats' campaign arm and for Senate Majority PAC, the leading Democratic super PAC devoted to Senate races, declined to comment on Friday afternoon about Ms. Sinema's move. Senator Chuck Schumer, the New York Democrat and majority leader, said that Ms. Sinema would keep her committee positions. ''Kyrsten is independent,'' he said in a statement. ''That's how she's always been.''

And the White House press secretary, Karine Jean-Pierre, said in a statement that President Biden expected to ''continue to work successfully'' with Ms. Sinema but did not address her 2024 prospects.

Ms. Sinema was elected to the Senate in 2018, filling the seat of another party apostate, Senator Jeff Flake, a Republican who declined to seek re-election after breaking with President Donald J. Trump. He is now Mr. Biden's ambassador to Turkey.

The working assumption in Arizona political circles has long been that progressive anger at Ms. Sinema was concentrated among Democratic political activists, and that she could survive a primary from her left. But recent polling suggests that she has lost the confidence of many Arizona voters outside the center-right Chamber of Commerce types whom she has cultivated with the latest iteration of her political identity.

A Civiqs survey conducted shortly before Election Day found she had an approval rating of just 7 percent among the state's Democrats, 27 percent among Republicans and 29 percent among independents.

Moderate Republicans uncomfortable with Mr. Trump's politics have turned Arizona from a red state into a political battleground, swinging to Mr. Biden in 2020 and helping Democrats triumph in statewide elections last month against a Trump-backed slate of candidates. Ms. Sinema's calculation in leaving the Democratic Party is that those voters can lift her to victory on their own.

The Trumpian makeover of the Arizona Republican Party has also alarmed Democrats who want their candidates to be a forceful opposition -- not present themselves as ideologically ambiguous.

''Everything she's done has been in the service of Kyrsten Sinema,'' said Ian Danley, a progressive political consultant in Phoenix. ''There's really no other way to describe the decisions she makes. She cares about attention. She cares about setting herself up for the next thing.''

The Democratic grumbling has Mr. Gallego and Mr. Stanton leaving little pretense about their ambitions to challenge Ms. Sinema in 2024. Mr. Gallego, a Harvard graduate and Marine veteran, has been a regular presence on cable news whenever Ms. Sinema alienates the party base, and his lively and occasionally profane Twitter feed often criticizes her. On Friday, he called her decision a ''betrayal'' of volunteers who knocked on doors in triple-digit heat to elect her as a Democrat.

Mr. Stanton, a former Phoenix mayor who holds Ms. Sinema's old House seat, on Friday tweeted what appeared to be a snapshot of a poll showing him leading Ms. Sinema by 40 percentage points in a hypothetical matchup.

Her decision, he wrote, ''isn't about a post-partisan epiphany. It's about political preservation.''

Arizona's progressive organizations and officials were already wary of Ms. Sinema during her 2018 run for Senate, but at the time no Democrat in the state had won election to the chamber in three decades. They collectively held their noses to turn out the vote for her in hopes that she would reciprocate their support once in office.

Once Ms. Sinema became the linchpin of Senate Democrats' narrow governing majority in 2021, those groups began publicly fuming at Ms. Sinema, whom they accused of abandoning her promises on immigration, health care and the environment. Ms. Sinema dismissed their complaints, echoing her general practice of dodging journalists in Washington and Arizona.

When she theatrically turned a thumbs-down on a Senate vote in March 2021 to increase the minimum wage to $15 per hour, it was the last straw for her party's base. When she skipped votes to participate in Ironman triathlons or spent weeks as an intern at a Sonoma County winery, it served only to cement her reputation among progressives that she had removed herself from the concerns of ***working-class*** Arizonans.

In the fall of 2021, activists from LUCHA, one of the groups that worked to elect Ms. Sinema, confronted her at Arizona State University. Activists followed Ms. Sinema into a bathroom and demanded that she explain why she had not done more to push for a pathway to citizenship for about eight million undocumented immigrants. The protesters said they had taken the drastic action only because Ms. Sinema did not hold town-hall meetings or answer calls from constituents. Protesters have also chased her through airports and followed her into a high-priced fund-raising event at an upscale resort.

''We are not surprised that she would once again center herself,'' said Alejandra Gomez, the executive director of LUCHA. ''This is another unfortunate, selfish act. It is yet another betrayal -- there have been a slew of betrayals, but this is one of the ultimates, because voters elected her as Democrat, and she turned her back on those voters.''

But some of Ms. Sinema's allies argue that she has been consistently clear about having an independent streak.

''I love that she's going to be even freer now to just do the right thing,'' said Tammy Caputi, a Scottsdale City Council member who is herself a political independent, adding that Ms. Sinema had long been leery of being ''straitjacketed by partisan politics.''

She went on, ''I'm hoping that Kyrsten's decision to become an independent will spark other people to think long and hard about being overly attached to one party.''

But for many Arizonans and Ms. Sinema's fellow senators, the big question is whether or not she will run again in 2024, which she neglected to clarify in her video announcement, an op-ed article in The Arizona Republic or news media interviews that were released on Friday morning. Because she keeps a tight political circle of advisers and speaks little to the news media, there has long been far more speculation than explanation about her motivations.

''Anybody that underestimates Senator Sinema is being foolish,'' said Representative Raúl Grijalva, a liberal Arizona Democrat who said he planned to support Mr. Gallego if he ran. ''She's going to be formidable if she decides to run.''

A person familiar with Mr. Stanton's deliberations confirmed that he was considering running for Senate in Arizona in 2024 as a Democrat. The person confirmed that the image from a poll that Mr. Stanton tweeted on Friday was from a statewide survey in which he had tested his potential candidacy for Senate.

In an interview on Friday, Mr. Gallego said Ms. Sinema's rush to announce her party switch soon after the outcome of the Georgia race fit neatly into her career trajectory.

''I wish she would have waited for the Democrats at least to enjoy a couple more days after the victory,'' he said. ''But, you know, she's not known really for thinking of others.''

Mr. Gallego said he would make a decision about what office to seek in 2024 in the new year. He had just gotten off the phone with his mother, who was catching up on the news.

''She said: 'I heard Sinema is not running. Make sure to talk to me before you do anything,''' Mr. Gallego said.

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A seat belonging to Senator Kyrsten Sinema during a Senate Banking Committee hearing in 2021. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAHBETH MANEY/THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A1, A16.

**Load-Date:** December 12, 2022

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[***Sweden Is Becoming Unbearable; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66F1-0481-JBG3-62VG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 20, 2022 Tuesday 22:34 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1349 words

**Byline:** Elisabeth Asbrink

**Highlight:** The idea of Sweden as a land of equal opportunity, safe from the plagues of extreme left or extreme right that haunt other countries, is gone.

**Body**

STOCKHOLM — “Helg seger.”

Those two words, [*spoken by Rebecka Fallenkvist*](https://www.thelocal.se/20220913/sd-mini-scandals-helg-seger-journalist-rugby-and-akesson-for-pm/), a 27-year-old media figure and politician from the Sweden Democrats, the far-right party that took 20 percent in Sweden’s general election last week, sent shivers down spines throughout the country. It’s not the phrase, which is odd and means “weekend victory.” It’s the sound: one letter away from “Hell seger,” the Swedish translation of the Nazi salute “Sieg Heil,” and the war cry of Swedish Nazis for decades.

Ms. Fallenkvist was quick to disavow any Nazi associations. She meant to declare the weekend a victorious one, she said, but the words came out in the wrong order. Perhaps that’s true. But the statement would be entirely in keeping with the party Ms. Fallenkvist represents, which, after a steady rise, is now likely to play a major role in the next government.

For Sweden, a country that trades on being a bastion of social democracy, tolerance and fairness, it’s a shock. But perhaps it shouldn’t be. Steadily rising for the past decade, the Swedish far right has profited from the country’s growing inequalities, fostering an obsession with crime and an antipathy to migrants. Its advance marks the end of Swedish exceptionalism, the idea that the country stood out both morally and materially.

There’s no doubt about the party’s Nazi origins. The Sweden Democrats was created in 1988 out of a neo-Nazi group called B.S.S., or Keep Sweden Swedish, and of the party’s 30 [*founding fathers*](https://www.svd.se/a/mrAl8O/sd-s-vitbok-var-tredje-grundare-kopplas-till-nazism-eller-fascism), 18 had Nazi affiliations, [*according*](https://www.dn.se/sverige/flera-av-sds-grundare-var-nazister-forsta-delen-av-vitboken-klar/) to a historian and [*former party member*](https://www.svd.se/a/7dExX3/vitboksforfattare-sjalv-medlem-i-sd), [*Tony Gustaffson*](https://www.thelocal.se/20220809/researcher-who-wrote-sweden-democrats-white-book-was-party-member/). Some of the founding fathers had even served in Hitler’s Waffen SS.

Step by step the party changed its image — in 1995 uniforms were [*forbidden*](https://expo.se/fakta/wiki/sverigedemokraterna-sd) — but the core ideology remained: Immigrants should be persuaded to go home, Swedish culture should be protected and neither Jews nor the Indigenous Sami people were to be [*considered “real Swedes*](https://www.sydsvenskan.se/2014-12-14/sd-judar-och-samer-ar-inte-svenskar).” Not even the soccer star [*Zlatan Ibrahimovic*](https://www.svt.se/nyheter/inrikes/akesson-vagrade-beskriva-zlatan-som-svensk) secured the party’s approval, although he was born in the country and is the national team’s record goal scorer. The stances of the current leadership, which has sought to sanitize the party’s reputation, are equally worrying.

Take Linus Bylund, the party’s chief of staff in the Swedish Parliament. In an [*interview*](https://www.fokus.se/intervju/linus-bylund-sd-i-intervju-med-fokus-straffa-journalister-som-ar-partiska/) in 2020, he declared that journalists for the national public service radio and television ought to be “punished” if their reporting was biased. Such people, he stated previously, would be “[*enemies of the nation*](https://www.svt.se/kultur/medier/nationens-fiender).” Proximity to power hasn’t softened his views. The day after the recent election, a reporter asked him what he now looked forward to. “[*Journalist-rugby*](https://www.svt.se/nyheter/inrikes/bade-akesson-och-pehrson-pa-besok-hos-moderaterna),” he replied.

Jimmie Akesson, the party’s leader, also surprised a television audience in mid-February when he [*refused to choose*](https://www.svt.se/nyheter/inrikes/akesson-om-valet-mellan-putin-och-biden-vill-inte-ha-nagon-av-dem) between Joe Biden and Vladimir Putin. It’s of a piece with the party’s accommodating stance on Russia: The Swedish Parliament was so concerned about a journalist who used to work in the party’s office and had contact with Russian intelligence that it denied the journalist accreditation. Add in a cohort of representatives more prosecuted [*for crimes*](https://www.svd.se/a/7lO5o4/sd-toppar-lista-over-andel-atalade-kandidater) than any other, organized troll campaigns against opponents and even attempts to undermine faith in the electoral system, and you have the image of a deeply unsavory party.

Even so, the Sweden Democrats’ rise is an impressive right-wing success story. The party entered the Parliament in 2010 with just over 5 percent of the vote — but, under the leadership of Mr. Akesson, it built an efficient, nationwide organization. It more than doubled its share of the vote in 2014 and, after Sweden admitted over 160,000 Syrian refugees, grew even more in the 2018 election. But it’s in this vote that Sweden Democrats secured a sought-after breakthrough with a stunning 20.6 percent of the votes, surpassing the conservative Moderaterna, which had been Sweden’s second biggest party for over 40 years. Now only the Social Democratic Party, Sweden’s historic party of government, has more support.

This monumental rise is thanks to the dramatic changes in Swedish life over the past three decades. Once one of the most economically equal countries in the world, Sweden has seen the privatization of hospitals, schools and care homes, leading to a notable rise in inequality and a sense of profound loss. The idea of Sweden as a land of equal opportunity, safe from the plagues of extreme left and extreme right, is gone. This obscure collective feeling was waiting for a political response — and the Sweden Democrats have been the most successful in providing it. It was better in the good old days, they say, and people believe them. Back to red cottages and apple trees, to law and order, to women being women and men being men.

For opening this door, the major parties have themselves to blame. Bit by bit, the traditional parties [*have adopted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/world/europe/sweden-election-far-right.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article)the point of view and rhetoric on crime and immigrations of the Sweden Democrats Party — but this strategy hasn’t won back any votes. On the contrary, it seems to have helped the far right. In a little more than 12 years, Sweden Democrats has managed to compete with the Social Democrats for ***working-class*** voters, with Moderaterna for the support of entrepreneurs and with the Centre Party among the rural population.

The media is culpable, too. In an attempt to protect traditional Swedish democratic values, the mainstream media has often shunned and canceled Sweden Democrats officials and supporters, especially in the party’s early years. But now it seems that this response actually might have had the opposite effect. Individuals leaning toward the Sweden Democrats for various reasons have felt stigmatized: Some haven’t been invited to family gatherings, and in a few cases have even [*lost their jobs*](https://www.expressen.se/debatt/orimligt-att-sparka-mig-for-att-jag-rostar-pa-sd/). This has not only fed the party’s self-image as a martyr but also nurtured even more loyalty among its supporters.

One could argue that the traditional parties have had their part in creating the perfect storm. The Social Democratic Party has named the Sweden Democrats their main enemy in the election campaign, making other alternatives almost invisible in the public debate. Us or them, was the strategy. Many, predominantly male Swedes, [*chose the Sweden Democrats*](https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/artiklar/2021/okande-gap-mellan-kvinnors-och-mans-partisympatier/). As for a conservative party like Moderaterna, they have seen their voters abandon them for Sweden Democrats, and so Moderaterna reacted by emphasizing the similarities between the two parties until it reached a point where it became hard to distinguish any differences at all.

The result is now plain to see. The Social Democrats, though the largest party, are unable to form a government. Instead, a conservative bloc, led by Ulf Kristersson from Moderaterna, will attempt to take office — as long as it has the support of the Sweden Democrats. Effectively a kingmaker, the party is now one of the most successful far-right parties in Europe since World War II.

It’s a terrifying truth. But we must bear in mind that the majority of the country’s population is not among the Sweden Democrats’ ranks. These people want solutions to real problems — such as a worrying spike in gang and drug-related [*shootings*](https://polisen.se/om-polisen/polisens-arbete/sprangningar-och-skjutningar/) in several cities — without recourse to ethnic blame games and the vilification of “un-Swedish” culture. As a liberal democrat I will never approve of a party that celebrates its success with references to Hitler’s Nazi ideology, no matter the claim that only by sheer coincidence was the exclamation “Helg Seger” just one letter apart from a Nazi war cry.

Elisabeth Asbrink is the author of “[*1947: Where Now Begins*](https://www.otherpress.com/books/nineteen-fortyseven/),” “[*Made in Sweden: 25 Ideas That Created a Country*](https://scribepublications.co.uk/books-authors/books/made-in-sweden-9781912854011)” and “And in Wienerwald the Trees Remain.”

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PHOTO: Supporters of the Sweden Democrats political party during its election night rally. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JONATHAN NACKSTRAND/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 20, 2022

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[***In Riposte, G.O.P. Says Ills of 1970s Are Back***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WY-9T11-JBG3-6413-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 2, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 20

**Length:** 796 words

**Byline:** By Glenn Thrush

**Body**

The governor's speech foreshadowed Republican arguments ahead of the midterm elections.

Gov. Kim Reynolds of Iowa delivered a scathing Republican rebuke of President Biden's State of the Union address on Tuesday, casting his presidency as an unwanted remake of ''That '70s Show,'' complete with ''runaway inflation,'' rampant crime and a rampaging ''Soviet army.''

Ms. Reynolds, who was chosen by Republican Senate leadership to deliver the party's official response, portrayed the populist revolt against mask mandates and remote learning as a ''pro-parent, pro-family revolution,'' hoping to harness the backlash ahead of this year's midterm elections.

The governor, who has been in that office since 2017, used her address to preview themes, poll-tested and echoed by conservatives on social media, that are likely to be repeated by Republican candidates across the country as they seek to seize control of Congress two years after the party lost the White House and Senate. That included stoking fears that the Biden administration -- and Democrats -- want to control what children can learn in school and whether parents should have a say.

''We are tired of politicians who tell parents they should sit down, be silent and let government control their kids' education and future,'' she said.

In Iowa, Ms. Reynolds has pushed policies championed by a conservative base and motivated by opposition to government efforts to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

Senator Mitch McConnell, Republican of Kentucky and the minority leader, picked Ms. Reynolds for the high-profile speaking slot, in part, because she supported in-person public education and signed a bill last year banning local school mask mandates.

While that measure is currently on hold in the courts, Republicans believe that those positions will galvanize conservatives and win over some moderates who are weary of pandemic restrictions.

''Iowa was the first state in the nation to require that schools open their doors,'' she said. ''Keeping schools open is only the start of the pro-parent, pro-family revolution that Republicans are leading in Iowa and states across this country. Republicans believe that parents matter.''

Ms. Reynolds hammered the Biden administration's response to the rise in inflation, accusing the White House of elitism for initially downplaying the issue.

''The Biden Administration believes inflation is 'a high-class problem,''' she said. ''I can tell you it's an everybody problem.''

In the eyes of her supporters, Ms. Reynolds, 62, is one of few conservatives capable of bridging the populism of former President Donald J. Trump to the party's more calibrated effort to recapture Congress.

But to critics, Ms. Reynolds represents the contradictions and hypocrisies of a Republican establishment trying to project a moderate image while bowing to the whims of a former president who has little regard for the party's mainstream past, or its future without him.

What fans and foes agree upon: Ms. Reynolds is one of her party's most effective messengers, a skilled politician who has a knack for putting a folksy, heartland spin on hard-line Republican positions on abortion, guns and the pandemic.

''She's kind of an everywoman,'' said David Kochel, a Republican political consultant who worked with Ms. Reynolds on the speech, which was delivered from Des Moines. ''She's a product of small-town Iowa and the ***working class***, a very different profile than Joe Biden.''

Whether any of this will pay off for Ms. Reynolds politically remains to be seen. The importance of Iowa as a national political force seems to be waning, with the once-critical swing state now firmly in Republican hands and the role of its first-in-the-nation caucus being openly challenged by critics in both parties.

Moreover, the post-State-of-the-Union response, while a major development in Ms. Reynolds's career, has been as much a slippery sidewalk as a springboard for Republican up-and-comers, including a parched Marco Rubio, who was undone by a too-tempting water bottle in 2013.

Democrats were quick to dismiss her speech, portraying the governor as a die-hard Trump supporter trying to obscure her hard-right record.

In the lead-up to her remarks, they singled out her effort to claim partial credit for doling out $210 million in federal funding for rural broadband projects in Iowa -- despite her opposition to Mr. Biden's American Rescue Plan, which funneled hundreds of millions of dollars in pandemic relief funding to the state.

''Instead of playing politics by taking credit for President Biden's American Rescue Plan, which she opposed, she should work with Democrats to support Iowa families,'' said Zach Wahls, a Democrat and the minority leader in the State Senate.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/01/us/politics/kim-reynolds-state-of-the-union.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/01/us/politics/kim-reynolds-state-of-the-union.html)

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2022

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[***Hundreds of Teachers Cut At New York City Schools***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65TR-J541-JBG3-63FF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 1, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 18

**Length:** 1032 words

**Byline:** By Hurubie Meko

**Body**

More than three-quarters of district schools have lost enrollment. ''I've wiped their tears and assured them the future is hopeful even as I've told them I'm leaving,'' one teacher said.

In New York City, public school funding is tied to student enrollment, and students have been leaving city schools in droves for years. But during the pandemic, school budgets were largely untouched, buoyed by federal aid.

Now, the city is saying schools must make cuts to reckon with the steep declines -- to the tune of over $200 million -- and start preparing for even steeper reductions next year. That largely means culling teachers.

Nearly 77 percent of New York City district schools, about 1,200 out of 1,600 in the system, have seen their enrollments decline and are facing the budget cuts after Mayor Eric Adams and the City Council agreed to a municipal budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1. The budget reversed a policy under the previous mayor, Bill de Blasio, to keep funding for individual schools steady during the pandemic.

Hundreds of teachers are being let go, or ''excessed,'' by school principals, and placed into a districtwide hiring pool -- leading to an uproar among parents, educators and even some of the elected officials who voted for the reduced budgets.

Mariscelle Bautista, a mother of two public elementary school students, said during public testimony last week that the city's decision to ''defund'' public schools was ''outrageous'' and called for parents to mobilize and ''eventually vote all of these people out.''

The cuts to school budgets would hurt the programs and services that have helped students affected by school shutdowns and learning loss during the pandemic, said Ms. Bautista, including her own children.

The New York City schools chancellor, David C. Banks, pledged Monday, the last day of the school year for students, that most, if not all, teachers forced out because of enrollment-based budget cuts at their schools will be able to find a position within the system before the next school year begins.

Mr. Banks, who is just six months into his tenure at the helm of the nation's largest school system, said that ''no teacher in the entire school system will lose their job as a result of this right sizing.''

Teachers who are excessed are placed into the city's reserve pool and become eligible for jobs in other schools. Mr. Banks said that the number of teachers who are likely to land in the reserve pool this year is comparable with the numbers after the years before the pandemic. And with a mandate that schools first hire those teachers before bringing new teachers into the system, ''we expect all of those excessed teachers to be picked up,'' Mr. Banks said.

''We have several thousand teachers to hire this year and we will hire them,'' he said. ''You're not going to come back in September and see like dozens of people still sitting around.''

But Michael Mulgrew, president of the United Federation of Teachers, the New York City teachers' union, said the decision to shuffle teachers between schools based on a ''false narrative'' of necessary budget cuts was ''unacceptable.''

He said that the city has $4.6 billion in unspent federal pandemic aid. ''Those funds should be used to give our students the learning conditions, including smaller class sizes, they need to recover,'' Mr. Mulgrew said. ''Our students need stability.''

Mr. Banks's assurance that teachers will remain employed in new schools does not address the destabilizing impact on students, said Crystal Hudson, a councilwoman from Brooklyn, who was among 44 out of 50 City Council members who voted for the budget deal that included the cuts.

''It is also time we reconsider a system that allocates resources not on a qualified determination of need, but rather on a stubborn belief that faltering schools should languish,'' she said in a statement, ''punishing our poor and ***working-class*** Black and brown communities, while those with means prosper.''

Mr. Banks argued Monday that adjusting funding to reflect a school's enrollment changes is nothing new, adding, ''I was a principal for 11 years, the first thing I used to do is check the budget.''

But the idea that the cuts were a normal part of the budget cycle did little to satisfy parents, educators and elected officials, who voiced their dissatisfaction at protests, on social media and at a meeting on Thursday of the Panel For Educational Policy, a local board made up of appointees mostly appointed by the mayor.

Jessica Beck, a seventh grade teacher at 75 Morton Middle School, in Manhattan, testified at Thursday's panel, and said she was excessed earlier this month when the school's budget was reduced by 43 percent.

Ms. Beck spoke about how, in addition to teaching, she has helped students with buying art supplies, lunches and even books they wanted to read. ''And during the month of June, I've wiped their tears and assured them the future is hopeful even as I've told them I'm leaving,'' she said.

She added: ''As I think about how relationships matter to our students, I can't help but think how unimportant and insignificant we've been when this administration made budget decisions.''

Under the enacted budget, schools losing funds will see an average of $402,000 cut from their budgets, said Brad Lander, the New York City comptroller.

''These cuts might mean going from four sections of a grade to three, thus boosting class size from 25 to 32, or losing their only art or music teacher,'' Mr. Lander said. ''While not every individual excessed teacher will be out of work, schools will lose the small classes and enrichment programs that students need to thrive.''

New York State lawmakers passed a bill this month that would require the city to reduce class sizes. Doing so typically requires adding more teachers, and would cost hundreds of millions of dollars, city officials have said, which could lead to cuts in programs such as dyslexia screening and school nurses.

''Make no mistake, it will lead to large cuts in these critical programs,'' Mr. Banks said in a statement at the time. ''This should not be a choice that school leaders have to make.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/28/nyregion/nyc-schools-budget-cuts-teachers.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/28/nyregion/nyc-schools-budget-cuts-teachers.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: More than 1,000 New York City public schools are losing funds. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDRES KUDACKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 1, 2022

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[***Sinema Adds Intrigue and Democratic Fury to Arizona’s 2024 Senate Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6727-V7K1-JBG3-6128-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 9, 2022 Friday 22:14 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1715 words

**Byline:** Reid J. Epstein, Jennifer Medina and Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** Senator Kyrsten Sinema’s announcement that she would become an independent left Democrats in her state, many of whom have long wanted to defeat her in a primary, facing a new political calculus.

**Body**

Senator Kyrsten Sinema’s announcement that she would become an independent left Democrats in her state, many of whom have long wanted to defeat her in a primary, facing a new political calculus.

The one constant in Senator Kyrsten Sinema’s political career, from her start as a left-wing rabble rouser and Ralph Nader aide to her announcement on Friday that she was [*leaving the Democratic Party*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/09/us/politics/kyrsten-sinema-democrats.html) to become an independent, is her boundless ability to draw attention to herself.

Less than 72 hours after Democrats celebrated [*winning Georgia’s Senate race*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/12/06/us/warnock-walker-georgia-senate-runoff/raphael-warnock-georgia-senator?smid=url-share) and the presumed 51st vote in the chamber, Ms. Sinema yanked the focus of the political world in Washington and Arizona back to her.

This time, it was not another [*agenda-stymieing disagreement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/19/us/politics/democrats-filibuster-sinema-manchin.html) with the party that spent millions electing her to office, but instead a declaration that she was breaking with Democrats entirely, at least in name.

“I’m going to be the same person I’ve always been. That’s who I am,” Ms. Sinema said in [*a two-minute video on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/kyrstensinema/status/1601170136781664256) on Friday morning, adding, “Nothing is going to change for me.”

Democrats believe — or hope — that little will change in Congress, where Ms. Sinema will keep her Democratic [*committee assignments*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/09/us/politics/kyrsten-sinema-democrats.html) and where her defection will not change her former party’s control of the Senate.

But in Arizona’s Democratic circles, distaste for the senator runs deep, and her announcement immediately shifted the spotlight to the 2024 race for her Senate seat.

Democrats in the state have long presumed that she would run for re-election and that she was all but certain to face a difficult primary challenge, possibly from Representative Ruben Gallego, who has regularly criticized her over the past two years, or from Representative Greg Stanton, who [*signaled his interest*](https://twitter.com/gregstantonaz/status/1601307744874921984?s=20&amp;t=JsFBEbxY5dXZ2Vp2SAIIng) on Friday. Ms. Sinema, however, left her potential rivals guessing, batting away questions about future bids for office.

Hannah Hurley, a spokeswoman for Ms. Sinema, suggested that the senator had long promised to be an independent voice for the state, citing [*an ad*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jy9YPuZwFkA) from her 2018 campaign that emphasized a “fiercely independent record” and a “reputation for working across the aisle.”

“Independent, just like Arizona,” the spot said.

“She is not focused at all on campaign politics,” Ms. Hurley said of Ms. Sinema, who declined an interview on Friday afternoon.

Democrats in Arizona signaled on Friday that they still planned to support a candidate against Ms. Sinema, whether it ends up being Mr. Gallego, Mr. Stanton or someone else. National Democratic leaders were cagey on Friday about how they would approach the 2024 race or a potential independent Sinema campaign. One main worry for Democrats is that running a strong candidate against Ms. Sinema in the general election might inadvertently help elect a Republican.

Representatives for Senate Democrats’ campaign arm and for Senate Majority PAC, the leading Democratic super PAC devoted to Senate races, declined to comment on Friday afternoon about Ms. Sinema’s move. Senator Chuck Schumer, the New York Democrat and majority leader, said that Ms. Sinema would keep her committee positions. “Kyrsten is independent,” he said in a statement. “That’s how she’s always been.”

And the White House press secretary, Karine Jean-Pierre, said in a statement that President Biden expected to “continue to work successfully” with Ms. Sinema but did not address her 2024 prospects.

Ms. Sinema was elected to the Senate in 2018, filling the seat of another party apostate, Senator Jeff Flake, a Republican who declined to seek re-election after breaking with President Donald J. Trump. He is now Mr. Biden’s ambassador to Turkey.

The working assumption in Arizona political circles has long been that progressive anger at Ms. Sinema was concentrated among Democratic political activists, and that she could survive a primary from her left. But recent polling suggests that she has lost the confidence of many Arizona voters outside the center-right Chamber of Commerce types whom she has cultivated with the latest iteration of her political identity.

A [*Civiqs survey conducted*](https://civiqs.com/documents/Civiqs_AZ_banner_book_2022_11_4t7yks.pdf) shortly before Election Day found she had an approval rating of just 7 percent among the state’s Democrats, 27 percent among Republicans and 29 percent among independents.

Moderate Republicans uncomfortable with Mr. Trump’s politics have turned Arizona from a red state into a political battleground, swinging to Mr. Biden in 2020 and helping Democrats triumph in statewide elections last month against a Trump-backed slate of candidates. Ms. Sinema’s calculation in leaving the Democratic Party is that those voters can lift her to victory on their own.

The Trumpian makeover of the Arizona Republican Party has also alarmed Democrats who want their candidates to be a forceful opposition — not present themselves as ideologically ambiguous.

“Everything she’s done has been in the service of Kyrsten Sinema,” said Ian Danley, a progressive political consultant in Phoenix. “There’s really no other way to describe the decisions she makes. She cares about attention. She cares about setting herself up for the next thing.”

The Democratic grumbling has Mr. Gallego and Mr. Stanton leaving little pretense about their ambitions to challenge Ms. Sinema in 2024. Mr. Gallego, a Harvard graduate and Marine veteran, has been a regular presence on cable news whenever Ms. Sinema alienates the party base, and his lively and occasionally profane Twitter feed often criticizes her. On Friday, he called her decision a “betrayal” of volunteers who knocked on doors in triple-digit heat to elect her as a Democrat.

Mr. Stanton, a former Phoenix mayor who holds Ms. Sinema’s old House seat, on Friday [*tweeted what appeared to be a snapshot of a poll*](https://twitter.com/gregstantonaz/status/1601307744874921984?s=20&amp;t=AA_VmgKs_9Mr7HSQov7DTg) showing him leading Ms. Sinema by 40 percentage points in a hypothetical matchup.

Her decision, he wrote, “isn’t about a post-partisan epiphany. It’s about political preservation.”

Arizona’s progressive organizations and officials were already wary of Ms. Sinema [*during her 2018 run for Senate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/05/us/politics/kyrsten-sinema-arizona-democrat.html), but at the time no Democrat in the state had won election to the chamber in three decades. They collectively held their noses to turn out the vote for her in hopes that she would reciprocate their support once in office.

Once Ms. Sinema became the linchpin of Senate Democrats’ narrow governing majority in 2021, those groups began publicly fuming at Ms. Sinema, whom they accused of abandoning her promises on immigration, health care and the environment. Ms. Sinema dismissed their complaints, echoing her general practice of dodging journalists in Washington and Arizona.

When she theatrically [*turned a thumbs-down on a Senate vote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/07/us/politics/kyrsten-sinema-minimum-wage-thumbs-down.html) in March 2021 to increase the minimum wage to $15 per hour, it was the last straw for her party’s base. When she skipped votes to participate in Ironman triathlons or spent weeks [*as an intern at a Sonoma County winery*](https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/business/senator-kyrsten-sinema-tries-her-hand-as-winery-intern-in-sonoma-county/), it served only to cement her reputation among progressives that she had removed herself from the concerns of ***working-class*** Arizonans.

In the fall of 2021, activists from LUCHA, one of the groups that worked to elect Ms. Sinema, [*confronted her*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/us/politics/kyrsten-sinema-joe-biden.html) at Arizona State University. Activists followed Ms. Sinema into a bathroom and demanded that she explain why she had not done more to push for a pathway to citizenship for about eight million undocumented immigrants. The protesters said they had taken the drastic action only because Ms. Sinema did not hold town-hall meetings or answer calls from constituents. Protesters have also chased her through airports and followed her into a high-priced fund-raising event at an upscale resort.

“We are not surprised that she would once again center herself,” said Alejandra Gomez, the executive director of LUCHA. “This is another unfortunate, selfish act. It is yet another betrayal — there have been a slew of betrayals, but this is one of the ultimates, because voters elected her as Democrat, and she turned her back on those voters.”

But some of Ms. Sinema’s allies argue that she has been consistently clear about having an independent streak.

“I love that she’s going to be even freer now to just do the right thing,” said Tammy Caputi, a Scottsdale City Council member who is herself a political independent, adding that Ms. Sinema had long been leery of being “straitjacketed by partisan politics.”

She went on, “I’m hoping that Kyrsten’s decision to become an independent will spark other people to think long and hard about being overly attached to one party.”

But for many Arizonans and Ms. Sinema’s fellow senators, the big question is whether or not she will run again in 2024, which she neglected to clarify in her video announcement, [*an op-ed article*](https://www.azcentral.com/story/opinion/op-ed/2022/12/09/sen-kyrsten-sinema-of-arizona-why-im-registering-as-an-independent/69712395007/) in The Arizona Republic or news media interviews that were released on Friday morning. Because she keeps a tight political circle of advisers and speaks little to the news media, there has long been far more speculation than explanation about her motivations.

“Anybody that underestimates Senator Sinema is being foolish,” said Representative Raúl Grijalva, a liberal Arizona Democrat who said he planned to support Mr. Gallego if he ran. “She’s going to be formidable if she decides to run.”

A person familiar with Mr. Stanton’s deliberations confirmed that he was considering running for Senate in Arizona in 2024 as a Democrat. The person confirmed that the image from a poll that Mr. Stanton tweeted on Friday was from a statewide survey in which he had tested his potential candidacy for Senate.

In an interview on Friday, Mr. Gallego said Ms. Sinema’s rush to announce her party switch soon after the outcome of the Georgia race fit neatly into her career trajectory.

“I wish she would have waited for the Democrats at least to enjoy a couple more days after the victory,” he said. “But, you know, she’s not known really for thinking of others.”

Mr. Gallego said he would make a decision about what office to seek in 2024 in the new year. He had just gotten off the phone with his mother, who was catching up on the news.

“She said: ‘I heard Sinema is not running. Make sure to talk to me before you do anything,’” Mr. Gallego said.

PHOTO: A seat belonging to Senator Kyrsten Sinema during a Senate Banking Committee hearing in 2021. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAHBETH MANEY/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A16) This article appeared in print on page A1, A16.

**Load-Date:** December 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Gov. Kim Reynolds of Iowa uses G.O.P. response to blast Biden over ‘runaway inflation.’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WX-37C1-DXY4-X469-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 1, 2022 Tuesday 00:44 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 785 words

**Byline:** Glenn Thrush

**Highlight:** The governor’s speech foreshadowed Republican arguments ahead of the midterm elections.

**Body**

The governor’s speech foreshadowed Republican arguments ahead of the midterm elections.

Gov. Kim Reynolds of Iowa delivered a scathing Republican rebuke of President Biden’s State of the Union address on Tuesday, casting his presidency as an unwanted remake of “That ‘70s Show,” complete with “runaway inflation,” rampant crime and a rampaging “Soviet army.”

Ms. Reynolds, who was chosen by Republican Senate leadership to deliver the party’s official response, portrayed the populist revolt against mask mandates and remote learning as a “pro-parent, pro-family revolution,” hoping to harness the backlash ahead of this year’s midterm elections.

The governor, who has been in that office since 2017, used her address to preview themes, poll-tested and echoed by conservatives on social media, that are likely to be repeated by Republican candidates across the country as they seek to seize control of Congress two years after the party lost the White House and Senate. That included stoking fears that the Biden administration — and Democrats — want to [*control what children can learn*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/us/politics/virginia-governor-republicans-schools.html) in school and whether parents should have a say.

“We are tired of politicians who tell parents they should sit down, be silent and let government control their kids’ education and future,” she said.

In Iowa, Ms. Reynolds has pushed policies championed by a conservative base and motivated by opposition to government efforts to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

Senator Mitch McConnell, Republican of Kentucky and the minority leader, picked Ms. Reynolds for the high-profile speaking slot, in part, because she supported in-person public education and signed a bill last year banning local school mask mandates.

While that measure is [*currently on hold*](https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/politics/2022/01/25/iowa-mask-mandate-ban-back-schools-federal-court-rules-kim-reynolds/9210054002/) in the courts, Republicans believe that those positions will galvanize conservatives and win over some moderates who are weary of pandemic restrictions.

“Iowa was the first state in the nation to require that schools open their doors,” she said. “Keeping schools open is only the start of the pro-parent, pro-family revolution that Republicans are leading in Iowa and states across this country. Republicans believe that parents matter.”

Ms. Reynolds hammered the Biden administration’s response to the rise in inflation, accusing the White House of elitism for initially downplaying the issue.

“The Biden Administration believes inflation is ‘a high-class problem,’” she said. “I can tell you it’s an everybody problem.”

In the eyes of her supporters, Ms. Reynolds, 62, is one of few conservatives capable of bridging the populism of former President Donald J. Trump to the party’s more calibrated effort to recapture Congress.

But to critics, Ms. Reynolds represents the contradictions and hypocrisies of a Republican establishment trying to project a moderate image while bowing to the whims of a former president who has little regard for the party’s mainstream past, or its future without him.

What fans and foes agree upon: Ms. Reynolds is one of her party’s most effective messengers, a skilled politician who has a knack for putting a folksy, heartland spin on hard-line Republican positions on abortion, guns and the pandemic.

“She’s kind of an everywoman,” said David Kochel, a Republican political consultant who worked with Ms. Reynolds on the speech, which was delivered from Des Moines. “She’s a product of small-town Iowa and the ***working class***, a very different profile than Joe Biden.”

Whether any of this will pay off for Ms. Reynolds politically remains to be seen. The importance of Iowa as a national political force seems to be waning, with the once-critical swing state now firmly in Republican hands and the role of its first-in-the-nation caucus being openly challenged by critics in both parties.

Moreover, the post-State-of-the-Union response, while a major development in Ms. Reynolds’s career, has been as much a slippery sidewalk as a springboard for Republican up-and-comers, including a parched Marco Rubio, who was [*undone by a too-tempting water bottle*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19ZxJVnM5Gs) in 2013.

Democrats were quick to dismiss her speech, portraying the governor as a die-hard Trump supporter trying to obscure her hard-right record.

In the lead-up to her remarks, they singled out her effort to claim partial credit for doling out $210 million in federal funding for rural broadband projects in Iowa — despite her opposition to Mr. Biden’s American Rescue Plan, which funneled hundreds of millions of dollars in pandemic relief funding to the state.

“Instead of playing politics by taking credit for President Biden’s American Rescue Plan, which she opposed, she should work with Democrats to support Iowa families,” said Zach Wahls, a Democrat and the minority leader in the State Senate.

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Chinatown’s Civic Groups Have Held Developers at Bay. Can They Survive?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6591-YT31-JBG3-62PB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 23, 2022 Saturday 01:04 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 2010 words

**Byline:** Elaine Chen, Stefanos Chen and Jingyu Lin

**Highlight:** The groups have held back gentrification in an area surrounded by development. The future of one of Manhattan’s few ***working-class*** neighborhoods is at stake.

**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*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/06/nyregion/asian-woman-attacks.html) 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*](https://twitter.com/CCBA1883).

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.

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**



[***An Art Legacy in Danger***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65H7-NXS1-DXY4-X0V2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 22, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section RE; Column 0; Real Estate Desk; Pg. 1; STREETSCAPES

**Length:** 2203 words

**Byline:** By John Freeman Gill

**Body**

More than 1,000 terra-cotta sculptures -- of firefighters, mermaids, steelworkers -- adorn the walls of Parkchester in the Bronx. Is there a plan to protect them?

Among the more than 33,000 residents of Parkchester, the sprawling 1940s Bronx apartment complex, the most exuberant characters tend to hang out at the buildings' entrances and corners: folk singers and firefighters, accordion players and harlequins, steelworkers and mermaids. There are exotic fauna as well, not typically found in such urban environs: gazelles, puffins, kangaroos and bears.

Vivid and three-dimensional, these neighborhood fixtures are whimsically crafted terra-cotta sculptures -- more than a thousand of them, many colorfully glazed -- embedded in the facades of Parkchester's red brick apartment blocks.

These playful architectural ornaments, many by distinguished sculptors, have enlivened Parkchester ever since the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company built the middle-income housing complex starting in 1938. But in recent years some 45 of these signature artworks have vanished after being taken down by maintenance crews, infuriating many residents.

''They're like the totems for the community, they're the mascots,'' said Sharon Pandolfo Pérez, a creative director for a multicultural advertising agency who spent her childhood in Parkchester and now runs the Parkchester Project, which documents on its Instagram page the removal of the distinctive sculptures.

Standing by the subway station at Hugh J. Grant Circle, Ms. Pandolfo Pérez pointed up at a brick tower, where a larger-than-life sculpture of a hose-brandishing firefighter in period garb jutted from the western corner near the building's roof. For some eight decades, the building's eastern corner was home to a companion firefighter, the pair serving as ornamental sentries at Parkchester's southern gateway. But in 2018, workers removed the second firefighter and bricked up the wound in the facade as if the statue had never been there.

''When that first fireman came down, it was a sign that they just don't care, because he's one of the two you see when you come from the subway,'' Ms. Pandolfo Pérez said. ''It's a sign that they are being taken for granted, and the people here feel taken for granted. This is ***working-class*** New York. If you're taking that down, what's that saying?''

In March, the Historic Districts Council, a citywide preservation group, announced the selection of the Parkchester Project for its annual Six to Celebrate program, which honors historic city neighborhoods and community groups that work to preserve them.

The council was impressed by the grass-roots efforts of Ms. Pandolfo Pérez, who, with crowdsourcing help from followers of her Instagram page -- including Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, now a Democratic congresswoman whose district includes Parkchester -- chronicled the removal of several of the complex's most high-profile sculptures between 2018 and last year. According to Ms. Pandolfo Pérez, the losses include larger-than-life sculptures of two firefighters, a muse, a skier and a woman carrying a flower.

The project's inclusion in the Six to Celebrate program lends new momentum to a campaign, begun last year by prominent architectural historians, to persuade the city to designate the 129-acre Parkchester complex a historic district. The effort has attracted the backing of several preservation groups and elected officials.

Preservationists maintain that the clock is ticking.

''The complex's unmatched set of polychromatic terra-cotta ornament -- some 500 statuettes and 600 plaques -- is, quite literally, being chipped away,'' Roberta Nusim, president of the Art Deco Society of New York, wrote to the Landmarks Preservation Commission in November.

The destruction is the result, she wrote, of ''sheer carelessness -- the kind of carelessness that landmarks designation could prevent. The damage isn't overwhelming -- yet -- and there is still time to act, but that time is slipping away.''

Nancy Johnson, a co-founder of the Parkchester Watch Group, an association for renters and owners of condominium units that advocates for quality-of-life improvements, said that there had been a lack of transparency about the sculptures from Parkchester's management.

''I think it's appalling that they've taken them down without a restoration plan,'' she said. ''We don't know what they're doing with them, if they're being stored, or where they're being stored, and this should have been discussed with the unit owners, with the community.''

The boards of managers of the Parkchester North Condominium and the Parkchester South Condominium said in a joint statement that 80 years of exposure to the elements had taken their toll on some statues and that ''the masonry behind them needed repairs to be made safe. In those cases, the Parkchester North and South Condominium boards of managers have found it necessary to remove the terra-cotta elements, which are often too fragile to reinstall safely.''

The boards added that whenever possible, statues had been saved, carefully wrapped and placed in storage for safekeeping, an approach that would continue until a final plan was adopted. A spokesman for the condominiums would not say where the sculptures were being stored and declined to show them to a reporter.

But the boards pointed to the expense of caring for the sculptures. ''We hope to be successful in saving and re-displaying as many as possible, if that can be done safely, securely and affordably for the community's residents,'' the statement continued. ''Parkchester units have thousands of owners, and as a designated Naturally Occurring Retirement Community, many of those owners are on a fixed income.''

Preservationists say that landmark status is long overdue for Parkchester. In 1978, the landmarks commission's staff wrote a Bronx Survey report that identified five potential historic districts, with Parkchester at the head of the list. Four have since been designated. But 44 years later, Parkchester remains unprotected.

''It's one of the most important housing projects in America,'' said Andrew S. Dolkart, a professor of historic preservation at Columbia University who worked on the 1978 Bronx Survey and later wrote the book on historic districts for the commission -- the first edition of ''Guide to New York City Landmarks.''

Mr. Dolkart said that Parkchester and the contemporaneous Castle Village in Manhattan were the first housing projects in America to implement the modernist towers-in-the-park precepts set forth by Le Corbusier, the influential Swiss-born architect.

''Castle Village is five buildings, and it was for a solid upper-middle-class audience,'' he added. ''Whereas what makes Parkchester so important is that it's an enormous complex and that it was built for less-wealthy people. It's built for working people to create quality housing for them.''

The landmarks commission ''is undertaking a detailed process of research and evaluation of this large complex,'' Zodet Negrón, the commission's spokeswoman, wrote in an email. ''While much of the concern has been focused on the terra-cotta decorative elements, LPC must evaluate Parkchester's architectural merit and historic significance in the context of housing complexes and our standards for designation.''

Easily the nation's largest apartment complex when it opened, Parkchester was built by MetLife following the passage of a New York State law that allowed insurance companies to invest up to 10 percent of their assets in low-rent housing. With the eyes of the world on the venture, the company assembled an all-star team of design and building professionals led by the architect Richmond H. Shreve.

Known as the Board of Design, the group included Andrew J. Eken of the Starrett Bros. & Eken construction company, which had teamed with Shreve's firm to speedily erect the Empire State Building.

Parkchester's master plan was by Gilmore D. Clarke with assistance from Michael Rapuano, with whom he also worked on the master plans for the 1939 and 1964 World's Fairs.

''Their impact on American space, primarily the New York metro area but by example, cities throughout the United States, was every bit as profound as the impact of Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, if not more so,'' said Thomas J. Campanella, a professor of urban studies and city planning at Cornell University who is writing a book about the pair. ''Clarke basically was one of the inventors of the modern highway: the Bronx River Parkway, the Hutchinson Parkway, the Saw Mill Parkway.''

As the first major American example of towers-in-the-park urbanism, he added, the Parkchester plan became a template for urban-renewal public housing projects that would ''fundamentally change the character and appearance of our cities from coast to coast, for better and worse.''

The pioneering complex was envisioned as a parklike community of more than 12,000 modern apartments on rolling land the company had purchased from the New York Catholic Protectory, which had dotted the area with orphanage and reform school buildings. The East Bronx site was bisected diagonally by Unionport Road, a constraint that Parkchester's designers elegantly incorporated by widening the thoroughfare to 110 feet and crossing it with a second diagonal boulevard, dividing the complex into four irregular quadrants.

Building heights, too, were irregular, ranging from seven to 13 stories, with each quadrant's structures arrayed in a variety of orientations, like rotated Tetris pieces, around a large central lawn. There was an intrinsic generosity to the design, which maximized light and air by placing the 51 residential buildings at least 60 feet apart and leaving three-quarters of the complex as open space. When a scale model of Parkchester was displayed at the 1939 World's Fair, it ''awed many a visitor,'' Architectural Forum reported.

Not everything about Parkchester was generous, however. At the outset, MetLife restricted residency to white people. But after passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, the complex was opened to all races. The 2020 U.S. Census found that its population was 35 percent Black, 33 percent Hispanic or Latino, 25 percent Asian and 3 percent white, according to Social Explorer, a research company. About half of the 12,271 units are owned by the Parkchester Preservation Company, whose management arm superintends the complex.

Parkchester was conceived as a city unto itself, complete with its own ''downtown.'' The main commercial district still has Streamline Moderne-style facades of colorful terra-cotta, including the first branch of Macy's. Some store fronts are embellished with elaborate sculptures, like a rondel depicting a pair of women exchanging scandalous gossip.

The former Loew's American, originally a 2,000-seat cinema and now occupied by a Marshalls, features some of the most charming, colorfully glazed terra cotta. Two harlequins flank the theater, while the building's rear is decorated with a dazzling row of movie-character types, including a matador, a hula girl and a flamenco dancer.

''The time, care and money that went into'' Parkchester's ornament ''is phenomenal,'' said Susan Tunick, president of Friends of Terra Cotta and the author of ''Terra-Cotta Skyline.'' ''It's very special also because some of the pieces can be attributed to the sculptors. Terra cotta is usually unsigned, so it's very important that the work was done by sculptors who signed their work rather than just workers in a terra-cotta factory.''

As a child, Ms. Pandolfo Pérez was enchanted by the ornaments. But her mother, a cook at a Bronx school, did not have access to information about them, said Ms. Pandolfo Pérez.

It was to fill that void for current residents that Ms. Pandolfo Pérez began the Parkchester Project, researching the development's sculptors and corresponding with their descendants. She also bought small works by the artists through online auctions.

The complex's visual smorgasbord of ornament was designed by nine sculptors and produced by the Federal Seaboard Terra Cotta Company, which also made the cladding for the McGraw-Hill Building, including its celebrated crown.

Four of the sculptors --Raymond Granville Barger, Joseph Kiselewski, Carl Schmitz and Theodore Barbarossa -- were described in Art Digest in 1941 as ''prominent'' artists who had done ''important sculptural decoration'' for the New York World's Fair and for Parkchester.

Ms. Pandolfo Pérez said that Parkchester's sculptures sparked her interest in art as a child and set her on a path to becoming a creative director. She hopes to have a similar effect on children, through a walking-tour app and school visits.

For many ***working-class*** people ''who don't get the opportunity to go to the Met, it's attainable art, and it's inspirational,'' Ms. Pandolfo Pérez said of the ornaments. ''That's why identifying the artists is so important, because it gives residents a sense of pride to say, 'The artist who made this sculpture had work in the Whitney Museum.'''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/20/realestate/streetscapes-parkchester-bronx.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/20/realestate/streetscapes-parkchester-bronx.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, one of Parkchester's terra-cotta gems in the 1940s. Above, Parkchester in 1957. Right, a 1942 photo shows a sculpture over the doorway by Raymond Granville Barger that depicts him and his son. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALFRED EISENSTAEDT/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/SHUTTERSTOCK

HERBERT GEHR/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/SHUTTERSTOCK) (RE1)

Sculptural scenes from Parkchester, above, from left: a workman on the facade of the apartment complex's power plant

a rondel of a Dutch girl

a firefighter at the ready

gazelles on a doorway

another vibrant sculpture. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KATHERINE MARKS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Center, Sharon Pandolfo Pérez, runs the Parkchester Project, which documents the removal of the distinctive sculptures. Above left, this fireman has not been returned to his spot. Above right, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the Democratic congresswoman whose district includes Parkchester, snapped this image of a felled terra-cotta woodsman in pieces. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KATHERINE MARKS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

SHARON PANDOLFO PÉREZ

ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ) (RE10)

**Load-Date:** May 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Earthquakes, Motorbikes and Unruly Teens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6764-HXN1-DXY4-X42D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 28, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 1750 words

**Byline:** By James Poniewozik, Mike Hale and Margaret Lyons

**Body**

TV in the streaming era is an endless feast. This year, series like ''Barry,'' ''Ms. Marvel,'' ''Pachinko,'' ''Station Eleven'' and ''This Fool'' offered some of the best bites.

TV can be a lot of different things these days. So can a TV episode: It can be a ''chapter'' of a visual novel, a revelatory stand-up special or a straight-up sitcom installment.

You'll find all of those and more in our choices of some of the best individual pieces we've sampled this year. Television in 2022 may have been all about the binge, but sometimes what you remember most about a feast is simply that one perfect bite. JAMES PONIEWOZIK

'Amber Brown' (Apple TV+)

Season 1, Episode 3: 'No Place Like Two Homes'

Aw man, I loved this light tween drama about a sixth grader whose parents are newly divorced. In the show's third episode, Amber (Carsyn Rose) is trying to build up the courage to audition for the school play -- she hopes to follow in her father's drama-club footsteps so they can bond more now that he's moved back to town. ''Do you think he likes me?'' she asks her best friend. Of course, her friend says. He's your father; he loves you. ''Well, I know he loves me,'' Amber replies. ''I just wonder if he likes me.'' It's this kind of brutal, beautiful poignancy that makes the show so special. (Streaming on Apple TV+.) MARGARET LYONS

'Barry' (HBO)

Season 3, Episode 6: '710N'

More than one scene from this stunner -- a high-speed motorcycle chase through a traffic jam, a high-firepower shootout at a car dealership -- would have been the high point of any other series. But there was more to ''710N'' than simply showing off Bill Hader's directing chops. The action sequences, simultaneously thrilling, slapstick and bathetic, served the larger purpose of ''Barry,'' to tell the story of an antihero without celebrating his antiheroism. (Streaming on HBO Max.) PONIEWOZIK

'Black Bird' (Apple TV+)

Season 1, Episode 4: 'WhatsHerName'

Dennis Lehane's mini-series was a showcase for the fine and distinctive actor Paul Walter Hauser, who plays Larry Hall, a convicted kidnapper and suspected serial killer who is close to having his convictions overturned and walking free. It is nominally the story (based on an autobiographical novel) of another convict, played by Taron Egerton, who makes a deal to befriend Hall and compromise him. But Hauser's soft, sibilant, weirdly sexy performance is all that matters. In the fourth episode, Hall is put in charge of cleaning up after a prison riot (itself a shocking yet poetic spasm of violence, as directed by Jim McKay), and Hauser conveys a deep, narcissistic satisfaction that puts cleanliness next to beastliness. (Streaming on Apple TV+) MIKE HALE

'Derry Girls' (Netflix)

Season 3, Episode 5

Lisa McGee's rowdy Northern Irish comedy used a high school reunion to turn its clock back from the 1990s to the 1970s, visiting the adolescence of its Derry Mums. The half-hour brought in a new cast to play its adult characters as punk-era teens, but McGee established such a voice and sense of character over three short seasons that you could instantly recognize the elders in their younger versions (and see their daughters in them as well). The tart, heartfelt episode underscored how teenage rebellions, like some political ones, cut across generations. PONIEWOZIK

'Fleishman Is in Trouble' (FX on Hulu)

Season 1, Episode 7: 'Me-Time'

This limited series worked hard to re-create the pyrotechnics of Taffy Brodesser-Akner's 2019 novel, from the upside-down shots that mimicked the topsy-turvy imagery of the book cover to a copious use of voice-over. (Brodesser-Akner, who created the series and wrote this episode, is a staff writer for The New York Times Magazine.) Here, it pulled off the novel's signature reversal -- telling the title character's divorce story from the perspective of his wife -- using the tools of the screen, in particular a wrenching performance by Claire Danes, an emotional volcano who has rarely erupted better. (Streaming on Hulu.) PONIEWOZIK

'Genndy Tartakovsky's Primal' (Adult Swim)

Season 2, Episodes 7-9: 'The Colossaeus' (parts I, II and III)

In its second season, ''Primal'' expanded its scope and time frame, dipping into 19th-century England for an episode and introducing various other clans to our cave man and dinosaur protagonists. But it was this three-part blood bath, culminating in a triumphant slave rebellion at sea, that exemplified the show's tender nuance and also its unrelenting savagery. It was a reminder that while cartoon violence can be exhausting and meaningless in live-action shows, it can still be mesmerizing and meaningful when done where it belongs. ''Primal'' is almost entirely wordless, and its characters rarely rely on gesture; instead, their ideas are communicated through expression, breath and attention. And yet, few other shows are able to capture passion and pain with such precision, an entire life story told through one furrowed brow. (Streaming on HBO Max.) LYONS

'Ms. Marvel' (Disney+)

Season 1, Episode 5: 'Time and Again'

This ''Spider-Man''-like series about Kamala Khan (Iman Vellani), a Jersey City 16-year-old in a ***working-class*** immigrant family who discovers that she has superpowers, is the most charming and likable of the Marvel shows for Disney+ so far. The obligatory flashback episode revealing how Kamala came by her powers was set during the partition of India and Pakistan; the incorporation of that fraught history could easily have led to something labored and stiff, but in the hands of the writer Fatimah Asghar and the director Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy it was ingenious and surprisingly moving. (Streaming on Disney+) HALE

'Pachinko' (Apple TV+)

Season 1, Episode 7

The penultimate episode of this Min Jin Lee novel adaptation, set in and around the 1923 Yokohama earthquake, is staggering in its scope and rendering of cataclysm. But it's equally, quietly devastating in how its expands the depiction of a key character: Koh Hansu (Lee Minho), introduced in the series as a menacing, charismatic gangster. Laying out how he began as a young math tutor with hopes for a legitimate life, then fell onto his path through disaster and circumstance, ''Chapter 7'' connects him to the series's other Korean exiles making hard choices in an unwelcoming Japan. (Streaming on Apple TV+.) PONIEWOZIK

'Rothaniel' (HBO)

A lot of ''confessional'' comedy has ground itself into a rut in recent years. But the comedian Jerrod Carmichael breathes new life into the paradigm with this lyrical and restrained special, in which he comes out as gay and explores his fraught relationship with his family. Carmichael weaves together sorrow and humor, insight and fear, love and disappointment, unraveling family secrets and allowing for messy and unresolved truths to all exist at once. (Streaming on HBO Max.) LYONS

'The Simpsons' (Fox)

Season 34, Episode 3: 'Lisa the Boy Scout'

A seemingly routine episode of ''The Simpsons'' is hijacked by hackers (wearing masks that are a frightening combination of Guy Fawkes and Homer Simpson) who demand a $20 million ransom; until it is paid, they will broadcast a stream of ''Simpsons'' outtakes ''so ill-conceived, so idiotic that their exposure would destroy the value of the very I.P. itself.'' Luckily, no one pays, and we get to see a lovingly assembled panoply of blackout sketches, written by Dan Greaney and directed by Timothy Bailey, ranging across 34 seasons of characters and animation styles. One highlight: a two-hander for the Sea Captain and Groundskeeper Willie whose dialogue consists entirely of ''Yar'' and ''Aye.'' (Streaming on Hulu.) HALE

'Slow Horses' (Apple TV+)

Season 1, Episode 3: 'Bad Tradecraft'

Based on Mick Herron's Slough House novels, ''Slow Horses'' -- set in a fictional MI5 office where out-of-favor agents pass their time doing busy work -- is in one sense a sendup of John le Carré's moody, cerebral tales of the postwar British intelligence services. But it's also a completely credible spy thriller, with complicated, believable twists and well executed action. The first season's third episode, written by Will Smith and directed by James Hawes, best encapsulated the show's seesawing mix of sardonic humor, deft characterization and sometimes brutal suspense. (Streaming on Apple TV+.) HALE

'Station Eleven' (HBO Max)

Season 1, Episode 9: 'Dr. Chaudhary'

TV's sweetest apocalypse story began just before the holidays last year, so it was the gift that kept on giving in early 2022. The penultimate episode, which found Jeevan Chaudhary (Himesh Patel) impersonating a doctor in a big-box-store-turned-birthing-center, was an inventive expression of the show's oddly hopeful vision: the first sparks of humanity's future being kindled amid the mundane ruins of its past. Like the traveling actors who make the backbone of this story, Jeevan puts on a performance that ends up becoming real and restorative. (Streaming on HBO Max.) PONIEWOZIK

'This Fool' (Hulu)

Season 1, Episode 5: 'Sandy Says'

The closing seconds of this episode-long homage to ''Austin Powers'' were perhaps the most satisfying payoff I saw this year. ''Sandy Says'' exemplifies the tricky tone ''This Fool'' is able to strike, combining the structure of traditional sitcoms with the style of auteur comedies, hitting a sweet spot of goofy and clever. Luis (Frankie Quinones), newly out of prison, is in annoying-eighth-grader mode with his constant ''Austin Powers'' references, and the episode is packed with shagadelic Easter eggs before Luis explains part of why the movie means so much to him. ''I'm tired of wasting time living in the past,'' he says. ''Ideally, we'll change. The world is ever-changing, homey. I gotta change with it. That's what 'Austin Powers' is all about. You know, I used to think that movie was a comedy. But now I know, it's a tragedy.'' (Streaming on Hulu.) LYONS

'This Is Us' (NBC)

Season 6, Episode 4: 'Don't Let Me Keep You'

''This Is Us'' did a lot of traveling over its six-season run -- through multiple family trees, across the divide of death, from the future to the deep past. But it was often at its best when focused on one story, here Jack's (Milo Ventimiglia) trip to Ohio to attend his mother's funeral and reckon with the legacy of his abusive father. It's a showcase for Ventimiglia, who anchored a big-feeling show through his reserved portrayal of a father, husband and son driven to fix things. (Streaming on Hulu.) PONIEWOZIK

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/21/arts/television/best-tv-episodes-2022.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/21/arts/television/best-tv-episodes-2022.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: An episode of ''Barry,'' above, included a thrilling freeway chase with the title character (Bill Hader, who also directed) on a stolen motorcycle, carrying a bag of beignets. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HBO)

A group-therapy session in an episode of ''This Fool'' that functioned as a nonstop homage to ''Austin Powers.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY HULU)

The ninth episode of ''Station Eleven'' featured Himesh Patel (right, with Rebecca Applebaum) impersonating a doctor in a birthing center. (PHOTOGRAPH BY IAN WATSON/HBO MAX)

Dearbháile McKinney, left, and Shauna Higgins as 1970s teenagers in an episode of ''Derry Girls.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NETFLIX)

In a ''Simpsons'' episode, nasty hackers subjected viewers to lampoons of the series' three decades. (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOX)

In ''Ms. Marvel,'' Iman Vellani (right, with Aramis Knight) plays a 16-year-old with superpowers. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DISNEY+) This article appeared in print on page C5.

**Load-Date:** December 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Bustos’s advice for swing-district Democrats: Focus on local issues and avoid progressive slogans.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63BG-1311-DXY4-X0K0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 10, 2021 Tuesday 08:31 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 545 words

**Byline:** Lisa Lerer

**Highlight:** Representative Cheri Bustos of Illinois, a former leader of the House Democrats’ campaign arm, has released a report intended to help members of her party win in conservative areas.

**Body**

Representative Cheri Bustos of Illinois, a former leader of the House Democrats’ campaign arm, has released a report intended to help members of her party win in conservative areas.

Message discipline. Focus on local issues. Find ways to work with Republicans. And show up. Everywhere.

That is some of the advice offered to swing-district Democrats for winning in conservative areas in a [*new report written by Representative Cheri Bustos*](https://medium.com/how-dems-win-in-trump-districts/how-dems-win-in-trump-districts-6e1caf643bfa) of Illinois, a former leader of the House Democrats’ campaign arm.

The report comes as Democrats in competitive districts are growing increasingly anxious about holding onto their seats. Many point to falling polling numbers and argue that the party must sharpen its economic and public health messaging around the pandemic.

Ms. Bustos interviewed 25 national and local Democratic lawmakers who won areas carried by former President Donald J. Trump in 2020. She had help from a longtime adviser — Robin Johnson, a political scientist at Monmouth College, which is in Ms. Bustos’s district.

Democrats who won districts where Mr. Trump got a majority of votes are a distinct minority in Congress: There are only seven in the House.

Most of the advice in the report revolves around an intense focus on local issues, as a way of aggressively differentiating the political profile of members representing redder areas from the Democrats’ national brand, which Ms. Bustos argues can be “toxic” among rural and ***working-class*** voters.

Representative Cindy Axne became the first Democrat to win her seat in southwestern Iowa in 2018, beating out David Young, and then she won a rematch last year.

“Even when every ounce of you wants to stray from the messaging, especially when you’re in a safe Democratic room, DON’T,” Ms. Axne advised. “Everything is on the record and can be used against you by the other side.”

Some of the advice is based on the Democrats’ experiences in 2020, an election that started with confident predictions of increasing their ranks but ended with the loss of 13 House seats and the slimmest majority in decades.

Ms. Bustos blames the losses on the constraints of the pandemic, which prompted most Democrats to abstain from door-to-door campaigning out of concern about public safety. That hampered the ability of swing-district Democrats to counter messaging from the progressive wing of the party — slogans like “defund the police” — that remain unpopular in conservative areas, Ms. Bustos argues.

“We were responsible from a health perspective but from a political perspective it hurt us,” she said. “Some of these attacks that were thrown up there, they took hold and we were not able to fight back.”

The defeats were an embarrassment for Ms. Bustos, who had been considered particularly skilled at devising strategies for Democrats running in conservative-leaning districts, and kicked off a round of recrimination between the moderates and progressives in the party.

“Take any of us away and the majority is shot,” said Ms. Bustos. “I do not want to pick an intraparty fight but it has to be a whole party approach to serving in the majority.”

PHOTO: Representative Cheri Bustos of Illinois has some advice for Democrats who want to win in swing districts. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Annie Ernaux Has Broken Every Taboo of What Women Are Allowed to Write***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:684T-3N81-DXY4-X223-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 2, 2023 Tuesday 15:44 EST

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 6367 words

**Byline:** Rachel Cusk

**Highlight:** The novelist Rachel Cusk on what makes the Nobel laureate’s fiction so shocking.

**Body**

Perhaps with no clearer motive than F. Scott Fitzgerald’s observation that “France has the only two things toward which we drift as we grow older — intelligence and good manners,” we packed up our possessions during the last dark days of one December and decided to move to Paris. It was pleasant, I had often been told, for a writer to live somewhere where reading and writing were accorded the highest respect, and it was true that — in Paris at least — these were semipublic activities: In every park and cafe, on the Metro and on the benches along the Seine, people were openly engaged in what for me had always been the most private and solitary of occupations. Bookstores still held their ground here among the shopfronts, and the deification of French writers living and dead was evinced everywhere in street names and statues and advertising hoardings for new novels. I listened on the radio to an astronaut reading passages aloud from Marguerite Duras from his space station to his earthbound audience below.

Then, last October, the writer [*Annie Ernaux won the Nobel Prize for Literature*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/06/books/annie-ernaux-nobel-prize-literature.html), the first Frenchwoman ever to do so. We had been in France for nearly two years, and amid the alternating sensations of regeneration and disarray that this upheaval had inevitably incurred, Annie Ernaux had come to represent for me a troubling point of constancy. During my initial months in Paris, when it seemed for the first time in my life that lying on a sofa reading a book was something I was not only permitted but encouraged to do, I made my way slowly in my clumsy French through one slim text after another: [*“A Man’s Place,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/1992/05/10/books/leaving-father-behind.html) [*“A Woman’s Story,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/1991/05/19/books/when-mother-became-history.html) [*“Simple Passion,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/1993/10/24/books/who-can-explain-it-who-can-tell-you-why.html) “The Possession,” “The Years.” The story they told, rigorously excluding anything that did not directly pertain to it, was that of Annie Duchesne (Ernaux’s maiden name), only child of a ***working-class*** French couple who ran a humble café-epicerie in Yvetot, a small town in Normandy.

By means of scholarly excellence, Annie claws her way out of the mire of her origins to teacher-training college, marries the first man who presents himself, is submerged in a bourgeois purgatory as housewife and mother and slowly breaks her way out of that new prison by writing books — books that try to stop time by questioning and reconstructing as precisely as they can the events that have brought her to the existence she is now leading. Who is she, and where has she come from? Who were her parents, and why did they live as they did? Why did she act in certain ways as she became free of them, and to what degree is her life the consequence of those actions? Has she ever lived consciously even for one minute, or is this task of writing and reconstruction the effort to apply consciousness to blind fate?

Despite the differences — of nationality, generation, social class, familial situation — between my own life and that of Annie Ernaux, I found myself plunged as I read into a more and more profound state of recognition. Yet what I seemed to be recognizing were things that no one generally admits. Ernaux’s honesty had the effect of illuminating a profound and unsuspected lack of freedom in her reader. How, through the simple story of her origins, had she laid her hand so surely on the human tragedy of our ability to make ourselves unfree? The answer perhaps lay in her faith in writing as a sacred and transcendent activity. She believed in writing as some people believe in religion, as a sphere where the self, the soul, is entitled to find refuge.

Who she was as a writer bore only one very specific relationship to who she was as a woman: They inhabited the same body. It was to this body that she was confined, actually and artistically — to its social and economic destiny, to its gendered limitations, to its geographical and temporal location. What had happened to and in this body, what it in turn had made happen in the years from its birth to the present moment, was the limit and extent of her material.

France being a nation that holds itself in high esteem for its literary culture, the Nobel news caused a feverish outburst of pride, but also some startling paroxysms of venom. How could a woman who wrote only about herself be awarded the literary world’s highest accolade? Madame Ovary, as she was called by one conservative French critic, was the prime example of the erosion of literary art by narratives of self-pity and marginalization. The intelligence — indeed the sanity — of the Nobel committee appeared to be questioned. It was explained to me that in France the exposure of unglamorous aspects of female reality — the complaints of the bonne femme, or housewife — was widely considered to be distasteful. There was also apparently the matter of jealousy — of Ernaux’s success, of the youthfulness of her readership and now of this greatest of honors — among the literary male old guard. Yet it seemed to me that such explanations were, in fact, unnecessary: The aggression was simply the evidence that the nerve of truth had been touched.

From the beginning of her 50-year career, the uncompromising candor of Ernaux’s voice has wielded a formidable power of shock: the lacerating portrait of motherhood and bourgeois family life in “A Frozen Woman”; the masterly, pitiless accounts of her parents’ lives and deaths — and therefore of poor, provincial France — in “A Man’s Place” and “A Woman’s Story”; her analysis of the extreme subjection at the core of sexual relationships in “Simple Passion” and “The Possession.” One after another, her works have alienated or dismayed diverse groups across the social and political spectrum, from cultural patriarchs to feminists. It might seem evident that shock is the signifier of truth and reveals more about the people who feel it than about the artistic objectivity that caused it, but in the case of Annie Ernaux, the usual operation of time in reconciling people to truth did not seem entirely to have occurred.

“This summer, for the first time, I watched a pornographic film,” she writes at the opening of “Simple Passion.” She continues:

“The story was incomprehensible; it was impossible to predict any of the actions or movements. The man walked up to the woman. There was a close-up of the woman’s genitals, clearly visible among the shimmerings of the screen, then of the man’s penis, fully erect, sliding into the woman’s vagina. For a long time this coming and going of the two sex organs was shown from several angles. ... No doubt one gets used to such a sight; the first time is shattering. Centuries and centuries, hundreds of generations have gone by and it is only now that one can see this — a man’s penis and a woman’s vagina coming together — something one could barely take in without dying has become as easy to watch as a handshake. It occurred to me that writing should also aim for that — the impression conveyed by sexual intercourse, the feeling of anxiety and awe, a suspension of moral judgment.”

Reading Annie Ernaux’s books one after another was like watching an edifice being built in real time, something raised out of the wet ground and constructed brick by brick. The harrowing beauty and brevity of these books and their apparent simplicity disguised somewhat the punishing cost of their honesty. Never had I seen the supposed freedom — the “narcissism,” as we now like to call it — of self-examination so exposed in its brutality. Ernaux grasped the depths of isolation and loss she would need to descend to in order to retrieve the original reality of her being. Her art bears no relation to a privileging of personal experience; on the contrary, it is almost a self-violation. What Annie Ernaux understood was that as a female child of the regional laboring classes, her self was her only authentic possession in this world, and thus the sole basis for the legitimacy of her art.

Lying on the sofa, I became slowly immured in the concrete reality of this edifice and of its facts. The girl Annie grows up in an environment of squalor and industry. She is an only child, an older sister having died of diphtheria at age 6. Her father runs the cafe while her mother manages the shop, the two spaces connected by a corridor that functions as the family’s kitchen. There is no bathroom, just a toilet for customers and family alike out in the yard.

Over time, her reality takes shape around certain foundations, the mother and father most evidently, and the cramped labyrinth of the cafe and shop with its simple living quarters above — a world without privacy or solitude, a world in which the observer is as exposed as the observed — but also around her own nascent exceptionality, which soon becomes the subject of her parents’ mingled terror and pride. She begins early on to perform outstandingly at school. It is clear she will go out into the world, but what world is it, and how and to what end will she survive there? Their social conservatism and Catholicism — immovable features of the provincial ***working-class*** landscape in which they live — leave the subject of her burgeoning femininity and sexuality entirely opaque. Were she a normal girl, she would marry young with her virginity intact. This scholarly future is a vaguely nunlike destiny, whose risks of ruination include the possibility that — as a clever oddity — she might never find a husband. Yet her parents, and especially her mother, don’t want her to be like them, economically and socially trapped in a cycle of incessant labor. At school, she quickly becomes aware of her inferiority, but “at home, on her own territory, the grocer’s girl — as the locals call her — has all the rights. Helping herself liberally to packets of sweets and boxes of cookies, lying reading in bed until midday during the holidays, never setting the table or cleaning her shoes. She lives and behaves like a queen.” (I have translated this passage, and the others quoted in this article, from the French.) Her mother’s one luxury is reading, a habit Annie acquires from her.

At once cosseted and imprisoned by her parents, burdened with the prospect of her own liberation from everything she knows, the girl tries to contain in herself the violent forces of ignorance and desire, the problem of owing everything to people who can teach her nothing, the growing discomfort of her origins that is matched by the mystery of how one could live differently. Though she doesn’t know it, her isolation — the only tangible result, in fact, of her exceptionality — is extreme. This exceptionality is the great subject and problem of Annie Ernaux’s oeuvre, the Other with which she spars in book after book, sometimes taking the form of guilt or shame, in others of a savage and dizzying freedom. The exceptionality strives to normalize itself at every turn by making her conform, often to things that directly clash with and contradict one another. The conforming, sooner or later, results in rebellion: She is trapped and frees herself, creates and destroys and survives, learning over and over by this arduous and often disastrous route the opposing facts of internal and external reality. The exceptionality is not, in fact, that of intellectual or physical or moral attributes. It is the exceptionality of the artist, of the person who lives to tell the tale.

In 1958, at age 18, she is given the opportunity to work for a month as one of a group of monitors at a children’s summer camp in S, a village in the Orne. With this first experience of liberty, the whole unfeasible powder keg of her identity explodes. “The list of her social ignorances would be interminable,” Ernaux writes of herself in “A Girl’s Story.” “She doesn’t know how to use a telephone, has never taken either a shower or a bath. She has no experience of any milieu but her own.” In the middle-class world of the summer camp, she is by turns gauche and outrageous, short on manners, taste, charm and savoir-faire — she is, in a word, unacceptable. She alienates both her peers and her superiors, acquires a reputation for sexual availability and even lacks the discrimination to recognize what has happened. Yet she knows too that she is, for those people, entirely forgettable.

“I too wanted to forget that girl,” Ernaux writes. “To forget her truly, meaning to have no desire to write about her. Never again to think that I ought to write about her, her desire, her folly, her idiocy and her pride. ... [Yet] there were always phrases in my journal, allusions to ‘the girl of S,’ ‘the girl of 58.’ For 20 years I have listed ‘58’ among my book projects. It is always the missing text. Always delayed. The unquantifiable hole.”

During those weeks at the summer camp, she quietly abandons, without quite realizing it, her academic ambitions. She adjusts her expectations: Instead of going to a prestigious university, she will train to become a primary-school teacher. The weeks of summer camp, which at the time she believed to be the threshold of the future, were in fact a turning point back into the past. She would have to account for every moment of that past, both personally and artistically. What she had been programmed to escape was to become, in a very different form, her destiny.

Sometimes, reading, I would experience the curious illusion that this 82-year-old laureate was not my elder but my junior — that her voice was speaking from a future in which the possibilities for female utterance were bolder, more serious, more liberal. I was as though chagrined by my own compromised femininity in the light of this more evolved future. How had she managed to be so daring, so candid, so autonomous — so free?

The answer, perhaps, was shame: What Ernaux seemed to have understood from the start is that shame is the obverse side of truth. She uses it as a map, the existence of shame at different points in her history unfailingly leading her to a concealment of self buried beneath it. Besides, shame has an excellent memory, “more detailed, more indelible than any other. Memory ... is the special gift of shame.”

It was, perhaps, her shame about her origins that resulted in “A Man’s Place,” the book that first cemented her place in French literary culture. Her voice, so unlike any other, told the story of a France that did not usually presume to express itself. Spare, methodical, relentless, shocking — “clinical” was the word chosen by the Nobel committee — the severity of its discipline was matched by its unrepentant liberty. This, then, was the strange fruit of the café-epicerie in Yvetot, this voice whose internal stamina was indestructible yet recognized no conventional laws, that was capable of such suffering yet was so good at learning from it, that had escaped the bourgeois conditioning of character and thus was always stronger than the things that confronted it.

Shortly after my arrival in Paris, wanting to improve my French, I was put in touch with a writer who wanted to improve her English, and we began to meet weekly for conversations that switched language at midpoint, like a soccer team changing ends at halftime. The writer was Delphine de Vigan, a novelist around my own age, like me the mother of two grown-up children who is no longer with their father.

At first we were a little shy, a shyness that seemed to spring from our joint practicality. To be taking time in the middle of the afternoon simply to converse was a luxury to which neither of us seemed to feel altogether entitled. We had each been the wage-earners and managers in our households; each of us for years had written in extremis around the interruptions and [*obligations of motherhood*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/22/magazine/raising-teenagers-the-mother-of-all-problems.html); each of us had the greatest difficulty in considering ourselves to be artists; yet we each, despite or perhaps because of the exigency of our writing conditions, had chosen the hazardous route of self-examination in pursuit of a somehow ineluctable truth, the truth of who we were in the world and why.

Delphine de Vigan’s first novel, “Days Without Hunger,” was an account of her near-death from anorexia as a young woman, but in the novels that followed she moved determinedly away from autobiographical material, so that that first slim and agonized text remained there like an unanswered question. What had driven her — what drives anyone — to starve herself to the point of extinction at the very moment of gaining autonomy? This particularly female form of self-attack seemed to delineate something, a corresponding shadow or a silence, lying centrally across the field of self-expression.

I, too, at certain points, had felt at risk of becoming fundamentally separated from my own material, when my biological life as a woman began to generate conditions and experiences that were alien to and inadmissible in the writing of fiction. How was I to approach as a subject something whose power of nullification was so great that it menaced the very act of representation? To write about motherhood for instance — to bring objective scrutiny and distance to the biological invasion of the self — seemed to be not only a practical but also an intellectual impossibility. In order to succeed as an artist — it seemed — both the inconvenience and thus the reality of femininity had to be scrupulously concealed.

“My mother was blue, a pale ash-blue, the hands strangely darker than the face, when I found her at her house that January morning,” begins de Vigan’s riveting 2011 memoir, [*“Nothing Holds Back the Night.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/11/books/review/nothing-holds-back-the-night-by-delphine-de-vigan.html) “The hands as though stained with ink, at the folds of the knuckles. She had been dead for several days. I don’t know how many seconds or even minutes it took me to understand this, despite the evidence in front of me — a long time, awkward and febrile, until a cry escaped my lungs. Even today, more than two years later, it remains for me a mystery: By what mechanism was my brain able to hold itself apart from the sight of my mother’s corpse, and most of all from its smell, how had it taken so much time to accept the information that was in front of it? It was not the only question that her death left me with.”

With this book, de Vigan spectacularly marked the end of her self-annexation, or rather the point at which the internal pressure of truth forced its content out into the world. Her mother’s suicide was a sort of refusal or breakdown of the female narrative. To comprehend it, every aspect of de Vigan’s reality had to be dismantled: the entire carapace of self, of history both personal and impersonal, of memory and fact and myth, of the collective life and the individual reality, and most of all of writing — narration — and its relationship to being. The book is not so much a reconstruction of her mother’s life as a gathering of evidence, by which the private and subjective is made public and accountable. It required a painstaking examination of her wider family — a formidable and traditionally French clan of aunts and uncles and grandparents — and therefore of family culture itself. The resulting book is an inquiry into the “reality” a child is born into, a domain tyrannized by authority structures and social codes in which the personal binds fatally with the authorized and communal to make a theater of blood relationships.

“To write about one’s family,” de Vigan writes, “is without doubt the surest means of falling out with them.” Throughout her narration, she remains terrified and tormented by her power of disclosure, like a child being handed a dangerous weapon. She reveals, among other things, that her mother claimed to have been raped by her own father as a teenager, an accusation the mother made in writing at 32, sending the text to every member of her family. No one ever mentioned it: Life continued as normal, the family meeting regularly for Sunday lunch at the grandparents’ country house.

Midway through the book, rived with anxiety about the secrets she is revealing, de Vigan recounts a dream in which such a gathering of the long-dead is occurring. “Everyone is there, nothing has changed: the collection of porcelain plates on the wall, the serving baskets placed here and there around the table, the smell of roast lamb drifting in the air.” As the food is being served, a silence suddenly falls, and her dead grandmother turns to her, “with that sorrowful or disappointed expression that sometimes alters her gaze, without hostility. ‘It isn’t nice what you’re doing, darling,’ she says. ‘It isn’t nice.’”

“Nothing Holds Back the Night” was published in France to a wave of recognition, selling a million copies and winning numerous prizes. In this literature-loving country, Delphine de Vigan became a modest sort of rock star, yet the aims of her book were in a sense challenging or undermining the tenets of that culture and the story it told about itself. Among other things, what de Vigan — and the powerful response of her public — testified to was the personal cost exacted by life in this exalted, beautiful yet patriarchal nation. Her book is a girl’s story, her own girlhood as well as that of her mother, yet she finds that there is no template for it. Her mother’s pain “was part of our childhood, and later of our lives as adults,” she writes. “Without doubt her pain formed us, my sister and me. Yet any attempt at explanation is bound to fail. Instead I must make do with a writing made of odds and ends, of fragments, of hypotheses.”

After Annie Ernaux won the Nobel Prize, I received a call: I was invited to appear on “La Grande Librairie” to talk about her work. [*“La Grande Librairie,”*](https://europe.tv5monde.com/en/tv-guide/entertainment/la-grande-librairie/annie-ernaux-nobel-de-litterature-2022-829817) a weekly 90-minute television show about books, had often been cited to me as the emblem of France’s exceptional relationship to literary culture. Once a week, the country sat down to watch a special-effects-free sequence of interviews and debates with the writers of the moment. The prestige and sales figures of these writers were considerably advanced by an appearance on “La Grande Librairie” — an invitation was among the most fiercely desired laurels for the contemporary French writer. It was unusual, I had been told, for a foreign or non-French-speaking author to be invited; the need for an interpreter slowed things down too much.

On the phone, I explained that my French was not good enough to accept the invitation. There was silence on the other end — evidently no one refused such an offer; it simply wasn’t possible. What wasn’t possible, I continued, was that I would speak French on national television when I was still capable of making basic errors ordering a baguette in a boulangerie. It was explained to me that not only would I do so, I would do so very well. A special edition of the program had been put together for Annie Ernaux: The author herself would be there. My appearance would be a nice surprise for her, and besides, they needed someone to give the international perspective.

The near-hysterical national pride one might have anticipated at the Nobel accolade had, it seemed, been accompanied by some self-reproach. There was a general feeling that Annie Ernaux had somehow escaped appreciation, had been denied justice in her own country. Despite the French reverence for literature, it had required non-French eyes to see her true worth. The Anglophone world, for instance, had long understood her importance — it was seemingly as a witness to this debatable notion that I was invited to participate in the special edition of “La Grande Librairie.”

I went to ask Delphine de Vigan’s advice, but she, too, seemed to be inhabiting this other reality, in which I could discuss literary matters in French before an audience of a million people. You’ll be fine, she said. She offered to help me practice. Afterward we sat and talked about writing, about the blankness and terror that sometimes overcome each of us at the idea of having to write another book, as though it were some awful duty. Would either of us write again, if we had sufficient means not to? It seemed to me that for each of us it was this binding of writing with practicality — which for years had lent legitimacy to an apparently impractical activity — that now darkened the prospect of exercising our craft. I felt sure that neither of us knew any greater joy than that of doing our work, yet the framing of it as a job rather than art had become habitual.

After the startling success of “Nothing Holds Back the Night,” Delphine de Vigan wrote a clever, tenebrous faux-memoir called [*“Based on a True Story,”*](https://www.npr.org/2017/05/11/526913543/based-on-a-true-story-may-not-be-true-but-its-still-scary) in which the splitting of herself, first by writing the book about her mother and then by the extraordinary fame it brought her, is incarnated in a woman she meets at a party who insinuates herself into her life and nearly destroys it. While writing this book, she felt, she says now, the most crippling self-consciousness and anxiety, as though a goblin critic were sitting on her shoulder laughing cruelly at every line she set down. She was certain it was a failure and nearly didn’t publish it at all: It was a huge success and won the prestigious Prix Renaudot, as well as the Prix Goncourt des Lycéens.

This fear of writing, which is not perhaps a fear of failure so much as a deep and half-unconscious belief that writing is socially and morally wrong, seemed to me to be the very reverse of Annie Ernaux’s vocational objectivity. “It is the absence of a sense of what one is living at the moment one lives it that multiplies the possibilities of writing,” Ernaux writes in “A Girl’s Story.” “To explore the gulf between the frightening reality of what happens, at the moment it happens, and the strange unreality, years later, of what happened.”

On the set of “La Grande Librairie,” amid the cameras and wires and blinding lights, where an atmosphere of sustained nervous frenzy was running through everything like an electric charge, Annie Ernaux was sitting among the other participants on a plush sofa — small and still and composed, like a statue depicting sanity. It was before the eyes of this sanity, rather than those of x million French people, that I would consider myself to be judged.

For me, the conversation was like a ball being thrown very fast from one participant to another. I could understand very little of what was being said: My strategy had been to learn by heart a number of all-purpose lines, which I delivered every time the direction of the others’ eyes indicated the ball was being thrown to me. Afterward I was ready to faint. The producer and presenter congratulated me. You see? they said. We told you it would be fine!

There was a small drinks reception for us all downstairs, and I was surprised to see Ernaux, proud and elegant, standing there alone, away from the talking groups. Her solitude and apartness seemed like things she carried with her wherever she went. I approached her and said hello, and she took my hand and patted it. Hers was soft and warm. Her eyes were like searchlights. We stood there, our hands clasped together. I would be very glad, she said after a while, if in a week’s time everyone could forget this had ever happened.

A few weeks later, Delphine de Vigan and I drove out to Cergy, where Ernaux lives. It is the suburb she describes in “The Years,” the 2008 novel that finally carried her reputation outside France. “The Years” is a longer and more ambitious book than its predecessors: The familiar facts of Ernaux’s life are there, but this time they are integrated into a broader context of social history, political and cultural events, and most of all the advance of capitalism into every aspect of life in the second half of the 20th century. For the first time Ernaux sees herself not as the anomaly from Yvetot but as part of the wave of history, a gendered organism shaped and driven by forces both seen and unseen, forces whose operation around individual consciousness and destiny has been far more powerful and fundamental than the myth of self-will and personality would seem to allow.

The Oise River, seen from the rise behind Ernaux’s house, winds shining through the valley below among groves of bare trees. It is a square, somber house in a large, sloping garden: Its broad and unimpeded view of the river is startling. Along the lanes and cul-de-sacs we passed on the way the houses are closely packed, their territories demarcated with walls and hedges and security gates that block one another’s line of sight and leave no space empty. Ernaux’s ample shaggy lawn and trailing trees giving way to a wide perspective of sky and valley seem the fruits not of privilege but of artistic and moral consistency: She has lived in this house for 40 years, during which time the world has filled in all the space around her.

Standing outside her front door, I was conscious that we were in one of her literary sites, the home that was the stage set for the woman she became, burning with oppression and desire and her indefatigable power of truth. “From September last year, I did nothing else but wait for a man,” she writes in “Simple Passion,” the story of her midlife affair with a married Eastern European diplomat. “For him to call me and come round to my place ... I had no future other than the telephone call fixing our next appointment. I would try to leave the house as little as possible, except for professional reasons . . . forever fearing that he might call in my absence. I would also avoid using the vacuum cleaner or the hair dryer as they would have prevented me from hearing the sound of the telephone. Every time it rang, I was consumed with hope, which usually only lasted the time it took me slowly to pick up the receiver and say hello. When I realized it wasn’t him, I felt so utterly dejected that I began to loathe the person who was on the line.”

Ernaux was widely upbraided by her feminist readers for this portrayal of female dependency on male sexual attention: The clinical spotlight of her regard, so revelatory when it illuminates that which one is willing to see, becomes distinctly uncomfortable when it falls too close to home. Those same readers may later have found themselves forced to salute her for “The Young Man,” her account of her relationship in her late 50s with a man 30 years her junior. She describes encountering, when out with the young man in public places, “the looks of heavy disapproval from people around us. Looks which, far from causing me to feel shame, reinforced my determination not to hide my liaison with a man ‘young enough to be my son,’ when any man in his 50s could be seen with a girl who was evidently not his daughter without arousing the slightest reprobation.”

She answered the door, beaming with welcome. Inside the house was filled with cold, clear light. It was uncluttered and tidy, modestly and tastefully furnished with antiques, yet it was evident that very little had changed here: The small, spare kitchen where she prepared coffee for us was a kitchen from 40 years ago. Yet the house seemed expressive of a double achievement: her rise from the café-epicerie and her stoical resistance of the temptation to falsify or adorn the facts that surround her. We sat at the table in the sunny dining room. She talked about the imminent Nobel Prize ceremony, for which she needed to travel to Stockholm. Her main concern was her descent, before the audience, of a long staircase: At 82, she was worried she’d fall over. We asked whether someone couldn’t accompany her down, and she instantly looked startled. Later, I realized that this well-meaning suggestion was rather tactless: Her autonomy, her uncompromising independence from everyone and everything she has met with in life, was the reason she was going to Stockholm in the first place.

When she talked about her age, and the handful of years she imagines are left to her, the luminosity of her countenance was arresting, and I was struck by the sheer aliveness of this creature and by her undimmed force of inquiry. The question, she said, is how to live when life is nearly over. What, in that context, can life mean? A few months earlier, she and her son David made a documentary, “Les Années Super 8,” that is a collage of the home movies of their family life shot by her then-husband, Philippe, from 1972 to 1981. The images, so indelibly dated, put the past into a long and almost unbearable perspective. Talking now about the film, and about the clarity with which it summons back her past selves as a young wife and mother, she recalled the secret life that the images did not show: her determination, amid the detritus and preoccupations of conventional family life, to record her inner world in writing.

She wrote her first novel, “Cleaned Out,” in secret and mailed it to a publisher in Paris, giving only the address of the school where she was teaching at the time. She didn’t even enclose a cover letter. The weeks during which she waited for a response were filled with the weighty sense of what she had done. Talking about it now, all these years later, she even recalled the dates: of the mailing of the parcel, of the stages of the wait — fevered expectation followed by doubt followed by the beginnings of resignation — and of the receipt finally of the letter of acceptance. When the news came, she realized that this was not to be a covert contract with the world, of news smuggled out of her domestic entrapment in an envelope — the people who knew her, most of all her husband and mother, would also read it. She feared her husband’s reaction, sure enough, to this written betrayal of their shared life, but it was, she says now, her mother’s response to the book that was in fact the only one that mattered to her.

Her mother had come to live with them after her father’s death, and she took the book with her into her bedroom and closed the door. Ernaux recalls going to that door several times during the night and seeing the light still burning through the crack. In the morning, her mother came down to breakfast and didn’t say a word about what she had read, a silence that signaled her acceptance of the situation. It is extraordinary that this tough and humble woman, whose existence had been led under the severest constraints of a reality in which the breaking of social codes could have catastrophic consequences, could approve her daughter’s actions in publicly smashing the bourgeois veneer of her family life.

Proud as her mother was, Ernaux says now, of her daughter’s achievement in securing for herself the undreamed-of accouterments of a conventional middle-class existence, she was prouder of her writing. In the past, on discovering them, she had burned Ernaux’s diaries and notebooks, doubtless out of terror at what their content implied for her daughter’s future. But in the official acceptance by a publisher she recognized legitimacy.

In the bright, tranquil silence of Ernaux’s dining room, I was struck by the force and meaning of this story, the power that a mother’s acceptance could bestow on a woman artist, arming her against the whole world. After an hour or so, we took our leave. In the car on the way home, de Vigan and I spoke about the palpable and forceful aura that emanates from Ernaux and her home, an aura of unbreakable and radiant autonomy. It is rare, we agreed, to encounter someone of such strength. De Vigan wondered whether it was her survival over the years of the attacks on her work and persona — beginning, to my mind, with the dismay of her husband, who, unlike her mother, could not surmount his embarrassment from her manuscript — that have fortified her. I disagreed: It was, in my opinion, the fruit of love. From the beginning, her parents believed in her fiercely, passionately, as the most important thing in the world. The fact that they were the owners of a provincial corner store makes no difference.

It is something neither of us had, I said, this unbreakable gift of love, the mother-love that extends even to forgiving the betrayal that is writing. Her own mother, de Vigan said, tried her best to be supportive of her work but was very hurt and embarrassed by the portrayal of the mother in “Days Without Hunger.” It is, I surmised, the reason each of us have struggled to contain the splintering of our creative energies around personal truth, this elemental fear of disapproval, rejection, abandonment — the grandmother’s suggestion that what we’re doing isn’t very nice.

I was told that the venom directed toward Annie Ernaux on social media after her Nobel win had become so uncontrolled that it was the subject of an editorial in L’Obs, the French news weekly. When I next saw de Vigan, she was bewildered and upset by such hatred — where did it come from, and why? She admitted she had been slow to recognize the flourishing problem of misogyny in today’s world — like me, she belongs to a generation who grew up believing that feminism had somehow already occurred, that the concepts of social justice and equality were as subject to progress as the evolution of science and technology. Yet if it seems that in our time we have discovered new ways of hating, this belief in the illusion of progress may be the cause. Misogyny, the oldest hatred of them all, plays cat and mouse with this illusion from one generation to the next, to the extent that the experience of misogyny, both private and public, could be said almost to have become a subjective state. If it remains difficult for women to make art about their own lives, it is because femininity still has no stable place in culture. Ernaux recognized and weaponized, as it were, the enforced subjectivity of the female voice. Her mechanism of honesty is highly trustworthy — but honesty, like certain talents, isn’t heritable by the next generation.

In the days that followed, I thought often of Annie Ernaux in Stockholm, descending the staircase alone. Her body, that which has been both her container and her subject, which has been the fragile, mortal basis of her empire, stepping forward into empty space.

Rachel Cusk is the author of several novels, most recently “Second Place.” She has written for the magazine [*about the female voice in the visual arts.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/07/magazine/women-art-celia-paul-cecily-brown.html)

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCUS SCHAEFER) (MM31); Ernaux in January 1984. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SOPHIE BASSOULS, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (MM33) This article appeared in print on page MM30, MM31, MM32, MM33, MM44, MM45, MM46.

**Load-Date:** November 6, 2023

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[***Lt. Gov. Antonio Delgado Fends Off Challenge From Left in N.Y. Primary***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65T8-W0H1-DXY4-X2RG-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** NYREGION

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**Byline:** Luis Ferré-Sadurní

**Highlight:** Mr. Delgado overcame his late entry into the race, benefiting from millions of dollars spent on campaign ads and mailers in the last weeks before the primary.

**Body**

Mr. Delgado overcame his late entry into the race, benefiting from millions of dollars spent on campaign ads and mailers in the last weeks before the primary.

Antonio Delgado, the lieutenant governor of New York, [*won the Democratic primary on Tuesday*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/06/28/us/elections/results-new-york-lieutenant-governor.html), scoring a convincing victory over his nearest challenger, [*Ana María Archila*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/19/nyregion/archila-delgado-lieutenant-governor.html), a longtime activist who had emerged as the left wing’s best chance of winning statewide office this election cycle.

Mr. Delgado prevailed despite his late entry into the race just last month, when Gov. Kathy Hochul [*appointed him as her second-in-command*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/03/nyregion/antonio-delgado-new-york-lieutenant-governor-hochul.html) and running mate, replacing former Lt. Gov. Brian A. Benjamin, who [*was arrested*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/nyregion/brian-benjamin-resigns-indicted.html) on federal campaign finance fraud charges.

But in just a few weeks, Mr. Delgado, a former congressman from the Hudson Valley, managed to overwhelm his opponents with millions of dollars spent on television ads and campaign mailers. With Ms. Hochul’s backing, he secured the party’s institutional support and endorsements from major labor unions, giving him a definitive edge as he rushed to introduce himself to voters statewide.

The election for the state’s second-highest office became one of the most compelling and closely watched contests in Tuesday’s primary after Mr. Benjamin’s resignation rocked the race. It cast a spotlight on a typically low-profile office with few statutory duties besides succeeding the governor — a once-rare occurrence that has nonetheless come to pass for two of the last three governors.

The race set off competing visions of an office typically used to amplify the governor’s agenda and touched on divisive issues around ideology, Latino representation in government and the influence of money in the State Capitol.

And it presented a potentially awkward outcome for Ms. Hochul: Had Ms. Archila scored an upset, Ms. Hochul would have shared the Democratic ticket with a running mate not of her choice in the general election. Ms. Hochul and Mr. Delgado will now face off in November against the Republican ticket of Representative Lee Zeldin and Alison Esposito, a former police officer who ran unopposed for lieutenant governor.

On Tuesday night, Mr. Delgado said that if Democrats needed a reminder of what’s at stake in November, they need look no further than the Supreme Court’s “disastrous” decision to take away a woman’s right to an abortion.

“This is the fight of our lives,” Mr. Delgado said at an election night watch party at a Manhattan rooftop event space swirling with a who’s who of the state’s top Democrats.

Mr. Delgado had won 60 percent of the Democratic primary vote, with 48 percent of the expected vote counted, according to The Associated Press. Ms. Archila had won 25 percent of the vote, followed by Diana Reyna, with 14 percent.

Ms. Reyna 48, a former city councilwoman from Brooklyn, was the running mate of Representative Thomas Suozzi of Long Island, who unsuccessfully challenged Ms. Hochul in the primary.

Mr. Delgado’s main competition was thought to be from Ms. Archila, the preferred candidate of the Working Families Party, who sought to galvanize the party’s left flank by mounting an insurgent campaign that garnered endorsements from Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Nydia Velázquez, and a slew of progressive groups. Running alongside Jumaane Williams, the New York City public advocate, Ms. Archila vowed to use the lieutenant governor’s office not as a ceremonial role but as an independent bully pulpit to push back against the governor’s office.

In Ms. Archila, 43, the party’s progressive-activist wing saw its latest opportunity to catapult one of its own to statewide office for the first time, following a string of failed attempts in recent years: Mr. Williams himself came close to unseating Ms. Hochul when she was lieutenant governor in 2018.

But Ms. Archila’s nimble campaign was no match for Mr. Delgado&#39;s giant campaign war chest, which helped him outspend his opponents 80 to one on the airwaves.

Mr. Delgado poured $5.3 million into the race to pay for a barrage of television and digital ads leading up to Election Day. The Archila campaign and the Working Families Party spent only $66,000 in ads on her behalf, according to AdImpact, a firm that tracks political ad spending.

“I am so proud of what we have done, what we have built in just three and a half months,” Ms. Archila said during a watch party alongside Mr. Williams in the Bushwick neighborhood of Brooklyn. “A beautiful, beautiful expression of democracy, of community, of collective imagination.”

Mr. Delgado, 45, was elected to Congress in 2018 as part of the so-called blue wave during the Trump presidency, flipping a largely rural House seat in the Hudson Valley and becoming the first person of color to represent a New York district outside New York City and its suburbs in Washington.

A newcomer to the intricacies of state politics, Mr. Delgado [*was recruited*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/03/nyregion/antonio-delgado-new-york-lieutenant-governor-hochul.html) by Ms. Hochul in May to serve as her lieutenant governor and running mate after she muscled through legislation to remove Mr. Benjamin from the ballot after his arrest. The Hochul campaign saw in Mr. Delgado a proven campaigner who could potentially win in competitive districts and help Ms. Hochul, who is white, make inroads among Black and Latino communities.

Mr. Delgado, who identifies as Afro-Latino, [*struggled to explain his Hispanic roots*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/21/nyregion/antonio-delgado-afro-latino.html) during his first news conference in Albany, upsetting Latino political leaders who were eager to elevate a Latino to statewide office for the first time in the state’s history. The concerns around his ethnicity were amplified by the two Latinas challenging him; Ms. Archila was born in Colombia, while Ms. Reyna is Dominican-American.

On the campaign trail, Mr. Delgado often highlighted his upbringing in a ***working-class*** household in Schenectady and his polished résumé as a Rhodes scholar and graduate of Harvard Law School, as well as his brief stint as a rapper — an example, he has said, of an unplanned trajectory that led him to enter public service.

Mr. Delgado has said he would work in close partnership with Ms. Hochul if elected for a full-term and, because of his connections in Washington, serve as a liaison between New York and the federal government.

Dana Rubinstein contributed reporting.

Dana Rubinstein contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Lt. Gov. Antonio Delgado vacated his House seat in the Hudson Valley to become Gov. Kathy Hochul’s second-in-command. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jose A. Alvarado Jr. for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***How Opinions On Abortion Vary, And Why That Matters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65CK-8J91-DXY4-X0VM-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Nate Cohn

**Body**

Polling suggests an overturning of Roe v. Wade might not carry political consequences in states that would be likeliest to put in restrictions.

A majority of Americans believe that abortion should be legal in all or most cases. But the story is more complicated in the states where the future of abortion policy is likely to be decided if -- as is now expected -- the Supreme Court overturns Roe v. Wade.

In the states poised to put in new restrictions on abortion, people tend to say that abortion should be mostly or fully illegal, based on a New York Times analysis of large national surveys taken over the last decade.

In the 13 states that have enacted so-called trigger laws, which would immediately or very quickly outlaw abortion if Roe were overturned, 43 percent of adults on average say abortion should be legal in most or all cases, while 52 percent say it should be illegal in most or all cases.

Voters are more divided in the dozen or so states that have pre-Roe bans on the books or that are expected to enact new abortion restrictions if Roe is overturned. In those states -- where the fight over abortion is most likely to play out in campaigns or state legislative chambers -- an average of 49 percent of adults say abortion should be legal in most or all cases, compared with 45 percent who say otherwise.

That is still somewhat less than the national average of 54 percent who mostly or fully support legalized abortion, compared with 41 percent who mostly or fully oppose it.

The geographic pattern evident in the results suggests that a national outcry over a court decision to overturn Roe might not carry many political consequences in the states where abortions could be immediately restricted. In some of those states, new abortion restrictions may tend to reinforce the political status quo, even as they spark outrage elsewhere in the country.

But in some states, a fight over new abortion restrictions might pose serious political risks for conservatives, perhaps especially in the seven mostly Republican-controlled states that are seen as most likely to enact new restrictions even though a majority of voters tend to support legal abortion.

The public's views on abortion are notoriously hard to measure, with large segments of the public often seeming to offer muddled or inconsistent answers. Polls consistently show that around two-thirds of Americans support the court's decision in Roe v. Wade and oppose overturning it. Yet just as many Americans say they support banning abortion in the second trimester, a step barred by Roe. And a more modest majority -- usually around 55 percent in broader sets of data -- supports legal abortion in most or all cases, while people split almost evenly over whether they consider themselves ''pro-choice'' or ''pro-life.''

The poll question used here -- whether the respondent believes abortion should be legal in most or all cases, or illegal in all or most cases -- offers only a general sense of a voter's attitudes on the issue. It may not align exactly with whether a voter or a state electorate would support any particular restriction.

Voters who support abortion in ''most'' cases might accept a ban on abortions after the first trimester, like the one recently enacted in Florida, which would be at odds with Roe v. Wade but affect only about 8 percent of abortions. Conversely, voters who believe abortion should be illegal in most cases might still support allowing abortion in cases of rape or incest -- or perhaps even without conditions in the first trimester.

The opponents of Roe have long said they wanted to leave the issue to the voters of each state, and the data suggests that abortion restrictions may cut very differently across the dozen or so states where the issue is likeliest to be in play in the months ahead.

In Texas, which has put into action the most stringent abortion restrictions so far, there are few signs of a fundamental transformation of the state's politics.

Texans roughly split on abortion overall, making abortion rights more popular there than in the typical state with a trigger law. But abortion was almost a nonissue in the state's primary in March, with candidates staying focused on the pandemic and immigration. Only 39 percent of Texans said the state's abortion laws should be ''less strict'' in a poll in February, several months after the passage of the law, which effectively bans abortion after around six weeks of pregnancy.

Abortion-rights advocates might be on more favorable political terrain in the more traditionally competitive Midwestern states. A modest majority of voters say abortion should be mostly legal in states like Ohio, Michigan and Iowa, where evangelical Christians represent a far smaller share of voters than in the South. The figures are similar in other battleground states, like Arizona and Florida.

It's unclear if the abortion issue will be enough to redraw the political map. Perhaps it will fade, as it seems to have in Texas. But the stakes are not small for Republicans in this region: The predominantly white ***working-class*** voters who swung from Barack Obama to Donald J. Trump in the 2016 presidential election tended to back abortion rights.

In a postelection study, 58 percent of voters who flipped from Mr. Obama to Mr. Trump in 2016 said that they would support a law that would ''always allow a woman to obtain an abortion as a matter of choice.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/04/upshot/polling-abortion-states.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/04/upshot/polling-abortion-states.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 5, 2022

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[***N.Y.C. Schools Are Forced to Cut Hundreds of Teachers as Funding Drops***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65T4-32G1-DXY4-X26P-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1036 words

**Byline:** Hurubie Meko

**Highlight:** More than three-quarters of district schools have lost enrollment. “I’ve wiped their tears and assured them the future is hopeful even as I’ve told them I’m leaving,” one teacher said.

**Body**

More than three-quarters of district schools have lost enrollment. “I’ve wiped their tears and assured them the future is hopeful even as I’ve told them I’m leaving,” one teacher said.

In New York City, public school funding is tied to student enrollment, and students have been leaving city schools in droves for years. But during the pandemic, school budgets were largely untouched, buoyed by federal aid.

Now, the city is saying schools must make cuts to reckon with the steep declines — to the tune of over $200 million — and start preparing for even steeper reductions next year. That largely means culling teachers.

Nearly 77 percent of New York City district schools, about 1,200 out of 1,600 in the system, have seen their enrollments decline and are facing the budget cuts after Mayor Eric Adams and the City Council agreed to a [*municipal budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/10/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-nypd-budget.html). The budget [*reversed a policy*](https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2022/6/10/23163161/nyc-budget-school-funding-cuts-declining-enrollment-adams)under the previous mayor, Bill de Blasio, to keep funding for individual schools steady during the pandemic.

Hundreds of teachers are being let go, or “excessed,” by school principals, and placed into a [*districtwide hiring pool*](https://www.uft.org/your-rights/know-your-rights/excessing) — leading to an uproar among parents, educators and even some of the elected officials who voted for the reduced budgets.

Mariscelle Bautista, a mother of two public elementary school students, said during public testimony last week that the city’s decision to “defund” public schools was “outrageous” and called for parents to mobilize and “eventually vote all of these people out.”

The cuts to school budgets would hurt the programs and services that have helped students affected by school shutdowns and learning loss during the pandemic, said Ms. Bautista, including her own children.

The New York City schools chancellor, David C. Banks, pledged Monday, the last day of the school year for students, that most, if not all, teachers forced out because of enrollment-based budget cuts at their schools will be able to find a position within the system before the next school year begins.

Mr. Banks, who is just six months into his tenure at the helm of the nation’s largest school system, said that “no teacher in the entire school system will lose their job as a result of this right sizing.”

Teachers who are excessed are placed into the city’s reserve pool and become eligible for jobs in other schools. Mr. Banks said that the number of teachers who are likely to land in the reserve pool this year is comparable with the numbers after the years before the pandemic. And with a mandate that schools first hire those teachers before bringing new teachers into the system, “we expect all of those excessed teachers to be picked up,” Mr. Banks said.

“We have several thousand teachers to hire this year and we will hire them,” he said. “You’re not going to come back in September and see like dozens of people still sitting around.”

But Michael Mulgrew, president of the United Federation of Teachers, the New York City teachers’ union, said the decision to shuffle teachers between schools based on a “false narrative” of necessary budget cuts was “unacceptable.”

He said that the city has $4.6 billion in unspent federal pandemic aid. “Those funds should be used to give our students the learning conditions, including smaller class sizes, they need to recover,” Mr. Mulgrew said. “Our students need stability.”

Mr. Banks’s assurance that teachers will remain employed in new schools does not address the destabilizing impact on students, said Crystal Hudson, a councilwoman from Brooklyn, who was among [*44 out of 50*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/15/nyregion/aoc-city-council-budget.html)City Council members who voted for the budget deal that included the cuts.

“It is also time we reconsider a system that allocates resources not on a qualified determination of need, but rather on a stubborn belief that faltering schools should languish,” she said in a statement, “punishing our poor and ***working-class*** Black and brown communities, while those with means prosper.”

Mr. Banks argued Monday that adjusting funding to reflect a school’s enrollment changes is nothing new, adding, “I was a principal for 11 years, the first thing I used to do is check the budget.”

But the idea that the cuts were a normal part of the budget cycle did little to satisfy parents, educators and elected officials, who voiced their dissatisfaction at protests, on social media and at a meeting on Thursday of the Panel For Educational Policy, a local board made up of appointees mostly appointed by the mayor.

Jessica Beck, a seventh grade teacher at 75 Morton Middle School, in Manhattan, testified at Thursday’s panel, and said she was excessed earlier this month when the school’s budget was reduced by 43 percent.

Ms. Beck spoke about how, in addition to teaching, she has helped students with buying art supplies, lunches and even books they wanted to read. “And during the month of June, I’ve wiped their tears and assured them the future is hopeful even as I’ve told them I’m leaving,” she said.

She added: “As I think about how relationships matter to our students, I can’t help but think how unimportant and insignificant we’ve been when this administration made budget decisions.”

Under the enacted budget, schools losing funds will see an average of $402,000 cut from their budgets, said Brad Lander, the New York City comptroller.

“These cuts might mean going from four sections of a grade to three, thus boosting class size from 25 to 32, or losing their only art or music teacher,” Mr. Lander said. “While not every individual excessed teacher will be out of work, schools will lose the small classes and enrichment programs that students need to thrive.”

New York State lawmakers [*passed a bill this month*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/03/nyregion/nyc-schools-class-sizes.html) that would require the city to reduce class sizes. Doing so typically requires adding more teachers, and would cost hundreds of millions of dollars, city officials have said, which could lead to cuts in programs such as dyslexia screening and school nurses.

“Make no mistake, it will lead to large cuts in these critical programs,” Mr. Banks said in a statement at the time. “This should not be a choice that school leaders have to make.”

PHOTO: More than 1,000 New York City public schools are losing funds. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDRES KUDACKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Hospitals Both Strained and Essential***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66X2-HY41-DXY4-X0HB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 20, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 3293 words

**Byline:** By Joseph Goldstein and Desiree Rios

**Body**

The bearded young man suffering a psychotic episode craned his neck to get a better view of his body before looking away in horror. ''Something's coming out of me,'' he bellowed from the gurney where he lay in the emergency room at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, an independent hospital in Brooklyn.

Nearby, a heavily muscled man in his 30s lay as still as a wax figure after Narcan had reversed his opioid overdose. Across the hallway, in the pediatric emergency room, a police officer was rocking a crying infant who had been left alone in a parked car.

Upstairs in the neonatal intensive care unit on the 11th floor, Diana Calderón, an Ecuadorean immigrant who crossed into the United States last year, would soon arrive for her daily visit to hold her two surviving triplets, born prematurely six weeks earlier. The third, Josiah, had lived just a day.

Some days her eyes fall on an empty incubator. That's when Dr. Calixto Cazano, a neonatologist, murmurs a few words of solace in Spanish: ''Luca, Zabdiel and Josiah were together in your womb.'' His brothers would always feel Josiah's presence, he tells her.

Wyckoff Hospital is considered low-performing by some metrics -- including its damning one-star rating by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which puts it in the bottom 7 percent of hospitals in the United States. But for many in a large swath of Brooklyn and Queens, it is the most convenient, or only, place to go for medical care, emergency or otherwise. Each year, some 110,000 New Yorkers -- just over 1 percent of the city -- are treated at Wyckoff or one of its clinics.

jointjoiLocated in the predominantly Hispanic neighborhood of Bushwick, Wyckoff is one of about 10 independent hospitals across New York City that aren't part of large health care systems and mainly care for poor patients. Many of them have been plagued by past mismanagement, labeled ''failing hospitals'' and long been considered for takeover or closure. Wyckoff is no different.

But now, the pandemic -- and the racial health disparities it exposed and exacerbated -- is fueling a reappraisal of these hospitals, even in Albany, where they were once seen as perennial money losers that the state had to prop up with huge payments each year.

In their neighborhoods, independent hospitals like Wyckoff are often the main providers of health care to many of the city's most vulnerable residents. In this era of health care consolidation, there is broad consensus among state health officials that stand-alone community hospitals are outdated, especially in New York City. Yet they may well prove central to post-pandemic efforts to provide more preventive care and treatment for diabetes, hypertension and chronic diseases that drive racial health disparities. Outside of Wyckoff, doctors' offices are scarce in Bushwick. The community around Wyckoff had about two primary care physicians per 10,000 residents in 2017. One stretch of Manhattan, running from the Lower East Side to Murray Hill, had more than 60 primary care doctors per 10,000 residents.

There is a growing recognition that if health disparities are going to be reduced, shoring up independent hospitals like Wyckoff may be central to that effort.

''No one else is trying in any visible manner,'' said Wyckoff's chief medical officer, Gustavo Del Toro, a lanky man in his 50s and the older brother of the actor Benicio Del Toro. He had worked at large hospital systems in Manhattan as a pediatric hematologist-oncologist before coming to Wyckoff to try to help turn it around.

The state has long supported independent hospitals in New York City that primarily serve lower-income patients, providing roughly $800 million a year in direct subsidies. Wyckoff receives more than $100 million -- sometimes delivered at the last minute and grudgingly, hospital officials say. It has been enough to keep the hospital open, but often just barely.

This year, however, the administration of Gov. Kathy Hochul has budgeted about twice as much and has asked the federal government to give a boost to the Medicaid rates paid to hospitals that serve primarily low-income patients.

Vali Gache, the hospital's chief financial officer, who regularly pleads the hospital's case for more money in phone calls with state officials, has noticed a change in tone: ''Two years ago nobody would listen to you. They would say, 'You're just one of these failing hospitals.'''

Nowhere else to go

At any given time, there are around 150 admitted patients at Wyckoff Hospital, who stay, on average, 4.6 days; another 40 or so occupy the emergency room. But amid this churn, one patient, in recent months, has been a constant: Rodolfo Parris.

Back in March, Mr. Parris arrived by ambulance, unable to walk. A barber by trade, Mr. Parris, 53, was admitted with failing kidneys and festering leg ulcers.

His infections were treated, and his wounds began to heal. He should have been discharged a couple of weeks after he was admitted, but his apartment -- a second-floor walk-up -- was now inaccessible. Each stair was one too many.

Though he was a child when he emigrated to New York from Panama, he is without legal status in this country. That means that no skilled nursing home -- where he might receive wound care and dialysis -- has yet been willing to admit him. The government doesn't typically reimburse nursing homes for care to undocumented immigrants.

So last summer, Mr. Parris spent his days in his hospital bed, reading the Bible, watching cop shows and telling visitors about better days, like when Christopher Wallace, the rapper known as Notorious B.I.G., used to come into his barbershop for a cut. Occasionally Mr. Parris would eye with fury the wheelchair that remained folded and untouched in the corner of the room. It was a gift from the hospital.

''They're talking about discharging me and sending me out in a wheelchair,'' he said recently. ''I don't got nobody to push me around.'' Many hospitals have long-term boarders -- patients like Mr. Parris, who have nowhere to go and are not easily discharged. They are a drag on the hospital's bottom line, as insurance companies and Medicaid are reluctant to pay for visits that extend indefinitely. But Mr. Parris's presence speaks to a role that these kinds of hospitals often play: housing a few patients whom no one else will take.

Big Manhattan hospitals also have these kinds of patients, but they offset the expense with a far greater number of profitable patients -- those with commercial insurance or those needing cardiac or orthopedic surgery.

Wyckoff is not that kind of hospital.

Roughly speaking, New York City has three classes of hospitals.

There are the big academic medical centers, like NewYork-Presbyterian, Mount Sinai and NYU Langone, where the treatment you receive can depend on the insurance you have. They tend to be based in Manhattan.

There is also New York's robust network of 11 public hospitals, jointly run by the city and state. They include Bellevue, where patients tend to be ***working class*** or poor, and no one is turned away.

Then there is a third category of hospitals, located in poor neighborhoods, which are often called ''independent safety-net'' hospitals. Some started as charity wards; St. Barnabas Hospital in the Bronx was founded in 1866 as ''The Home for Incurables.'' Others were built by booming ethnic communities like the Germans who in the 19th century transformed Bushwick into the brewery capital of the northeast. Wyckoff, once known as the German Hospital of Brooklyn, rebranded as Wyckoff Heights Hospital during World War I to deflect anti-German sentiment.

A century later, this hospital -- a tiny player among the behemoth health care systems across the city -- had one of the city's first critically ill Covid-19 patients in March 2020: an 82-year-old immigrant from the Philippines.

The virus was still so new that Dr. Parvez Mir, an energetic, upbeat 67-year-old who runs the intensive care unit, went into the patient's room to swab her nose enough times to collect samples to share with larger hospitals to help validate their laboratory tests.

The patient died on March 13, New York City's first known Covid death. As the days passed, the hospital transformed into a labyrinth of plastic sheeting, as one makeshift Covid unit after another opened. Nearly 300 patients died at Wyckoff in that first wave.

The very communities that needed the most hospital beds had the fewest -- the result of hospital closures. For decades, the state assumed that there were too many outer-borough hospitals and that the future lay in preventive medicine and outpatient procedures. For complex surgeries, it was thought, patients could go to Manhattan. In New York, the community hospital was deemed outdated. At the start of the pandemic, there were on average two hospital beds for every 1,000 residents of Brooklyn and Queens, compared with Manhattan's five.

Those beds filled quickly as Covid patients streamed into emergency rooms. There weren't enough nurses to look after them all, nor enough medicine to keep all the patients on ventilators -- about 70 in Wyckoff at one point -- adequately sedated, Dr. Mir said. When the medicine wore off, some patients emerged from their coma-like state and reflexively grabbed at the breathing tube down their throats.

''No one was looking at them, and they would self-extubate'' -- that is, pull out the tube -- ''and die,'' said Dr. Mir, who at the height of the first wave lost 24 Covid patients in a single day.

The math doesn't make sense

For much of the 20th century, hospitals like Wyckoff dotted the city. But more than 15 have closed since the turn of the century. Many of them were converted into condos. The same economic forces have kept Wyckoff on the perpetual brink of closure. On top of those pressures, though, were problems of Wyckoff's own making.

For years, it had a well-deserved reputation for cronyism, subpar care and wasteful spending. (It once paid to insure the $160,000 Bentley of a hospital official.) The hospital took out a loan at 12 percent interest from a board member. According to news accounts, it paid bribes to a corrupt state assemblyman. And doctors remember other instances of petty corruption, such as requests for favors when they asked for admitting privileges.

In 2011, there was a change in leadership, and Ramón Rodriguez, a onetime lawyer for the indigent who had become state parole commissioner and was then leading a commission examining several troubled hospitals in Brooklyn, was installed as the chief executive of Wyckoff. ''I saw criminality all over,'' he said.

He fired 30 people. Some had no-show jobs, he said, and others were billing the hospital for malpractice insurance for their private practices.

Mr. Rodriguez coaxed doctors from big Manhattan hospitals who were attracted to the idea that there was more need for their skills in a poor neighborhood with few doctors, and he expanded the hospital's community clinics. The dread that Wyckoff might close its doors at any moment started to fade. Still, Wyckoff is anticipating a shortfall of about $135 million this fiscal year. Even in this era of expanded insurance coverage, a hospital that primarily serves the poor is unlikely to make money.

At Wyckoff, just 14 percent of patients have private medical insurance, like employment-based coverage. At some Manhattan hospitals, about half the patients do. Private insurance companies typically pay hospitals much more than government-sponsored Medicare and Medicaid.

But the disparities run deeper. Because of its small size and low ranking, Wyckoff can't charge private insurers anywhere near what the Manhattan giants do. Those hospitals are able to negotiate ever-increasing payments from insurance companies that need to keep the big hospitals in their network -- or risk losing customers to other insurance plans. Wyckoff has no such leverage.

If a patient with employment-based health insurance came to Wyckoff severely ill with a respiratory infection, for instance, Wyckoff would receive on average 52 percent of what a Manhattan hospital would be paid, according to Manatt Health, a consulting firm that Wyckoff and several other safety-net hospitals hired.

Another analysis, by the union 32BJ, which represents cleaners, doormen and other service workers, found that the union's health fund pays only $6,433 for a vaginal birth at Wyckoff but $11,101 at the city's public hospital system, and more than $20,000 at major hospital systems including Mount Sinai, NYU Langone and Northwell.

A colonoscopy costs the union's health fund $2,145 at Wyckoff; at most Manhattan hospitals it will pay two or three times as much.

At Wyckoff, slightly more than half the patients are covered by Medicaid, the government-funded insurance program for people with low incomes. Less than a third of hospital patients at some large systems, like NewYork-Presbyterian, have Medicaid. At the main Manhattan campus of NYU Langone, only about 18 percent of hospitalized patients had Medicaid, according to 2018 data.

Medicaid reimburses hospitals at far lower rates than other types of insurance, and the gap grows only wider each year. Wyckoff may receive just one-sixth as much treating a Medicaid patient as a top-ranked Manhattan hospital receives for treating an equally sick patient with private health insurance, according to Manatt.

As Mr. Rodriguez often repeats, the hospital loses money on most patients. ''There are very few people who pay us more than our expenses for that visit,'' he said. The lesson is clear: It's impossible to run a safety-net hospital that doesn't bleed money, he said. ''The math doesn't make sense.''

That math hasn't made sense for some time. Since 2008, as bigger hospitals raised prices and medical inflation ticked up, the Medicaid reimbursement rates in New York State have gone up just 1 percent.

The disparity over the past three decades between Medicaid rates and what private insurance pays should be regarded as a form of redlining, Mr. Rodriguez said. The result, he said, is a racist, discriminatory practice that has left large areas of the city with few doctors and far less access to quality health care.

''There is a two-class system of health care, and it's wrong,'' Mr. Rodriguez said. ''It's pure disinvestment.''

'Dr. Guberman saved my foot'

On a recent Friday afternoon, the patient bays in Wyckoff's emergency room were all full. Another 10 or so patients lay on gurneys lined up, head to toe, like planes waiting for takeoff. In the last one sat a man with a vulture tattoo on his bald head and a jagged cut on his leg, which he had snagged on a rusty dumpster.

A young woman in abdominal pain groaned loudly as she dug the heel of her palm into her stomach.

Nearby Albert Feliciano smiled from his gurney. A resident examined his right foot, which was swollen, oozing and missing two toes.

When he had gone to another hospital, the doctor there had proposed amputation. So he called Wyckoff.

''Dr. Guberman saved my foot,'' Mr. Feliciano said, gazing at it happily. ''I love it here.''

In Bushwick, close to 13 percent of adults are diagnosed with diabetes, compared with 3 percent of adults in some of Manhattan's wealthier neighborhoods. And in Bushwick, those with diabetes are far less likely to have the disease under control.

For many, the first step to doing so is a visit to Wyckoff's diabetes clinic, close to the main hospital. One summer morning, Dr. Stella Ilyayeva dispensed advice at a fast clip as she saw six patients in one 40-minute stretch. ''We drink only water,'' she admonished as she left an exam room, finishing the thought across the hallway in the next patient's room. ''Nobody drinks juices.''

She chided patients for not refilling their diabetes medications. ''Why'd you stop taking it, bad girl?'' she said to a 59-year-old woman who looked away sheepishly. ''Do you want dialysis? Amputation? Don't curse my name later,'' said Dr. Stella, as she is known in Bushwick.

The patient promised to take her medicine, but Dr. Stella was unconvinced, telling her to come back for another appointment within a month.

Mr. Rodriguez has a few ideas for the hospital's future. His most ambitious plan is to sell the current site, in a rapidly gentrifying patch of Brooklyn, to developers and use the proceeds to build a smaller, modern high-rise hospital across the street on a parking lot.

If that doesn't work, Mr. Rodriguez is hoping that a richer hospital system will absorb Wyckoff. For years, New York's Health Department has been trying to push Wyckoff into an arranged marriage with Northwell Health, the state's largest hospital system. Mr. Rodriguez hopes that if he can first persuade the state to invest more in Wyckoff -- and in safety-net hospitals generally -- Northwell might agree to not only absorb Wyckoff but also keep it open to the ***working class*** and poor.

But he and his colleagues are also wary. A large hospital system that absorbs Wyckoff will try to stem losses. One way to do that, Mr. Rodriguez said, is ''by finding a way to see fewer Medicaid patients.''

Dr. Del Toro worries another institution would close down much of the hospital, until it was little more than an emergency room that sent patients onward to other institutions. ''They're not going to come here to provide,'' he said. ''They're going to come here to extract, to suck away.''

In an interview, Michael Dowling, the chief executive of Northwell, noted that the gentrification and new development sweeping across Bushwick actually bodes well for the hospital.

''Wyckoff is going through some difficult times, but I do think Wyckoff has a future,'' he said. Still, with Medicaid reimbursement rates so low, taking on a safety-net hospital could be a huge money loser for a larger, stable hospital system. ''I'm not going to make a commitment at this point,'' he said.

Nonetheless, Mr. Rodriguez has brought a new urgency to Wyckoff. In the past two years, the hospital received state approval to begin placing coronary stents, which means Wyckoff no longer sends every heart attack patient on a lengthy ambulance ride to Manhattan.

Wyckoff officials also talk of opening primary care doctors' offices around the neighborhood and opening a large center devoted to diabetes care. Mr. Rodriguez hopes the hospital might one day expand its care capacity for stroke patients or receive a ''trauma center'' designation, which would allow it to treat gunshot victims. There is talk of renovating the maternity ward, adding showers to each room so new mothers needn't line up, towels under their arms, to wait their turn at the shared stall.

For now, however, Wyckoff remains unable to pay all of its bills: It is currently tens of millions of dollars behind in bond payments.

''My biggest frustration is that no matter what we do, we remain a one-star institution,'' said Dr. Del Toro.

''Knowing the people that work here, knowing what we do, it makes me feel like crying,'' he added, as he teared up. ''We haven't been able to pull it off.''

Mr. Parris also has a feeling of dread about the future. More than 180 days after he was admitted with kidney failure, he was still living at the hospital, confined to a bed and engaged in a standoff with Wyckoff. One of these days, he knew, the hospital would force him to leave, and he was terrified.

When that happens, he fears he will become homeless.

As he grew more depressed this fall, Mr. Parris refused to talk to some of the hospital social workers about what lay ahead. And he had stopped participating in physical therapy. By then a fine layer of dust had begun to settle on the wheelchair in the corner.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/17/nyregion/wyckoff-hospital-brooklyn.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/17/nyregion/wyckoff-hospital-brooklyn.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, Diana Calderón with one of her children in the neonatal intensive care unit at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center in Brooklyn in June. Above, the hospital's emergency room. (MB1)

From top, left column: doctors discussing a patient at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center in Brooklyn

the hospital, which serves neighborhoods that are largely Black and Hispanic

and a birth at Wyckoff, where new mothers in the maternity ward have to wait their turn for a shower.

Safety-net hospitals like Wyckoff care for some patients whom no one else will take, like Rodolfo Parris, top, who lacks legal status in this country. He has been at Wyckoff for more than six months. Although he has been given a wheelchair, above, Mr. Parris has not used it. Denied admission to nursing homes so far, he cannot be easily discharged. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DESIREE RIOS) (MB8-MB9) This article appeared in print on page MB1, MB8, MB9.

**Load-Date:** November 20, 2022

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[***Biden Says He Gets Places Like Scranton. Some in Town Aren’t So Sure.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:613C-47K1-JBG3-647G-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Sabrina Tavernise

**Highlight:** Scranton, Pa., is no longer the dying coal town of Joseph Biden’s youth. It is more racially diverse and prosperous, and not everyone there is enthusiastic about his candidacy.

**Body**

Scranton, Pa., is no longer the dying coal town of Joseph Biden’s youth. It is more racially diverse and prosperous, and not everyone there is enthusiastic about his candidacy.

SCRANTON, Pa. — Despite it all, Gabriel Perez, the Empanada King of Scranton, is still hopeful about America.

In the first few months of the pandemic, “it was scary, business dropped for a little while,” he said. But now, more people are ordering delivery from his small shop where he has been serving steaming beef and chicken empanadas to go since 2016. Last month he invested in a renovation of his kitchen, with new equipment and a fresh coat of paint.

Mr. Perez did not vote for Donald J. Trump in 2016. He did not vote at all. But he does not dislike him. Mr. Trump’s book “The Art of the Deal” gave him “guidelines for how to run my business: No matter how many times you make a mistake, just keep going.”

And while he does not think he will vote for President Trump this year, he is not sold on former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. either.

“The Democrats and Republicans are both lost,” he said a few weeks ago in his shop, a Biden ad on mute on the television on the wall. “They are not giving solutions. They just want you to pick their side.”

In the final weeks of the campaign, Mr. Biden has made Scranton, his hometown, a major part of his closing pitch. “I really do view this campaign as a campaign between Scranton and Park Avenue,” he said at a CNN event in town last month. Embedded in Mr. Biden’s shorthand is that he can win back the paradigmatic Scranton voter: white, ***working class***, disaffected by Democrats.

But Scranton is no longer the dying coal town of Mr. Biden’s youth. It is both more racially diverse and prosperous. In more than two dozen interviews the week of Mr. Biden’s visit, few voters were particularly enthusiastic about his candidacy, despite his personal roots, but about half said they probably would vote for him anyway. Voters who abandoned the Democratic Party in 2016 said they planned to vote for Mr. Trump again this year. Some people said they were so fed up with politics that they were not going to vote at all. Others expressed annoyance at what they said was Mr. Biden’s habit of making Scranton into a kind of blue-collar cartoon.

At the town-hall-style event, held six miles from downtown in a stadium parking lot, Mr. Biden said that not many people in Scranton owned stock.

“Frankly, it was insulting,” said Frances Keating, 74, a retired accountant who has lived in Scranton most of her life. “He’s using Scranton as a prop.”

Still, she said she planned to vote for Mr. Biden because “Trump is a monster.”

Scranton has become a symbol for Democrats’ lost dreams in 2016, when ***working-class*** voters abandoned the party in droves. The city itself is blue. But the surrounding county, Lackawanna, and a neighboring one, Luzerne, had the second- and third-largest swings toward Mr. Trump of any county with more than 100,000 voters in the United States. The surge was enough to cover his 44,000-vote victory in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Trump is trailing in the state by [*seven percentage points*](https://int.nyt.com/data/documenttools/flpa-0930-crosstabs/16c21b7ab34ed4d1/full.pdf), but the enthusiasm he enjoys among many ancestral Democrats in Scranton highlights the challenges Mr. Biden still faces in a state regarded by both parties as a must-win next month.

Kim Anzelmi, a former meat inspector, was watching television after dinner in a suburb of Scranton last month when Mr. Biden flashed on the screen.

“Mr. President, do your job,” Mr. Biden said.

Ms. Anzelmi scoffed. She said that she was tired of hearing from progressives that she had privilege because she was white and that she feared a Biden presidency would only give them more power.

“I put myself through college,” said Ms. Anzelmi, who is 55 and whose vote for Mr. Trump in 2016 was the first she had ever cast for president. “I was a security guard at Sears. I worked in meat plants where I was the only woman. Now you tell me I’m entitled?”

That Mr. Biden is from this area did not matter. Ms. Anzelmi plans to vote for Mr. Trump again. But in a sign of how complicated politics have become within families, her husband — an immigrant from Uruguay who got his citizenship in 2009 but has never voted — likes Mr. Biden and said he thought he might vote for him.

Mr. Trump “is crazy,” he said, sitting in an armchair near his wife. “He speaks too much.”

He asked his wife why she liked him.

“I agree with Trump because I got screwed,” she said.

“But nobody does nothing for you,” he said. “It’s going to be the same.”

A saw-shaped spot on the map whose coal mines drew immigrants from Europe in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Scranton has a population that peaked in the 1930s and declined sharply in the following decades.

In the early 2000s, the economy began to pick up. Located at the intersection of several major Interstate highways, logistics companies and warehouses began to open up. The economic engines that powered revivals in places like Pittsburgh — education and health care — have grown too. Colleges have expanded dramatically. A new medical school has opened.

Demographics have changed too. Hispanics are now about 14 percent of the population in Scranton. In Hazleton, a city in Luzerne County, they make up more than half. Scranton now has two Hindu temples and Indian grocery stores that serve South Asians working in the hospitals and at a nearby T.J. Maxx warehouse.

But immigrants in Scranton do not all default to the Democratic Party.

The day after Mr. Biden’s visit, Dipen Vyas was standing outside his Indian food supply store with two friends. All of them were Indian immigrant business owners and all had voted for Mr. Trump in 2016. They liked that he was a businessman, and that he had promised to be tough on illegal immigration.

But they could not decide whether to vote for Mr. Trump again. On the one hand, Indians who had been waiting years for permanent residence were now being rejected. On the other, the president seemed to have struck up a strong relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India. But they liked Mr. Biden too. He was from Scranton. And he had already been vice president, so he knew the ropes.

“I’m going to toss the coin,” Mr. Vyas said. “Heads or tails.”

On Scranton’s South Side, where new arrivals from Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean are now moving into houses that used to belong to immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, Mr. Perez at the empanada shop, Papi’s Kitchen, was reflecting on the political decision before him.

In 2016, Mr. Perez preferred Bernie Sanders. Health care for everyone and free tuition made sense to him. But he did not vote after Mr. Sanders lost the Democratic nomination. That year, he opened his empanada shop in what used to be a pizza takeout place.

Now the Democrats’ main pitch seems to be to get rid of Mr. Trump. But Mr. Perez, 45, did not feel very excited by that.

Democrats are too preoccupied with race, he said, and too negative on America.

“I didn’t come from a great background, but for me to be where I am today, that’s America,” said Mr. Perez, who grew up in a ***working-class*** Puerto Rican family in Newark but said he sometimes felt that Democrats reduced him to his ethnic background.

He added, “I mean is Biden really going to change anything?”

Few in town personally objected to Mr. Biden, even those who support Mr. Trump.

“It’s not really even about Biden,” said Eddie Franklin, who, together with other Trump supporters, was parked by the side of the road that led to Mr. Biden’s event. What worried him was how weak Mr. Biden seemed, and how that might allow less moderate Democrats to take over.

Mr. Franklin, 68, who works in a car lot, said that he came from a long line of coal miners who were Democrats, but that the party had moved too far left. A sign saying, “Democrat never again, my eyes are open,” was taped to his back window.

He said he felt slightly sorry for Mr. Biden, stuck in a stadium parking lot.

Mr. Trump, on the other hand, was still exciting.

“Trump people really believe in him. They’re not like, ‘I’m voting for Trump because he’s a Republican.’”

The largest concentration of Biden yard signs was in the Green Ridge neighborhood, where Mr. Biden grew up, which includes large stately houses with awnings and wide porches.

“Joe Biden is the best shot that Scranton has ever really had in my lifetime,” said Joseph Corcoran, a former county commissioner who grew up in an Irish-American family about 12 blocks from Mr. Biden’s house.

But liking Mr. Biden did not always translate into voting. A worker at Hank’s Hoagies, a sandwich shop a few blocks from Mr. Biden’s childhood house, said he liked Mr. Biden but had not voted for president since 2004 and did not think he would this time either. Politicians “are just so corrupt,” he said. That cynicism has settled deeply in Scranton. This month, the former mayor, a Democrat, was [*sentenced to seven years*](https://int.nyt.com/data/documenttools/flpa-0930-crosstabs/16c21b7ab34ed4d1/full.pdf) for extorting contractors, part of a long line of public corruption scandals in the area.

Turnout is what worried Michael McDermott, the business manager at International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local No. 81. Not enough union members voted in 2016 to keep Mr. Trump from winning Pennsylvania.

“Trump’s numbers aren’t going to change that much,” he said. “What we need is for our numbers to change.”

He predicted that many who did not turn out in 2016 would show up for Mr. Biden this year. Still, he is worried.

“I’m not sleeping peacefully,” he said.

PHOTOS: Scranton, Pa., is a blue city, but many ***working-class*** voters abandoned the Democrats in 2016. Observers say turnout will be key. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK MAKELA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. has made his Scranton roots part of his political image, but President Trump is enjoying enthusiasm among many former Democrats in the area. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES; MARK MAKELA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 19, 2020

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[***Failing in Marriage Doesn't Mean Failing at Marriage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66VJ-RTV1-DXY4-X18T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 13, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 6; MODERN LOVE

**Length:** 1407 words

**Byline:** By Joe Blair

**Body**

My wife has kicked me out five times. Another time I left on my own. Why are we still together?

Alone one evening in early spring, seated on a green park bench beside the Charles River in Cambridge, Mass., I waited for Deb. The sun was setting and the temperature falling, and I was wearing my softball jersey and knickers and wishing I had remembered to bring my thick flannel shirt.

Now, decades later, at my home in Iowa, I search for that bench on Google Maps. Here it is. Riverbend Park. Here's the bridge. The John W. Weeks Bridge. Here's our bench. The bridge arches. The still water. It makes my body ache to see it again. The place where we were young.

We had agreed to meet there, in that ratty little park. I waited for her. And waited. I imagined her getting off work at Legal Sea Foods at the Copley Plaza. Cashing out. Boarding the bus. Walking along the path. Approaching.

I imagined someone watching us as she arrived. Would they think we were madly in love? Mistake us for Harvard students? People with illustrious futures? The moon was brightening. The sun a slur of color in the west. I was cold. My thick flannel shirt at home in my closet.

I had returned to college at 26 after serving my apprenticeship in the refrigeration trade. I first noticed her in my selected authors class. On the first day, the professor asked if anyone could give him an Emerson quote, and she, blushing, raised her hand. Three months later, I asked her to marry me. She said yes.

We shared my tiny, overheated Cambridge apartment and fell into a nightly bar-crawl routine. From the Plough and Stars to the Cellar to Drumlin's. The Cantab. After the first three rounds, I would accuse her of being in love with her cigarettes. Then she would accuse me of not being truly in love with her. And I would swear on the Bible how I loved her with the intensity of ten suns while holding up my hand to order another round.

We knew we needed to end this childish routine. We imagined a new town unsullied by the likes of us. Someplace clean and innocent.

After less than a year of squirreling away cash in a Mason jar atop the refrigerator, we allowed the lease to expire, moved our furniture (a futon and a lamp) to the curb, paid our parking tickets, climbed on my motorcycle, and with no ultimate destination in mind, left town.

We had enough cash left by the time we rolled into Iowa to rent a small brick house adjacent to a hog farrowing pen on the rolling Iowa cornfields. Soon we found work and started a family.

By the time Deb kicked me out for the first time, she had already given birth to our first two children. I moved into a duplex on East Washington in Iowa City. The inside of the place reminded me of a rustic hunting lodge. The shiplap walls and ceilings were stained dark brown. I remember sliding into my Coleman sleeping bag that first night, settling myself on my camping mat and thinking, ''Ah, yes, this is how I'm meant to be. Alone.''

We reunited after a month or two. Then we had the twins.

Saturday nights we would walk down to George's, where, three beers in, Deb would once again accuse me of not loving her enough. And I would do my best to drum up the old enthusiasm, but I wasn't fooling either of us.

Over the 32 years of our marriage, she has kicked me out five times. One time, I sublet a basement apartment across the street from a small park with a basketball court, which was a big plus. The basement was crawling with little white worms, which, when they died, curled up like pill bugs.

Another time, I moved into Le Chateau, a low-rent apartment complex. There was an outdoor pool on the property, but it wasn't open when I lived there. I don't think it had been open for a long time, hence the black mud and leaves at the bottom. There was a laundry room, which was my favorite room in the place. A single coin-operated washing machine and a single dryer. It was always warm and brightly lit, and there was a metal folding chair and the air always smelled clean.

The last time, the sixth, Deb didn't kick me out. I left. Weary of our accusation and outrage routine, I rented another duplex in a quiet neighborhood on the south side of Iowa City. I shared the place with little red ants. They really liked the sponge I used to clean my dishes. I would boil water and soak my sponge in it to kill them, then dump the floaters down the drain.

I didn't do anything in this apartment. Didn't cook, read or listen to music. If I got home from work early, I would go to bed. If I got home late, I would go to bed. I would lie down under my blue and white duck blanket, turn on my side and think, ''Yes. This is how I'm meant to be.''

According to the landlord, the young woman who lived there before me had once dated the young man who lived across the street with his parents. After she broke it off, the young man continued texting her. He even knocked on her door at odd hours. When the young woman moved out, I moved in.

Sometimes when it was dark, I would look through my front window at that house and think about the young man. I would wonder how one is supposed to find love. Where to look? How to begin?

On weekend mornings, I took walks around the neighborhood. It was still cool enough to need a hat and jacket. One of my neighbors had erected a book exchange. I chose a collection of Kafka short stories and then, later that day, sat on my front cinder block steps and began reading it.

But I kept thinking of Deb. I kept thinking how she would like this quiet, ***working-class*** neighborhood. With the book exchange and the red ants. And the Sycamore Movie Theater close enough to walk. And no traffic sound. And big deciduous trees. And rickety front steps. And cool air. And warm sun.

I called her and asked if she wanted to stop over for coffee. We sat at my little kitchen table and drank our coffee. She said she liked my little house. She liked my rickety front steps.

I have always thought of Deb wherever I am. Whomever I am with. Whenever I experience something good. I want her to experience the same thing. I can't stand to watch a good movie without her. I'll walk out after half an hour if I can't turn to her in the dark and whisper, ''Isn't this great?'' I can't ride my motorcycle up into the Rocky Mountains. I can't enter a small diner with worn pine floorboards and an antique, curve-glass pie case with slices of banana cream inside. I can't take a flight without wishing she were occupying the seat beside me.

I think we have the wrong idea about marriage. It's not like running a business, where there are recordable credits and debits. Or buying a house, where you pay your mortgage or lose it. Or owning a pet, where, in return for companionship, you are obligated to feed them and take them for walks and clean up after them.

It's more like learning, after a thousand hangovers, to stop drinking so much. Or learning, after often being false, to be true just once, in the hope that you can continue to be true. Or learning, after habitually hating yourself, to love yourself just once, in the hope that you can continue to love yourself. And then learning, through loving yourself, to love someone else.

I will always love Deb. Even when she hates me. Even when I hate her. Not because she's especially forgiving. Or pretty. Or pleasant to be with. Or well-read. Or spiritual. Not because she may or may not be any of those things. Loving her isn't transactional. I love her because I can't help it. There's something in her that makes me weak. Something vulnerable and unconquerable. Something fleeting and unmoving.

After a few months in the house with the rickety steps, I moved back in with Deb. Soon enough now, I'll be alone on the edge of sleep. Just as I am alone on the edge of all things. It's how I am. It may be how we all are. Still alone. Waiting. And still in love.

Joe Blair, a writer and HVAC mechanic in Coralville, Iowa, is the author of the memoir, ''By the Iowa Sea.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/11/style/modern-love-failing-while-married-does-not-mean-failing-at-marriage.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/11/style/modern-love-failing-while-married-does-not-mean-failing-at-marriage.html)

**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page ST6.

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[***The Kanye Whisperer; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66D5-RRH1-JBG3-622J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 16, 2022 Friday 12:09 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1287 words

**Byline:** Mychal Denzel Smith

**Highlight:** In ‘Black Skinhead,’ the civil rights advocate Brandi Collins-Dexter investigates the significance of Kanye West and other figures on the margins of mainstream Black culture.

**Body**

In ‘Black Skinhead,’ the civil rights advocate Brandi Collins-Dexter investigates the significance of Kanye West and other figures on the margins of mainstream Black culture.

BLACK SKINHEAD: Reflections on Blackness and Our Political Future, by Brandi Collins-Dexter

In her debut essay collection, “Black Skinhead,” Brandi Collins-Dexter, a former senior campaign director for the civil rights nonprofit Color of Change, takes on a task I don’t envy even slightly: trying to make sense of Kanye West. The rapper, producer and fashion designer, who now goes by Ye, has been the architect of some of our era’s most enduring popular music, as well as some of the most head-scratching cultural controversies. Collins-Dexter spends the most time unpacking the ordeal that may have alienated the largest portion of his fan base: when Ye, in May 2018, having already endorsed Donald Trump for the presidency a few years prior, went on TMZ Live and said that slavery was a choice.

In the essay “Kanye Was Right-ish,” Collins-Dexter — a self-proclaimed “Kanye-whisperer” — looks to clarify on his behalf. She points out that the next day, on Twitter, Ye tried to explain what he’d meant — not that the enslaved had made a choice to be shackled, but that the institution’s persistence for 400 years, despite the enslaved outnumbering the enslavers, “means that we were mentally enslaved” in a way he warns against perpetuating for 400 more. “There’s a lot in this that’s true,” she writes, citing the “mental terror … inflicted upon Black communities to keep those enslaved subservient,” the beatings, rapes and lynchings meant to deter Black people from revolt. “He was right about the impact of psychological abuse.”

The interpretation feels generous. Ye’s take — “When you hear about slavery for 400 years. For 400 years? That sounds like a choice” — didn’t appear to be about the psychological terror inflicted on the enslaved, but about a mentality they adopted. It overlooks the number of revolts that took place, the coordinated efforts to escape, the work to buy their freedom, and all their other daily acts of subversion and resistance.

Collins-Dexter’s point here, however, isn’t just about Ye or his understanding of American history: It’s about what he embodies. “A canary in a coal mine,” the artist is for her “an example of an emerging party-ambivalent Black voter base that could upend expected Black voter norms in the coming years.” Taking its title from Ye’s 2013 song, the book aims to identify those on the margins of mainstream Black culture and politics — the Black skinheads — who can tell us something about where our future may lie.

To anyone familiar with modern white supremacist movements, the moniker seems like a contradiction in terms, but Collins-Dexter begins with the origins of the term “skinhead” in 1960s Britain, as a reference to the “multicultural ***working-class*** subculture rooted in Black — particularly Jamaican — music.”

For Collins-Dexter, the modern Black skinhead similarly “lives in the cracks and uncertainties” of mainstream culture — a “disillusioned political outlier,” this voter has been defined by a history of Democratic alignment, despite a range of ideologies that are changing demographic norms. Still a nascent contingent, she writes, “they live outside of the bounds of fetishized Black political identity.”

Collins-Dexter compellingly ties her engaging assessments of the Black skinheads’ artistic output to a broader political critique, often drawing on the history of media and labor movements and social justice. In the essay “Hood Vampires,” she traces the birth of drill music in the years following 2008 as a response to the disillusionment of the hope in the first Black presidency. In Chicago, the realities of persistent inequality, divestment from Black communities and violence moved young people to express themselves through the macabre sounds of drill. “Hard Times” finds an entry point to the successes and failures of populism in professional wrestling. Each essay reflects deep research, passion and respect for her subject.

The bulk of the book is dedicated to examining a particular kind of Black skinhead: the Black Trump supporter. Their numbers are slim, but as Collins-Dexter sees it, they are significant enough to undermine whatever confidence the Democratic Party has in securing “the Black vote.”

There are holes in Collins-Dexter’s theory. She mentions that younger Black voters show more interest in socialism than their elders; by her definition, would they not also be considered Black skinheads? Are Black-led L.G.B.T.Q. movements also Black skinheads, standing on the margins and attempting to move the center?

And while Collins-Dexter dismisses the political provocateur Candace Owens for “using her own identity as a Black woman to launder far right ideology,” the distinction she draws between this more established Black conservatism and the newer, self-identified “conscious Black conservatives” is in the latter’s commitment to Black advancement — through, of course, capitalism.

The thing is, this ideology is not as new as the author makes it out to be. Versions of this thinking can be found in Booker T. Washington (name-dropped several times in the book), the Nation of Islam and most Black Democratic officials of the late 20th and early 21st century. It’s what produces misplaced nostalgia for Black Wall Street, and to a degree what animates the judicial philosophy of the Supreme Court justice Clarence Thomas.

Yet the progressive-leaning Collins-Dexter, who repeatedly refers to herself as a “Bernie broad,” lends these “conscious Black conservatives” a sympathetic ear. “At least they have a plan,” she writes. “Do we?” Never mind that this plan perpetuates misogyny, homophobia and transphobia; the answer to her question is yes. The book downplays the demonstrable influence of Black leftist thought and principles in a moment when such “radical” ideas as police and prison abolition and more robust union organizing are seeing more airtime than they have in decades.

I understand where Collins-Dexter is coming from. It’s a common refrain I know from my youth, whenever the problems of Black communities were the topic of conversation: Black unity. “I don’t want it to be an us (left) versus them (liberal) versus them (conservative) dynamic,” Collins-Dexter writes on the subject of mental health in communities. “I remain convinced that any chance we have to thrive relies on being able to come to the table to form a baseline consensus.”

There is something romantic in imagining “a collective Black us,” joined in the fight against a common enemy. But we have to ask what that unity would require of us: Are there any just compromises to be found with an ideology that would replicate capitalist excess and exploitation, but with Black faces at the top? Would Black queer people need to put aside any hope of having their identities affirmed, and material needs met? Is unity worth that price?

My heart wants the same thing Collins-Dexter’s does, and maybe that’s the place to start: an acknowledgment and honoring of those on the margins. Perhaps her point is that we are actually all Black skinheads, conforming in some ways and not in others — all just trying to reconcile our inner Kanye West.

Mychal Denzel Smith is a Puffin Foundation fellow at the Type Media Center, and the author of “Invisible Man, Got the Whole World Watching” and “Stakes Is High: Life After the American Dream.”

BLACK SKINHEAD: Reflections on Blackness and Our Political Future | By Brandi Collins-Dexter | 274 pp. | Celadon Books | $26.99

PHOTO: Kanye West (PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIAN BERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page BR14.

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[***Do Americans Support Abortion Rights? Depends on the State.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65CD-PMP1-JBG3-62DR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 4, 2022 Wednesday 16:56 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 905 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Polling suggests an overturning of Roe v. Wade might not carry political consequences in states that would be likeliest to put in restrictions.

**Body**

Polling suggests an overturning of Roe v. Wade might not carry political consequences in states that would be likeliest to put in restrictions.

A majority of Americans believe that abortion should be legal in all or most cases. But the story is more complicated in the states where the future of abortion policy is likely to be decided if — as is [*now expected*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/04/us/roe-v-wade-supreme-court-abortion) — the Supreme Court overturns Roe v. Wade.

In the states poised to put in new restrictions on abortion, people tend to say that abortion should be mostly or fully illegal, based on a New York Times analysis of large national surveys taken over the last decade.

In the 13 states that have enacted so-called trigger laws, which would immediately or very quickly [*outlaw abortion*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/us/abortion-bans-restrictons-roe-v-wade.html) if Roe were overturned, 43 percent of adults on average say abortion should be legal in most or all cases, while 52 percent say it should be illegal in most or all cases.

Voters are more divided in the dozen or so states that have pre-Roe bans on the books or that are expected to enact new abortion restrictions if Roe is overturned. In those states — where the fight over abortion is most likely to play out in campaigns or state legislative chambers — an average of 49 percent of adults say abortion should be legal in most or all cases, compared with 45 percent who say otherwise.

That is still somewhat less than the national average of 54 percent who mostly or fully support legalized abortion, compared with 41 percent who mostly or fully oppose it.

The geographic pattern evident in the results suggests that a national outcry over a court decision to overturn Roe might not carry many political consequences in the states where abortions could be immediately restricted. In some of those states, new abortion restrictions may tend to reinforce the political status quo, even as they spark outrage elsewhere in the country.

But in some states, a fight over new abortion restrictions might pose serious political risks for conservatives, perhaps especially in the seven mostly Republican-controlled states that are seen as most likely to enact new restrictions even though a majority of voters tend to support legal abortion.

The public’s views on abortion are notoriously [*hard to measure*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/08/upshot/politicians-draw-clear-lines-on-abortion-their-parties-are-not-so-unified.html), with large segments of the public often seeming to offer muddled or inconsistent answers. Polls consistently show that around two-thirds of Americans [*support*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/01/21/politics/cnn-poll-abortion-roe-v-wade/index.html) the court’s decision in Roe v. Wade and oppose overturning it. Yet just as many Americans say they [*support banning*](https://apnews.com/article/only-on-ap-us-supreme-court-abortion-religion-health-2c569aa7934233af8e00bef4520a8fa8) abortion in the second trimester, a step barred by Roe. And a more [*modest majority*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/05/06/about-six-in-ten-americans-say-abortion-should-be-legal-in-all-or-most-cases/ft_2021-05-06_abortion_01/) — usually around 55 percent in broader sets of data — supports legal abortion in most or all cases, while people split [*almost evenly*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/244709/pro-choice-pro-life-2018-demographic-tables.aspx) over whether they consider themselves “pro-choice” or “pro-life.”

The poll question used here — whether the respondent believes abortion should be legal in most or all cases, or illegal in all or most cases — offers only a general sense of a voter’s attitudes on the issue. It may not align exactly with whether a voter or a state electorate would support any particular restriction.

Voters who support abortion in “most” cases might accept a ban on abortions after the first trimester, like the one recently enacted in Florida, which would be at odds with Roe v. Wade but affect only about 8 percent of abortions. Conversely, voters who believe abortion should be illegal in most cases might still support allowing abortion in cases of rape or incest — or perhaps even without conditions in the first trimester.

The opponents of Roe have long said they wanted to leave the issue to the voters of each state, and the data suggests that abortion restrictions may cut very differently across the dozen or so states where the issue is likeliest to be in play in the months ahead.

In Texas, which has put into action the most stringent abortion restrictions so far, there are few signs of a fundamental transformation of the state’s politics.

Texans roughly split on abortion overall, making abortion rights more popular there than in the typical state with a trigger law. But abortion was almost a nonissue in the state’s primary in March, with candidates staying focused on the pandemic and immigration. Only 39 percent of Texans said the state’s abortion laws should be “less strict” in a poll in February, several months after the passage of the law, which effectively bans abortion after around six weeks of pregnancy.

Abortion-rights advocates might be on more favorable political terrain in the more traditionally competitive Midwestern states. A modest majority of voters say abortion should be mostly legal in states like Ohio, Michigan and Iowa, where evangelical Christians represent a far smaller share of voters than in the South. The figures are similar in other battleground states, like Arizona and Florida.

It’s unclear if the abortion issue will be enough to redraw the political map. Perhaps it will fade, as it seems to have in Texas. But the stakes are not small for Republicans in this region: The predominantly white ***working-class*** voters who swung from Barack Obama to Donald J. Trump in the 2016 presidential election [*tended*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/upshot/the-obama-trump-voters-are-real-heres-what-they-think.html) to back abortion rights.

In a [*postelection study*](https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi%3A10.7910/DVN/GDF6Z0), 58 percent of voters who flipped from Mr. Obama to Mr. Trump in 2016 said that they would support a law that would “always allow a woman to obtain an abortion as a matter of choice.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***Swedish Far-Right Party's Rise Was Both Expected and Shocking***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66D5-CDY1-DXY4-X26X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 16, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1243 words

**Byline:** By Steven Erlanger and Christina Anderson

**Body**

The Sweden Democrats, with roots in neo-Nazism, came in second in national elections and will have a powerful influence on a new center-right government.

STOCKHOLM -- The rise of the far-right Sweden Democrats to become the country's second-largest party, with a claim to government, has been a slow-moving earthquake over the past decade. But even as their success in Sunday's election seemed inevitable, it still had the ability to shock.

The world still regards Sweden as a bedrock of Nordic liberalism, and its move toward the more populist right, based on grievances about crime, migration, identity and globalization -- and the way they affect health care, schools and taxes -- has been slower than in other countries. So the election's result was something of a wake-up call.

''Sweden is very much an activist and ideologically charged nation, and in part because we had such an idyllic 20th century, we thought we could afford it,'' said Robert Dalsjo, director of studies at the Swedish Defense Research Agency. ''So the popular discontent over globalization and migration and crime we saw in Trump took longer to leak itself through the protective structures of the establishment here.''

The Sweden Democrats have been gaining political ground and a form of respectability for some time now, much like other Nordic far-right populist parties, including the Danish People's Party and Norway's Progress Party. But the Sweden Democrats, founded in 1988 with roots in neo-Nazism, are probably closer to the parties of Marine Le Pen in France and Giorgia Meloni in Italy, whose Brothers of Italy has roots in Mussolini's Fascist Party.

Ms. Meloni and her party are considered so normalized now that she is on track to become Italy's prime minister in elections in 10 days' time.

That is not in the cards for the leader of the Sweden Democrats, Jimmie Akesson, whose party was the largest vote winner in what is expected to be a center-right coalition. The bloc of right-wing parties previously agreed to support a government led by the center-right Moderate Party, but not one led by the Sweden Democrats. They will most likely not even take cabinet seats in a government led by Ulf Kristersson, leader of the Moderates, a conservative party.

But Mr. Kristersson, who would become prime minister, will need the support of Sweden Democrats in Parliament, as well as that of two other parties, the Christian Democrats and the Liberals. And Mr. Akesson has made it clear that his support will be expensive in terms of government policy.

''If we are going to support a government that we're not sitting in, it's going to cost,'' Mr. Akesson said before the vote.

The Sweden Democrats' showing in the election provided the center right a thin majority of three votes in Parliament, prompting the leader of the Social Democratic Party, Magdalena Andersson, to resign on Thursday and throwing Sweden into several weeks of political maneuvering. Negotiations to form a new government will be complicated, and it will take several weeks at least, with some hoping to have a new prime minister by month's end.

The Sweden Democrats' victory over the Moderates is likely to strengthen their hand and make the negotiations harder, especially since the small Liberal party has refused to join any coalition in which the Sweden Democrats have ministerial posts.

One option for Mr. Kristersson is to try to form a minority government with the Christian Democrats while keeping both the Sweden Democrats and the Liberals out of government. And the four parties of the right-wing coalition have their own differences over policies like foreign aid and increases in benefits for workers and the unemployed.

It could all get a bit messy, and a new coalition may not last very long.

Anna Wieslander, chairwoman of Sweden's Institute for Security and Development, said of the far right's gains, ''In a way, their success is not so surprising, given that no government dealt really with the migration issue, which has been there for years, affecting society more and more, and with the way crime has been tied to immigrant groups.''

Even the main parties, including the long-governing Social Democrats, have moved closer in this campaign to the hard-line position of the Sweden Democrats on crime and immigration, analysts noted, while easing up on some of the stricter environmental rules that have angered voters in rural areas and ***working-class*** neighborhoods, where the Sweden Democrats draw their strength.

Daniel Suhonen, head of Katalys, a trade union think tank, and a founding member of Reformisterna, the largest group in the Social Democratic party, said the Sweden Democrats had ''blown up the whole bloc politics, the right-left divide.''

They have won voters from the three main groups, he said: rural voters from the Center Party, small-business owners from the Moderates and workers from the Social Democrats. They have also won many young voters.

The three losing parties -- the Moderates, Christian Democrats and Liberals -- will govern on behalf of one winning party, he said.

Sverker Gustavsson, a political scientist at Sweden's Uppsala University, said that the Sweden Democrats ''want an ironclad agreement with the Moderates and Christian Democrats that will include concrete measures in the area of culture, schools, immigration and criminal justice policy.''

To monitor that agreement, instead of having ministers, ''they are saying they want watchdogs inside the departments to monitor that their policies are being followed,'' he said. ''That is the new and interesting thing.''

Sweden's application to join NATO, which the Sweden Democrats supported, is not in question, analysts said. But there are some worries in Brussels about European Union unity with a new Swedish government potentially influenced by the Sweden Democrats ahead of a difficult winter defined by soaring energy prices, the ongoing war in Ukraine and record inflation.

''I don't think the unity will crack, but it means that E.U. ambitions will be lower,'' said Fabian Zuleeg, head of the European Policy Center, a Brussels-based research institution. ''And this is dangerous given the crisis of this magnitude that we are facing.''

Sweden is poised to take over the rotating presidency of the bloc in January, which means it is going to take the lead in negotiations over a series of new laws, including a legislative package detailing how to phase out fossil fuels, as well as new rules on managing migration.

''The presidency can change things,'' Dr. Zuleeg said. ''It sets the agenda, and it often initiates compromise between different E.U. institutions.''

For her part, Ms. Andersson, who will serve as prime minister until a new government is formed, did well in her year of power, bringing new voters to the Social Democrats, who remain the country's largest party. But she did so by leaching votes from her potential coalition partners, and thus falling short.

She did suggest on Thursday that if it all proved too complicated and difficult for Mr. Kristersson, he could always talk to her about forming their own coalition. Of course, she would remain prime minister.

Steven Erlanger reported from Stockholm, and Christina Anderson from Bastad, Sweden. Monika Pronczuk contributed reporting from Brussels.Steven Erlanger reported from Stockholm, and Christina Anderson from Bastad, Sweden. Monika Pronczuk contributed reporting from Brussels.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/world/europe/sweden-election-far-right.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/world/europe/sweden-election-far-right.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Jimmie Akesson, leader of the Sweden Democrats, at an election watch gathering. His party became the country's second largest, and now has a claim to government. Right, Magdalena Andersson, the Social Democratic Party leader, resigned on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TT NEWS AGENCY, VIA REUTERS

JONATHAN NACKSTRAND/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

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**End of Document**



[***Personal Choices Propel a Frightening Film***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65SP-NDH1-JBG3-62PK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 26, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Byline:** By Elisabeth Vincentelli

**Body**

Influenced by ''Rosemary's Baby'' and ''The Devil's Backbone,'' the filmmaker wove details from his childhood into this supernatural movie starring Ethan Hawke.

After scoring a hit with the Marvel movie ''Doctor Strange'' in 2016, the director Scott Derrickson started working on its sequel, ''Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness.'' In January 2020, however, he abruptly left that movie because of creative differences.

For his next film, he started with a short story by Joe Hill, which he layered with autobiographical material. ''I had been in therapy for a couple of years, dealing with a lot of childhood trauma issues,'' Derrickson, 55, said in a video interview.

The result is ''The Black Phone,'' out on Friday, in which Derrickson and Ethan Hawke reunite 10 years after their collaboration in the terrifying horror movie ''Sinister.'' Now Hawke plays the Grabber, a masked psychopath who kidnaps and kills children in 1978 Colorado. Until, that is, he sets his sights on the resourceful 13-year-old Finney (Mason Thames), who gets unexpected help from the Grabber's previous victims -- their ghosts communicate tasks for survival via a derelict landline -- and his own sister, Gwen (Madeleine McGraw).

Considering how personal the film is to Derrickson, it comes as little surprise to hear him start off with his own story when asked to list five influences on ''The Black Phone.'' These are edited excerpts from the conversation.

His childhood

''The Black Phone'' is set in North Denver, where Derrickson grew up. ''It was a ***working-class***, kind of blue-collar neighborhood, half-Mexican, half-white,'' he said. ''There was a lot of violence -- everybody got whipped by their parents, there was fighting on the way to school, on the way home from school, at school.''

In the film, Finney is always on edge: His dad has a temper when drunk, and there are all these mysterious disappearances. ''I think I was 8 or 9 years old when my friend next door knocked on the door,'' Derrickson said. ''He was crying and he said, 'Somebody murdered my mom.' His mother had been abducted and raped and killed and wrapped in phone wire -- I remember that detail -- and thrown in the local lake,'' he continued. ''So the serial killer who could just grab you out of nowhere was a real thing for us in that neighborhood. That was always in the air.''

'The 400 Blows' (1959)

François Truffaut's debut feature retraces much of his upbringing -- via a cinematic alter ego portrayed by the 14-year-old Jean-Pierre Léaud -- in a way that is warm yet also devoid of sentimentality. ''The first idea I had was to take a lot of the traumatic events of my childhood and try to make a kind of American '400 Blows,''' Derrickson said. ''It's a movie for adults about children that I wouldn't describe as nostalgic -- that's a really interesting way to approach one's own childhood experience as a filmmaker.''

And yet Derrickson was also keen to show that fortitude is hard to snuff out. ''It's a really wonderful picture and somehow as bleak as it is, it also shows the resilience of children,'' he said. ''There's a lot of joy in that movie, too. Even as this kid keeps getting blow after blow, his spirit is very strong. And I think that shows in both Finney and Gwen.''

'The Devil's Backbone' (2001)

Derrickson is a huge fan of Guillermo del Toro's supernatural horror film, which is set in an orphanage in 1939 Spain, and he initially brings up the way it visually represented ghost children, as well as the communal relationship between the orphans. ''From a storytelling point of view, it was a really influential movie on me,'' Derrickson said.

But he also picked up tips from the commentary the Mexican filmmaker recorded for the movie's DVD release. ''One of the things that Guillermo del Toro says in that commentary is that when he casts a child actor, he makes sure that the child can imitate him, and this has been so helpful to me,'' Derrickson said. ''If you're giving them a direction and it's just not working, you need to be able to do it for them and have them just do it back for you the exact same way.''

'Rosemary's Baby' (1968)

Derrickson gets granular in his admiration for Roman Polanski's classic shocker, in which a pregnant woman (Mia Farrow) begins to suspect she might be surrounded by Satan worshipers. In particular, he zeros in on a scene in which we watch Rosemary call her therapist from a phone booth.

''I remember watching the scene and being immediately struck by the distorted phone filter on the psychiatrist's voice -- and her voice had the same filter,'' he said. ''I was very struck by how powerful and strange it felt. There was an otherworldliness to it and somehow it felt scary to me.''

Derrickson started by putting a similar filter on Finney's voice when he's talking to the Grabber's victims on the black phone. In postproduction, though, he slightly modified that approach so the filter is applied to the dead children when they manifest. ''It creates a real tactile feeling of ethereal unpresence and presence at the same time,'' Derrickson said. ''And all of that was the result of me thinking about the phone filter that's in 'Rosemary's Baby' in that one shot.''

'A Prayer for Owen Meany'

On the surface, there is not much linking ''The Black Phone'' to John Irving's novel from 1989, in which the title character is convinced that he has a connection to God and his life is building up to a preordained event. But it inspired Derrickson when he and co-writer C. Robert Cargill were trying to figure out what to do with the characters they were adding to the original short story. ''The big expansions were Gwen and adding four other kids based on kids I knew in middle school,'' Derrickson said.

But then he was stumped: How would those children fit in the plot? ''When I thought about 'A Prayer for Owen Meany,' I thought, 'Oh, that's it: They're giving Finney missions,' '' Derrickson said. ''And when I did that, I felt, 'OK, I know how to do this movie. I know how the structure works.' ''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/20/movies/black-phone-scott-derrickson.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/20/movies/black-phone-scott-derrickson.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: 'THE 400 BLOWS'

'ROSEMARY'S BABY'

THE DEVIL'S BACKBONE'

'A PRAYER FOR OWEN MEANY' (PHOTOGRAPH BY UNIVERSAL PICTURES (''THE BLACK PHONE''))

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[***Rise of Far-Right Party in Sweden Was Both Expected and Shocking***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66D1-HX71-DXY4-X1XM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 15, 2022 Thursday 22:16 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

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**Byline:** Steven Erlanger and Christina Anderson

**Highlight:** The Sweden Democrats, with roots in neo-Nazism, came in second in national elections and will have a powerful influence on a new center-right government.

**Body**

The Sweden Democrats, with roots in neo-Nazism, came in second in national elections and will have a powerful influence on a new center-right government.

STOCKHOLM — The rise of the far-right [*Sweden Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/14/world/europe/sweden-election-result-right.html?searchResultPosition=1) to become the country’s second-largest party, with a claim to government, has been a slow-moving earthquake over the past decade. But even as their success [*in Sunday’s election*](https://www.val.se/) seemed inevitable, it still had the ability to shock.

The world still regards Sweden as a bedrock of Nordic liberalism, and its move toward the more populist right, based on grievances about [*crime*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/10/world/europe/sweden-election.html?searchResultPosition=1), migration, identity and globalization — and the way they affect health care, schools and taxes — has been slower than in other countries. So the election’s result was something of a wake-up call.

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The Sweden Democrats have been gaining political ground and a form of respectability for some time now, much like other Nordic far-right populist parties, including the Danish People’s Party and Norway’s Progress Party. But the Sweden Democrats, founded in 1988 with roots in neo-Nazism, are probably closer to the parties of Marine Le Pen in France and Giorgia Meloni in Italy, whose Brothers of Italy has roots in Mussolini’s Fascist Party.

Ms. [*Meloni and her party are considered*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/world/europe/giorgia-meloni-italy-right.html) so normalized now that she is on track to become Italy’s prime minister in elections in 10 days’ time.

That is not in the cards for the leader of the Sweden Democrats, Jimmie Akesson, whose party was the largest vote winner in what is expected to be a center-right coalition. The bloc of right-wing parties previously agreed to support a government led by the center-right Moderate Party, but not one led by the Sweden Democrats. They will most likely not even take cabinet seats in a government led by Ulf Kristersson, leader of the Moderates, a conservative party.

But Mr. Kristersson, who would become prime minister, will need the support of Sweden Democrats in Parliament, as well as that of two other parties, the Christian Democrats and the Liberals. And Mr. Akesson has made it clear that his support will be expensive in terms of government policy.

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The Sweden Democrats’ showing in the election provided the center right a thin majority of three votes in Parliament, prompting the leader of the Social Democratic Party, Magdalena Andersson, to resign on Thursday and throwing Sweden into several weeks of political maneuvering. Negotiations to form a new government will be complicated, and it will take several weeks at least, with some hoping to have a new prime minister by month’s end.

The Sweden Democrats’ victory over the Moderates is likely to strengthen their hand and make the negotiations harder, especially since the small Liberal party has refused to join any coalition in which the Sweden Democrats have ministerial posts.

One option for Mr. Kristersson is to try to form a minority government with the Christian Democrats while keeping both the Sweden Democrats and the Liberals out of government. And the four parties of the right-wing coalition have their own differences over policies like foreign aid and increases in benefits for workers and the unemployed.

It could all get a bit messy, and a new coalition may not last very long.

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Even the main parties, including the long-governing Social Democrats, have moved closer in this campaign to the hard-line position of the Sweden Democrats on crime and immigration, analysts noted, while easing up on some of the stricter environmental rules that have angered voters in rural areas and ***working-class*** neighborhoods, where the Sweden Democrats draw their strength.

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To monitor that agreement, instead of having ministers, “they are saying they want watchdogs inside the departments to monitor that their policies are being followed,” he said. “That is the new and interesting thing.”

[*Sweden’s application to join NATO*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/19/us/politics/biden-finland-sweden-nato.html?searchResultPosition=5), which the Sweden Democrats supported, is not in question, analysts said. But there are some worries in Brussels about European Union unity with a new Swedish government potentially influenced by the Sweden Democrats ahead of a difficult winter defined by soaring energy prices, the ongoing war in Ukraine and record inflation.

“I don’t think the unity will crack, but it means that E.U. ambitions will be lower,” said Fabian Zuleeg, head of the European Policy Center, a Brussels-based research institution. “And this is dangerous given the crisis of this magnitude that we are facing.”

Sweden is poised to take over the rotating presidency of the bloc in January, which means it is going to take the lead in negotiations over a series of new laws, including a legislative package detailing how to phase out fossil fuels, as well as new rules on managing migration.

“The presidency can change things,” Dr. Zuleeg said. “It sets the agenda, and it often initiates compromise between different E.U. institutions.”

For her part, Ms. Andersson, who will serve as prime minister until a new government is formed, did well in her year of power, bringing new voters to the Social Democrats, who remain the country’s largest party. But she did so by leaching votes from her potential coalition partners, and thus falling short.

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PHOTOS: Jimmie Akesson, leader of the Sweden Democrats, at an election watch gathering. His party became the country’s second largest, and now has a claim to government. Right, Magdalena Andersson, the Social Democratic Party leader, resigned on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TT NEWS AGENCY, VIA REUTERS; JONATHAN NACKSTRAND/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

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**End of Document**



[***Republicans Grapple With Raising the Minimum Wage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623B-HS21-JBG3-64PC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Alan Rappeport and Jeanna Smialek

**Highlight:** The politics of a $15 minimum wage are increasingly muddled, but some Republicans are gravitating toward a higher base pay, citing the economic needs of ***working-class*** Americans.

**Body**

The politics of a $15 minimum wage are increasingly muddled, but some Republicans are gravitating toward a higher base pay, citing the economic needs of ***working-class*** Americans.

WASHINGTON — The policy debate over raising the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour is the latest fault line between Democrats, who largely support the idea, and Republicans, who generally oppose such a sharp increase as bad for business.

But it is also revealing new fissures in the Republican Party, which is straining to appeal to its corporate backers, some of whom believe that more than doubling the minimum wage would cut deeply into their profits, and the ***working-class*** wing, which fueled President Donald J. Trump’s rise and would stand to gain from a pay increase.

After decades of either calling for the abolishment of a federal minimum wage or arguing that it should not be raised, Republicans are beginning to bow to the realities facing the party’s populist base with proposals that acknowledge the wage floor must rise. President Biden is likely to try to capitalize on that shift as he tries to deliver on his promise to raise the minimum wage, even if it does not make it into the $1.9 trillion aid package because of [*a ruling Thursday evening by the Senate parliamentarian*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html).

For years, Republicans have embraced the economic arguments that were laid out [*in a letter this month*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html) to Congress by Americans for Tax Reform, the Club for Growth and other conservative groups that promote free enterprise. They point to studies that assert mandated wage increases would lead to job losses, small-business closures and higher prices for consumers. And they make the case that the economic trade-offs are not worth it, saying that more jobs would be lost than the number of people pulled from poverty and that those in states with a lower cost of living — often conservative-leaning states — would bear the brunt of the fallout.

In 2016, as Republicans moved further to the right, moderate candidates such as Jeb Bush, a former Florida governor, and Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, argued forcefully that the federal minimum wage did not need to be raised above $7.25, which is where it still stands today. Mr. Bush said the matter of wages should be left to the private sector, while Mr. Rubio warned about the risk of making workers more costly than machines.

But Republicans have at times grappled with the challenging politics of a position that so clearly sides with business interests. In the 2012 presidential campaign, Mitt Romney, the Republican nominee, said that he believed that the federal minimum wage should rise in step with inflation, as measured by the national Consumer Price Index.

And after arguing early on in his 2016 campaign that wages were already too high, Mr. Trump later said he could support a $10 minimum wage.

That is the number that Mr. Romney, now a Republican senator from Utah, and Senator Tom Cotton, Republican of Arkansas, introduced in a plan that would gradually raise the minimum wage to $10 over four years and then index it to inflation every two years.

On Friday, Senator Josh Hawley, Republican of Missouri, went a step further by matching the proposal that Democrats have made for a $15 minimum wage. His plan comes with a big caveat, however, and would apply only to businesses with annual revenue of more than $1 billion.

“Megacorporations can afford to pay their workers $15 an hour, and it’s long past time they do so, but this should not come at the expense of small businesses already struggling to make it,” Mr. Hawley said.

The proposal drew a sharp rebuke from David McIntosh, the president of the Club for Growth, who suggested that Mr. Hawley was adopting bad policies in a bid to appeal to Mr. Trump’s voters. He said that his organization would not support Republicans who promoted minimum wage increases and said that they should be pushing for payroll tax cuts to give workers more take-home pay.

“This is another example of his ambition driving him to these populist positions that completely violate any principles he has about free markets,” Mr. McIntosh said in an interview.

While the talking points surrounding the minimum wage have remained largely the same over the years, the politics are shifting partly because the federal wage floor has stagnated for so long — and a growing economic literature has suggested that the costs of higher wage floors may not be as significant as analysts once worried they might be.

After rising gradually over the decades, the minimum [*has held steady at $7.25 an hour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html) since 2009. Prices have gradually increased since then, so the hourly pay rate goes a shorter distance toward paying the bills these days: Today’s $7.25 is equivalent to $5.97 in 2009 buying power, adjusted by[*consumer price inflation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html).

Given how low it is set, a relatively small share of American workers actually make minimum wage. About 1.1 million — 1.5 percent of hourly paid workers and about 0.8 percent of all workers — [*earned at or below*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html) the $7.25 floor in 2020.

States with the highest share of hourly paid workers earning at or below the federal minimum are often Southern — like South Carolina and Louisiana — and skew conservative. About seven in 10 states that have an above-average share of workers earning at or below the minimum wage voted Republican in the 2020 presidential election.

While only a slice of the work force earns at or below the minimum, lifting the federal base wage to $15 would bolster pay more broadly. The $15 minimum wage would lift pay for some 17 million workers who earn less than $15 and could increase pay for another 10 million who earn just slightly more, based on a recent [*Congressional Budget Office analysis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html).

Still, raising wages for as many as 27 million Americans is likely to come at some cost. The budget office, drawing on results from 11 studies and adjustments from a broader literature, estimated that perhaps 1.4 million fewer people would have jobs in 2025 given a $15 minimum wage.

Some economists who lean toward the left have [*questioned the budget office’s conclusion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html).

In research that summarized 55 different academic studies of episodes where a minimum wage was introduced or raised — 36 in the United States, 11 in other developed countries — Arindrajit Dube at the University of Massachusetts Amherst found that even looking at very narrow slices of workers who were directly affected, a 10 percent increase in minimum wage might lead to a 2 percent loss in employment. Looking at the effects for low-wage workers more broadly, the cost to jobs was “minute.”

More recent work from Mr. Dube has found next to no employment impact [*from state*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html)and [*local minimum wage increases*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html).

Yet many Republicans have seized on the budget office’s job loss figure.

In [*a column titled “How Many Jobs Will the ‘Stimulus’ Kill?”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html) Stephen Moore, an adviser and ally of Mr. Trump’s, and the conservative economist Casey B. Mulligan suggest that the $15 federal minimum wage will cost a million jobs or more. Mr. Moore said in an email that they were relying on the Congressional Budget Office’s estimate.

Still, a variety of economic officials emphasize that the cost to jobs of a higher minimum wage are not as large as once believed, and that the federal minimum wage has not kept up with inflation.

“Higher minimum wages clearly do help the workers who are affected,” John C. Williams, the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, said during a virtual speech on Thursday. “There are some job losses,” but recent evidence suggests that it is not as many as once expected.

There is precedent for raising the minimum wage toward $15, because as the federal base pay requirement has stagnated, states and localities have been increasing their own pay floors. Twenty states and 32 cities and counties[*raised their minimum wages*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html) just at the start of 2021, based on an analysis by the National Employment Law Project, and in 27 of those places, the pay floor has now reached or exceeded $15 an hour.

The drive toward $15 [*started in 2012*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html) with protests by fast-food workers and was initially treated as something of a fringe idea, but it has gained momentum even in states that are heavily Republican. Florida — which Mr. Trump won in November 2020 — voted for a [*ballot measure*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/federal-minimum-wage.html) mandating a $15 minimum wage by 2026.

Like in many of those local cases, Democrats are proposing a gradual increase that would phase in over time. Janet L. Yellen, the Biden administration’s Treasury secretary and former Fed chair, suggested in response to lawmaker questions after her confirmation hearing that the long runway could help mitigate any costs.

“It matters how it’s implemented, and the president’s minimum wage will be phased in over time, giving small businesses plenty of time to adapt,” Ms. Yellen wrote.

PHOTO: A hotel cleaner in Herndon, Va. The state is among those with the highest share of workers earning the minimum wage, or less. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALYSSA SCHUKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Failing in Marriage Does Not Mean Failing at Marriage; Modern Love***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66V3-FNN1-JBG3-6073-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1402 words

**Byline:** Joe Blair

**Highlight:** My wife has kicked me out five times. Another time I left on my own. Why are we still together?

**Body**

My wife has kicked me out five times. Another time I left on my own. Why are we still together?

Alone one evening in early spring, seated on a green park bench beside the Charles River in Cambridge, Mass., I waited for Deb. The sun was setting and the temperature falling, and I was wearing my softball jersey and knickers and wishing I had remembered to bring my thick flannel shirt.

Now, decades later, at my home in Iowa, I search for that bench on Google Maps. Here it is. Riverbend Park. Here’s the bridge. The John W. Weeks Bridge. Here’s our bench. The bridge arches. The still water. It makes my body ache to see it again. The place where we were young.

We had agreed to meet there, in that ratty little park. I waited for her. And waited. I imagined her getting off work at Legal Sea Foods at the Copley Plaza. Cashing out. Boarding the bus. Walking along the path. Approaching.

I imagined someone watching us as she arrived. Would they think we were madly in love? Mistake us for Harvard students? People with illustrious futures? The moon was brightening. The sun a slur of color in the west. I was cold. My thick flannel shirt at home in my closet.

I had returned to college at 26 after serving my apprenticeship in the refrigeration trade. I first noticed her in my selected authors class. On the first day, the professor asked if anyone could give him an Emerson quote, and she, blushing, raised her hand. Three months later, I asked her to marry me. She said yes.

We shared my tiny, overheated Cambridge apartment and fell into a nightly bar-crawl routine. From the Plough and Stars to the Cellar to Drumlin’s. The Cantab. After the first three rounds, I would accuse her of being in love with her cigarettes. Then she would accuse me of not being truly in love with her. And I would swear on the Bible how I loved her with the intensity of ten suns while holding up my hand to order another round.

We knew we needed to end this childish routine. We imagined a new town unsullied by the likes of us. Someplace clean and innocent.

After less than a year of squirreling away cash in a Mason jar atop the refrigerator, we allowed the lease to expire, moved our furniture (a futon and a lamp) to the curb, paid our parking tickets, climbed on my motorcycle, and with no ultimate destination in mind, left town.

We had enough cash left by the time we rolled into Iowa to rent a small brick house adjacent to a hog farrowing pen on the rolling Iowa cornfields. Soon we found work and started a family.

By the time Deb kicked me out for the first time, she had already given birth to our first two children. I moved into a duplex on East Washington in Iowa City. The inside of the place reminded me of a rustic hunting lodge. The shiplap walls and ceilings were stained dark brown. I remember sliding into my Coleman sleeping bag that first night, settling myself on my camping mat and thinking, “Ah, yes, this is how I’m meant to be. Alone.”

We reunited after a month or two. Then we had the twins.

Saturday nights we would walk down to George’s, where, three beers in, Deb would once again accuse me of not loving her enough. And I would do my best to drum up the old enthusiasm, but I wasn’t fooling either of us.

Over the 32 years of our marriage, she has kicked me out five times. One time, I sublet a basement apartment across the street from a small park with a basketball court, which was a big plus. The basement was crawling with little white worms, which, when they died, curled up like pill bugs.

Another time, I moved into Le Chateau, a low-rent apartment complex. There was an outdoor pool on the property, but it wasn’t open when I lived there. I don’t think it had been open for a long time, hence the black mud and leaves at the bottom. There was a laundry room, which was my favorite room in the place. A single coin-operated washing machine and a single dryer. It was always warm and brightly lit, and there was a metal folding chair and the air always smelled clean.

The last time, the sixth, Deb didn’t kick me out. I left. Weary of our accusation and outrage routine, I rented another duplex in a quiet neighborhood on the south side of Iowa City. I shared the place with little red ants. They really liked the sponge I used to clean my dishes. I would boil water and soak my sponge in it to kill them, then dump the floaters down the drain.

I didn’t do anything in this apartment. Didn’t cook, read or listen to music. If I got home from work early, I would go to bed. If I got home late, I would go to bed. I would lie down under my blue and white duck blanket, turn on my side and think, “Yes. This is how I’m meant to be.”

According to the landlord, the young woman who lived there before me had once dated the young man who lived across the street with his parents. After she broke it off, the young man continued texting her. He even knocked on her door at odd hours. When the young woman moved out, I moved in.

Sometimes when it was dark, I would look through my front window at that house and think about the young man. I would wonder how one is supposed to find love. Where to look? How to begin?

On weekend mornings, I took walks around the neighborhood. It was still cool enough to need a hat and jacket. One of my neighbors had erected a book exchange. I chose a collection of Kafka short stories and then, later that day, sat on my front cinder block steps and began reading it.

But I kept thinking of Deb. I kept thinking how she would like this quiet, ***working-class*** neighborhood. With the book exchange and the red ants. And the Sycamore Movie Theater close enough to walk. And no traffic sound. And big deciduous trees. And rickety front steps. And cool air. And warm sun.

I called her and asked if she wanted to stop over for coffee. We sat at my little kitchen table and drank our coffee. She said she liked my little house. She liked my rickety front steps.

I have always thought of Deb wherever I am. Whomever I am with. Whenever I experience something good. I want her to experience the same thing. I can’t stand to watch a good movie without her. I’ll walk out after half an hour if I can’t turn to her in the dark and whisper, “Isn’t this great?” I can’t ride my motorcycle up into the Rocky Mountains. I can’t enter a small diner with worn pine floorboards and an antique, curve-glass pie case with slices of banana cream inside. I can’t take a flight without wishing she were occupying the seat beside me.

I think we have the wrong idea about marriage. It’s not like running a business, where there are recordable credits and debits. Or buying a house, where you pay your mortgage or lose it. Or owning a pet, where, in return for companionship, you are obligated to feed them and take them for walks and clean up after them.

It’s more like learning, after a thousand hangovers, to stop drinking so much. Or learning, after often being false, to be true just once, in the hope that you can continue to be true. Or learning, after habitually hating yourself, to love yourself just once, in the hope that you can continue to love yourself. And then learning, through loving yourself, to love someone else.

I will always love Deb. Even when she hates me. Even when I hate her. Not because she’s especially forgiving. Or pretty. Or pleasant to be with. Or well-read. Or spiritual. Not because she may or may not be any of those things. Loving her isn’t transactional. I love her because I can’t help it. There’s something in her that makes me weak. Something vulnerable and unconquerable. Something fleeting and unmoving.

After a few months in the house with the rickety steps, I moved back in with Deb. Soon enough now, I’ll be alone on the edge of sleep. Just as I am alone on the edge of all things. It’s how I am. It may be how we all are. Still alone. Waiting. And still in love.

Joe Blair, a writer and HVAC mechanic in Coralville, Iowa, is the author of the memoir, “By the Iowa Sea.”

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This article appeared in print on page ST6.

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[***Covid Almost Broke This Hospital. It Also Might Be What Saves It.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66WD-3VY1-JBG3-6522-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 3403 words

**Byline:** Joseph Goldstein and Desiree Rios

**Highlight:** For decades, smaller “safety net” hospitals like Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, in Brooklyn, have been losing money and are under pressure to close. But the pandemic has shown just how needed they are.

**Body**

The bearded young man suffering a psychotic episode craned his neck to get a better view of his body before looking away in horror. “Something’s coming out of me,” he bellowed from the gurney where he lay in the emergency room at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, an independent hospital in Brooklyn.

Nearby, a heavily muscled man in his 30s lay as still as a wax figure after Narcan had reversed his opioid overdose. Across the hallway, in the pediatric emergency room, a police officer was rocking a crying infant who had been left alone in a parked car.

Upstairs in the neonatal intensive care unit on the 11th floor, Diana Calderón, an Ecuadorean immigrant who crossed into the United States last year, would soon arrive for her daily visit to hold her two surviving triplets, born prematurely six weeks earlier. The third, Josiah, had lived just a day.

Some days her eyes fall on an empty incubator. That’s when Dr. Calixto Cazano, a neonatologist, murmurs a few words of solace in Spanish: “Luca, Zabdiel and Josiah were together in your womb.” His brothers would always feel Josiah’s presence, he tells her.

Wyckoff Hospital is considered low-performing by[*some metrics*](https://www.hospitalsafetygrade.org/h/wyckoff-heights-medical-center) — including [*its damning one-star rating*](https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare/details/hospital/330221?city=New%20York&amp;state=NY&amp;zipcode=11217&amp;measure=hospital-overall-rating) by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which puts it in the [*bottom 7 percent*](https://data.cms.gov/provider-data/topics/hospitals/overall-hospital-quality-star-rating/#:~:text=The%202022%20Overall%20Star%20Rating,measures%20that%20could%20be%20included.) of hospitals in the United States. But for many in a large swath of Brooklyn and Queens, it is the most convenient, or only, place to go for medical care, emergency or otherwise. Each year, some 110,000 New Yorkers — just over 1 percent of the city — are treated at Wyckoff or one of its clinics.

Located in the predominantly Hispanic neighborhood of Bushwick, Wyckoff is one of about 10 independent hospitals across New York City that aren’t part of large health care systems and mainly care for poor patients. Many of them have been plagued by past mismanagement, labeled “failing hospitals” and long been considered for takeover or closure. Wyckoff is no different.

But now, the pandemic — and the racial health disparities it exposed and exacerbated — is fueling a reappraisal of these hospitals, even in Albany, where they were once seen as perennial money losers that the state had to prop up with huge payments each year.

In their neighborhoods, independent hospitals like Wyckoff are often the main providers of health care to many of the city’s most vulnerable residents. In this era of health care consolidation, there is broad consensus among state health officials that stand-alone community hospitals are outdated, especially in New York City. Yet they may well prove central to post-pandemic efforts to provide more preventive care and treatment for diabetes, hypertension and chronic diseases that drive racial health disparities. Outside of Wyckoff, doctors’ offices are scarce in Bushwick. The community around Wyckoff had about [*two primary care physicians per 10,000*](https://www.pcdc.org/what-we-do/research/nyc-council-primary-care-access/) residents in 2017. One stretch of Manhattan, running from the Lower East Side to Murray Hill, had more than 60 primary care doctors per 10,000 residents.

There is a growing recognition that if health disparities are going to be reduced, shoring up independent hospitals like Wyckoff may be central to that effort.

“No one else is trying in any visible manner,” said Wyckoff’s chief medical officer, Gustavo Del Toro, a lanky man in his 50s and the older brother of the actor Benicio Del Toro. He had worked at large hospital systems in Manhattan as a pediatric hematologist-oncologist before coming to Wyckoff to try to help turn it around.

The state has long supported independent hospitals in New York City that primarily serve lower-income patients, providing roughly $800 million a year in direct subsidies. Wyckoff receives more than $100 million — sometimes delivered at the last minute and grudgingly, hospital officials say. It has been enough to keep the hospital open, but often just barely.

This year, however, the administration of Gov. Kathy Hochul has budgeted about twice as much and has asked the federal government to give a boost to the Medicaid rates paid to hospitals that serve primarily low-income patients.

Vali Gache, the hospital’s chief financial officer, who regularly pleads the hospital’s case for more money in phone calls with state officials, has noticed a change in tone: “Two years ago nobody would listen to you. They would say, ‘You’re just one of these failing hospitals.’”

Nowhere else to go

At any given time, there are around 150 admitted patients at Wyckoff Hospital, who stay, on average, 4.6 days; another 40 or so occupy the emergency room. But amid this churn, one patient, in recent months, has been a constant: Rodolfo Parris.

Back in March, Mr. Parris arrived by ambulance, unable to walk. A barber by trade, Mr. Parris, 53, was admitted with failing kidneys and festering leg ulcers.

His infections were treated, and his wounds began to heal. He should have been discharged a couple of weeks after he was admitted, but his apartment — a second-floor walk-up — was now inaccessible. Each stair was one too many.

Though he was a child when he emigrated to New York from Panama, he is without legal status in this country. That means that no skilled nursing home — where he might receive wound care and dialysis — has yet been willing to admit him. The government doesn’t typically reimburse nursing homes for care to undocumented immigrants.

So last summer, Mr. Parris spent his days in his hospital bed, reading the Bible, watching cop shows and telling visitors about better days, like when Christopher Wallace, the rapper known as Notorious B.I.G., used to come into his barbershop for a cut. Occasionally Mr. Parris would eye with fury the wheelchair that remained folded and untouched in the corner of the room. It was a gift from the hospital.

“They’re talking about discharging me and sending me out in a wheelchair,” he said recently. “I don’t got nobody to push me around.” Many hospitals have long-term boarders — patients like Mr. Parris, who have nowhere to go and are not easily discharged. They are a drag on the hospital’s bottom line, as insurance companies and Medicaid are reluctant to pay for visits that extend indefinitely. But Mr. Parris’s presence speaks to a role that these kinds of hospitals often play: housing a few patients whom no one else will take.

Big Manhattan hospitals also have these kinds of patients, but they offset the expense with a far greater number of profitable patients — those with commercial insurance or those needing cardiac or orthopedic surgery.

Wyckoff is not that kind of hospital.

Roughly speaking, New York City has three classes of hospitals.

There are the big academic medical centers, like NewYork-Presbyterian, Mount Sinai and NYU Langone, where the treatment you receive can depend on the insurance you have. They tend to be based in Manhattan.

There is also New York’s robust network of 11 public hospitals, run by the city. They include Bellevue, where patients tend to be ***working class*** or poor, and no one is turned away.

Then there is a third category of hospitals, located in poor neighborhoods, which are often called “independent safety-net” hospitals. Some started as charity wards; St. Barnabas Hospital in the Bronx was founded in 1866 as “The Home for Incurables.” Others were built by booming ethnic communities like the Germans who in the 19th century transformed Bushwick into the brewery capital of the northeast. Wyckoff, once known as the German Hospital of Brooklyn,[*rebranded*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1918/07/16/102722088.html?pageNumber=7) as Wyckoff Heights Hospital during World War I to deflect anti-German sentiment.

A century later, this hospital — a tiny player among the behemoth health care systems across the city — had one of the city’s first critically ill Covid-19 patients in March 2020: an 82-year-old immigrant from the Philippines.

The virus was still so new that Dr. Parvez Mir, an energetic, upbeat 67-year-old who runs the intensive care unit, went into the patient’s room to swab her nose enough times to collect samples to share with larger hospitals to help validate their laboratory tests.

The patient died on March 13, New York City’s first known Covid death. As the days passed, [*the hospital transformed*](https://time.com/wyckoff-hospital-brooklyn-coronavirus/) into a labyrinth of plastic sheeting, as one makeshift Covid unit after another opened. Nearly 300 patients died at Wyckoff in that first wave.

The very communities that needed the most hospital beds had the fewest — the result of hospital closures. For decades, the state assumed that there were too many outer-borough hospitals and that the future lay in preventive medicine and outpatient procedures. For complex surgeries, it was thought, patients could go to Manhattan. In New York, the community hospital was deemed outdated. At the start of the pandemic, there were on average two hospital beds for every 1,000 residents of Brooklyn and Queens, compared with Manhattan’s five.

Those beds filled quickly as Covid patients streamed into emergency rooms. There weren’t enough nurses to look after them all, nor enough medicine to keep all the patients on ventilators — about 70 in Wyckoff at one point — adequately sedated, Dr. Mir said. When the medicine wore off, some patients emerged from their coma-like state and reflexively grabbed at the breathing tube down their throats.

“No one was looking at them, and they would self-extubate” — that is, pull out the tube — “and die,” said Dr. Mir, who at the height of the first wave lost 24 Covid patients in a single day.

The math doesn’t make sense

For much of the 20th century, hospitals like Wyckoff dotted the city. But [*more than 15 have closed*](https://www.nysna.org/our-vow-no-more-closings#.YwbiAHbMI2w) since the turn of the century. [*Many of them were converted into condos*](https://ny.curbed.com/maps/10-nyc-sites-transforming-from-hospitals-to-housing-mapped). The same economic forces have kept Wyckoff on the perpetual brink of closure. On top of those pressures, though, were problems of Wyckoff’s own making.

For years, it had [*a well-deserved reputation for cronyism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/26/nyregion/at-ailing-brooklyn-hospital-insider-deals-and-lavish-perks.html),[*subpar care*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/29/nyregion/the-short-life-and-lonely-death-of-sabrina-seelig.html) and wasteful spending. (It once paid to insure the $160,000 Bentley of a hospital official.) The hospital took out a loan at 12 percent interest from a board member. According to news accounts, it paid [*bribes to a corrupt state assemblyman*](https://www.nydailynews.com/life-style/health/bushwick-wyckoff-heights-medical-center-secret-cash-stash-bribes-upstate-judge-article-1.1041043). And doctors remember other instances of petty corruption, such as requests for favors when they asked for admitting privileges.

In 2011, there was a change in leadership, and Ramón Rodriguez, a onetime lawyer for the indigent who had become state parole commissioner and was then leading a commission examining several troubled hospitals in Brooklyn, was installed as the chief executive of Wyckoff. “I saw criminality all over,” he said.

He fired 30 people. Some had no-show jobs, he said, and others were billing the hospital for malpractice insurance for their private practices.

Mr. Rodriguez coaxed doctors from big Manhattan hospitals who were attracted to the idea that there was more need for their skills in a poor neighborhood with few doctors, and he expanded the hospital’s community clinics. The dread that Wyckoff might close its doors at any moment started to fade. Still, Wyckoff is anticipating a shortfall of about $135 million this fiscal year. Even [*in this era of expanded insurance coverage*](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/health_insurance/TrendHealthInsurance1968_2018.pdf), a hospital that primarily serves the poor is unlikely to make money.

At Wyckoff, just 14 percent of patients have private medical insurance, like employment-based coverage. [*At some Manhattan hospitals*](https://navigator.med.nyu.edu/ace/sparcs/hospitals/1463/), about half the patients do. Private insurance companies typically pay hospitals much more than government-sponsored Medicare and Medicaid.

But the disparities run deeper. Because of its small size and low ranking, Wyckoff can’t charge private insurers anywhere near what the Manhattan giants do. Those hospitals are able to negotiate ever-increasing payments from insurance companies that need to keep the big hospitals in their network — or risk losing customers to other insurance plans. Wyckoff has no such leverage.

If a patient with employment-based health insurance came to Wyckoff severely ill with a respiratory infection, for instance, Wyckoff would receive on average 52 percent of what a Manhattan hospital would be paid, according to [*Manatt Health*](https://www.manatt.com/health), a consulting firm that Wyckoff and several other safety-net hospitals hired.

Another analysis, by the [*union 32BJ*](https://www.seiu32bj.org/), which represents cleaners, doormen and other service workers, found that the union’s health fund pays only $6,433 for a vaginal birth at Wyckoff but $11,101 at the city’s public hospital system, and more than $20,000 at major hospital systems including Mount Sinai, NYU Langone and Northwell.

A colonoscopy costs the union’s health fund $2,145 at Wyckoff; at most Manhattan hospitals it will pay two or three times as much.

At Wyckoff, slightly more than half the patients are covered by Medicaid, the government-funded insurance program for people with low incomes. [*Less than a third*](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6090544/) of hospital patients at some large systems, like [*NewYork-Presbyterian*](https://www.nyp.org/pdf/communityserviceplan2016.pdf), have Medicaid. At the main Manhattan campus of NYU Langone, [*only about 18 percent*](https://www.politico.com/states/f/?id=00000167-7b46-de33-a177-ff66e3e70001) of hospitalized patients had Medicaid, according to 2018 data.

Medicaid reimburses hospitals at far lower rates than other types of insurance, and the [*gap grows only wider each year*](https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/indicator/spending/per-capita-spending/#Cumulative%20growth%20in%20per%20enrollee%20spending%20by%20private%20insurance,%20Medicare,%20and%20Medicaid,%202008%20-%202020). Wyckoff may receive just one-sixth as much treating a Medicaid patient as a top-ranked Manhattan hospital receives for treating an equally sick patient with private health insurance, according to Manatt.

As Mr. Rodriguez often repeats, the hospital loses money on most patients. “There are very few people who pay us more than our expenses for that visit,” he said. The lesson is clear: It’s impossible to run a safety-net hospital that doesn’t bleed money, he said. “The math doesn’t make sense.”

That math hasn’t made sense for some time. Since 2008, as bigger hospitals raised prices and medical inflation ticked up, the Medicaid reimbursement rates in New York State have gone up just 1 percent.

The disparity over the past three decades between Medicaid rates and what private insurance pays should be regarded as a form of redlining, Mr. Rodriguez said. The result, he said, is a racist, discriminatory practice that has left large areas of the city with few doctors and far less access to quality health care.

“There is a two-class system of health care, and it’s wrong,” Mr. Rodriguez said. “It’s pure disinvestment.”

‘Dr. Guberman saved my foot’

On a recent Friday afternoon, the patient bays in Wyckoff’s emergency room were all full. Another 10 or so patients lay on gurneys lined up, head to toe, like planes waiting for takeoff. In the last one sat a man with a vulture tattoo on his bald head and a jagged cut on his leg, which he had snagged on a rusty dumpster.

A young woman in abdominal pain groaned loudly as she dug the heel of her palm into her stomach.

Nearby Albert Feliciano smiled from his gurney. A resident examined his right foot, which was swollen, oozing and missing two toes.

When he had gone to another hospital, the doctor there had proposed amputation. So he called Wyckoff.

“Dr. Guberman saved my foot,” Mr. Feliciano said, gazing at it happily. “I love it here.”

In Bushwick, [*close to 13 percent of adults*](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/data/2018chp-bk4.pdf) are diagnosed with diabetes, compared with 3 percent of adults in some of Manhattan’s wealthier neighborhoods. And in Bushwick, those with diabetes [*are far less likely to have the disease under control*](https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/nyc.health/viz/NewYorkCityNeighborhoodHealthAtlas/Home).

For many, the first step to doing so is a visit to Wyckoff’s diabetes clinic, close to the main hospital. One summer morning, Dr. Stella Ilyayeva dispensed advice at a fast clip as she saw six patients in one 40-minute stretch. “We drink only water,” she admonished as she left an exam room, finishing the thought across the hallway in the next patient’s room. “Nobody drinks juices.”

She chided patients for not refilling their diabetes medications. “Why’d you stop taking it, bad girl?” she said to a 59-year-old woman who looked away sheepishly. “Do you want dialysis? Amputation? Don’t curse my name later,” said Dr. Stella, as she is known in Bushwick.

The patient promised to take her medicine, but Dr. Stella was unconvinced, telling her to come back for another appointment within a month.

Mr. Rodriguez has a few ideas for the hospital’s future. His most ambitious plan is to sell the current site, in a rapidly gentrifying patch of Brooklyn, to developers and use the proceeds to build a smaller, modern high-rise hospital across the street on a parking lot.

If that doesn’t work, Mr. Rodriguez is hoping that a richer hospital system will absorb Wyckoff. For years, New York’s Health Department has been trying to push Wyckoff into an arranged marriage with Northwell Health, the state’s largest hospital system. Mr. Rodriguez hopes that if he can first persuade the state to invest more in Wyckoff — and in safety-net hospitals generally — Northwell might agree to not only absorb Wyckoff but also keep it open to the ***working class*** and poor.

But he and his colleagues are also wary. A large hospital system that absorbs Wyckoff will try to stem losses. One way to do that, Mr. Rodriguez said, is “by finding a way to see fewer Medicaid patients.”

Dr. Del Toro worries another institution would close down much of the hospital, until it was little more than an emergency room that sent patients onward to other institutions. “They’re not going to come here to provide,” he said. “They’re going to come here to extract, to suck away.”

In an interview, Michael Dowling, the chief executive of Northwell, noted that the gentrification and new development sweeping across Bushwick actually bodes well for the hospital.

“Wyckoff is going through some difficult times, but I do think Wyckoff has a future,” he said. Still, with Medicaid reimbursement rates so low, taking on a safety-net hospital could be a huge money loser for a larger, stable hospital system. “I’m not going to make a commitment at this point,” he said.

Nonetheless, Mr. Rodriguez has brought a new urgency to Wyckoff. In the past two years, the hospital received state approval to begin placing coronary stents, which means Wyckoff no longer sends every heart attack patient on a lengthy ambulance ride to Manhattan.

Wyckoff officials also talk of opening primary care doctors’ offices around the neighborhood and opening a large center devoted to diabetes care. Mr. Rodriguez hopes the hospital might one day expand its care capacity for stroke patients or receive a “trauma center” designation, which would allow it to treat gunshot victims. There is talk of renovating the maternity ward, adding showers to each room so new mothers needn’t line up, towels under their arms, to wait their turn at the shared stall.

For now, however, Wyckoff remains unable to pay all of its bills: It is currently [*tens of millions of dollars behind*](https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_audit/851220201) in bond payments.

“My biggest frustration is that no matter what we do, we remain a one-star institution,” said Dr. Del Toro.

“Knowing the people that work here, knowing what we do, it makes me feel like crying,” he added, as he teared up. “We haven’t been able to pull it off.”

Mr. Parris also has a feeling of dread about the future. More than 180 days after he was admitted with kidney failure, he was still living at the hospital, confined to a bed and engaged in a standoff with Wyckoff. One of these days, he knew, the hospital would force him to leave, and he was terrified.

When that happens, he fears he will become homeless.

As he grew more depressed this fall, Mr. Parris refused to talk to some of the hospital social workers about what lay ahead. And he had stopped participating in physical therapy. By then a fine layer of dust had begun to settle on the wheelchair in the corner.

PHOTOS: Top, Diana Calderón with one of her children in the neonatal intensive care unit at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center in Brooklyn in June. Above, the hospital’s emergency room. (MB1); From top, left column: doctors discussing a patient at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center in Brooklyn; the hospital, which serves neighborhoods that are largely Black and Hispanic; and a birth at Wyckoff, where new mothers in the maternity ward have to wait their turn for a shower.; Safety-net hospitals like Wyckoff care for some patients whom no one else will take, like Rodolfo Parris, top, who lacks legal status in this country. He has been at Wyckoff for more than six months. Although he has been given a wheelchair, above, Mr. Parris has not used it. Denied admission to nursing homes so far, he cannot be easily discharged. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DESIREE RIOS) (MB8-MB9) This article appeared in print on page MB1, MB8, MB9.

**Load-Date:** November 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Little Laughter Can Go a Long Way***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65S7-TY41-DXY4-X0MF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 24, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 966 words

**Body**

Looking for something to do in New York? See two-time Emmy winner John Mulaney take his first crack at dad jokes, or catch the iconoclastic, stubbornly noncommercial Vision Festival.

Comedy

John Mulaney

June 23-25 at 8 p.m. at Madison Square Garden, 4 Pennsylvania Plaza, Manhattan; msg.com.

When John Mulaney spoke to GQ at the end of 2020, he wasn't on a career high so much as a drug-induced one. Mulaney's friends staged an intervention shortly afterward, and the comedian checked himself into rehab for 60 days. The two-time Emmy winner and five-time host of ''Saturday Night Live'' has re-emerged with a new stand-up tour, ''From Scratch,'' wherein he deconstructs his bottoming out and how it has altered the public's perception of him, as well as the way he views himself. He also jokes about his new life as a father -- he had a son with the actress Olivia Munn in November 2021 -- but don't expect him to dissect the intimate details of his relationships. You can, however, buy an official tour T-shirt that boasts, ''I saw him right after he got outta rehab.'' Tickets start at $59.50 and are available at Ticketmaster. SEAN L. McCARTHY

Music

Sheer Mag

June 26 at 2 p.m. at Union Pool, 484 Union Avenue, Brooklyn; union-pool.com.

Back this month after a two-year pause, Union Pool's Summer Thunder series offers free live music every Sunday afternoon in the bar's outdoor courtyard -- an optimal summer hang. But when Tina Halladay and company take the stage at this weekend's edition, the vibe will be hardly laid-back. As the frontwoman of Sheer Mag, a four piece with roots in Philadelphia's D.I.Y. scene, Halladay commands the mic with live-wire energy. Her distinctive howl propels the band's '70s-influenced rock songs, which highlight charged topics like ***working-class*** strife (''Blood From a Stone''), abuse (''Cold Sword'') and political upheaval (''Expect the Bayonet,'' once featured at a Bernie Sanders campaign rally). At Union Pool, Sheer Mag shares the bill with the Brooklyn band Phantasia. An R.S.V.P. is not required for entry, but capacity is limited. OLIVIA HORN

Vision Festival

Through June 26 at various locations including Roulette, 509 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn; artsforart.org/vision.

One of New York's most iconoclastic, stubbornly noncommercial music festivals is also one of its most rooted and reliable. The Vision Festival has been holding space for free jazz and other kinds of spontaneous composition -- Butoh, performance poetry, action painting -- since the 1990s. This week, through Saturday starting at 6:30 each night, it's bringing five sets to Roulette in Downtown Brooklyn, including appearances from the rising tenor saxophonist Isaiah Collier, the vocalist Fay Victor and the bassist Joshua Abrams. Then, on Sunday at 4 p.m. at the Clemente Soto Vélez Cultural & Educational Center, in Lower Manhattan, this year's finale will feature a performance from the festival's youth ensemble (directed by William Parker) and a celebration of the career of Oliver Lake, the avant-garde saxophone icon, whose 80th birthday is in September. He shares this year's lifetime achievement honor with the trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith. Passes to the entire festival start at $350 to attend in-person and $75 to watch the livestream, and tickets to individual shows are $65 for in-person ($45 for students and seniors) and $15 for streaming; passes and tickets are available at Eventbrite. GIOVANNI RUSSONELLO

Kids

Sonia De Los Santos

June 24 at 4 and 7:15 p.m. at Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard, Queens; flushingtownhall.org.

Emily Dickinson called hope ''the thing with feathers,'' but on Friday, you can think of it as the thing with strings. That's when the singer and songwriter Sonia De Los Santos will bring her guitar and her jarana (a Mexican string instrument), as well as a full backup band, to Queens, where she will present bilingual concerts featuring numbers from her latest album, ''Esperanza'' (''Hope''). De Los Santos, a New Yorker who was born in Monterrey, Mexico, encourages little listeners to embrace Latin music. Although a family workshop between the shows is sold out, audience members can still learn about rhythms like huapango, cumbia and salsa as they dance and sing along in Spanish and English. Performing the title track from ''Esperanza'' and songs like ''Chichimoco'' and ''Sueña,'' De Los Santos will also offer tunes from her two previous family albums. They include one with a title that needs no translation: ''Chocolate.'' Tickets start at $8. LAUREL GRAEBER

Film

BAMcinemaFest

Through June 30 at Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn; bam.org.

''Nothing Lasts Forever,'' a documentary from Jason Kohn (''Manda Bala''), who worked for the director Errol Morris, leaves the impression that the value of diamonds is hardly rock-solid. It screens on Sunday at BAMcinemaFest, an annual series devoted to new offbeat documentaries and independent fiction films, several of which had their premieres at Sundance or South by Southwest. Exploring how synthetic diamonds have infiltrated the expensive-gem market, Kohn makes a damning case that nobody with an economic interest in these types of stones, from sellers to consumers, has an incentive to look too closely at authenticity, a concept the film suggests is becoming meaningless from a chemical perspective. Showing on Saturday is Morrisa Maltz's ''The Unknown Country,'' which puts the actress Lily Gladstone (who is in Martin Scorsese's forthcoming ''Killers of the Flower Moon'') at the center of a road movie that periodically digresses into documentary portraits of people her character meets along her drive. It resembles ''Nomadland,'' but with more ambiguity and less interest in overt social diagnosis. BEN KENIGSBERG

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/22/arts/what-to-do-in-new-york-city.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/22/arts/what-to-do-in-new-york-city.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The award-winning writer and comedian John Mulaney, who is on his ''From Scratch'' tour, will be onstage at Madison Square Garden through Saturday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DYNES MEDIA)

Lily Gladstone in a scene from ''The Unknown Country.'' (PHOTOGRAPH VIA BAMCINEMAFEST)

Oliver Lake, who will be honored by the Vision Festival this weekend. The avant-garde saxophonist is to turn 80 in September. (PHOTOGRAPH BY YANA PASKOVA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 24, 2022

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[***Sanders Is Electrifying Voters, Not Creating Them***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y91-CKG1-DXY4-X4W3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1447 words

**Byline:** By Sydney Ember and Nate Cohn

**Body**

Bernie Sanders has so far prevailed by expanding his appeal among traditional Democratic voters, not by driving record turnout.

CHARLESTON, S.C. -- It is the most politically provocative part of Senator Bernie Sanders's campaign pitch: that his progressive movement will bring millions of nonvoters into the November election, driving record turnout especially among disaffected ***working-class*** Americans and young people.

And yet despite a virtual tie in Iowa, a narrow victory in New Hampshire and a big triumph in Nevada, the first three nominating contests reveal a fundamental challenge for Mr. Sanders's political revolution: He may be winning, but not because of his longstanding pledge to expand the Democratic base.

The results so far show that Mr. Sanders has prevailed by broadening his appeal among traditional Democratic voters, not by fundamentally transforming the electorate.

In Iowa, for instance, turnout for the caucuses was lower than expected, up 3 percent compared with 2016, and the increase was concentrated in more well-educated areas where Mr. Sanders struggled, according to a New York Times analysis; in the Iowa precincts where Mr. Sanders won, turnout increased by only 1 percentage point.

There was no sign of a Sanders voter surge in New Hampshire either, nor on Saturday in Nevada, where the nearly final results indicated that turnout would finish above 2016 but well short of 2008 levels, despite a decade of population growth and a new early voting option that attracted some 75,000 voters. The low numbers are all the more striking given the huge turnout in the 2018 midterm elections, which was the highest in a century.

There was also no clear evidence across the early states of much greater participation by young people, a typically low-turnout group that makes up a core part of Mr. Sanders's base and that he has long said he can motivate to get out to the polls. And Mr. Sanders has struggled to overcome his longstanding weakness in affluent, well-educated suburbs, where Democrats excelled in the midterm elections and where many traditionally Republican voters are skeptical about President Trump's performance, meaning they could be up for grabs in November.

Because the moderate wing opposing Mr. Sanders, a Vermont liberal, is so fragmented, the lower-than-hoped-for turnout has not slowed his ascent. Sanders aides point to the simple fact that he has won, finishing atop all three states with a coalition of young people, ***working-class*** voters and people of color -- which was crucial to his victory in Nevada. And they say it is still early.

But many Democrats believe that for a general election, their nominee will need to pull in new voters, including those who sat out 2016 and moderate Republicans repelled by Mr. Trump. Even some inside the Sanders campaign expressed concern about the race's initial turnout.

''I grant that the turnouts aren't at the level that we would hope,'' Representative Ro Khanna of California, one of the campaign's national co-chairs, said before the Nevada caucuses.

''Do I think that there is room for growth,'' he said, ''and do I think that Senator Sanders would have liked the numbers to have been even further up among voters of color, among young voters, among ***working-class*** voters? Absolutely.''

Mr. Khanna expressed confidence that the numbers would increase in a general election contest against Mr. Trump, but said that the campaign had to ''keep pushing harder.''

On the campaign trail, Mr. Sanders, 78, has proclaimed that his ''is the campaign of energy, is the campaign of excitement, is the campaign that can bring millions of people into the political process who normally do not vote.'' In rallies in Texas over the weekend, as his resounding victory in Nevada was becoming clear, he conveyed an air of triumph, drawing enormous crowds as his campaign made plans to solidify his front-runner status by Super Tuesday on March 3.

''If the cameras turn on this crowd, and our friends in Wall Street and the drug companies see this kind of crowd, you're going to really get them nervous,'' Mr. Sanders declared to thousands at a rally in Austin on Sunday.

Mr. Sanders's rivals have rejected the premise that he will expand the Democratic Party's base, saying he is too rigid in his worldview. ''Senator Sanders believes in an inflexible, ideological revolution that leaves out most Democrats, not to mention most Americans,'' Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., said in his concession speech in Nevada on Saturday.

As Mr. Sanders and his opponents prepare for the South Carolina primary on Saturday, The Times's analysis of the first three states show some challenging signs for his goal of producing a surge in turnout. In New Hampshire, for instance, turnout increased far less in townships he won than it did in townships won by Mr. Buttigieg and by Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota.

The share of the electorate made up of first-time Democratic voters also decreased in Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada compared with 2016. And unlike four years ago, when Mr. Sanders mobilized far more first-time voters than Hillary Clinton did (averaging a 30-point lead over Mrs. Clinton across the three states), he had only a modest 10-point edge over his closest rival, Mr. Buttigieg, in that metric this time around.

Among young people, entrance poll data showed that the share of those voters remained essentially unchanged across the three early states. Participation was basically flat in precincts and townships in New Hampshire and Iowa where 18- to 24-year-olds made up more than 50 percent of the population.

For months, Mr. Sanders has consolidated support on the left and successfully parried challenges from moderates in the race. He has amassed the largest war chest of any Democratic candidate and has an army of loyal supporters. His aides and advisers are optimistic about his path to the nomination as the most crucial delegate-rich phase of the race approaches.

Jeff Weaver, a top strategist to Mr. Sanders, pointed to strong performances with ***working-class*** voters in places like Manchester, N.H., and Latino voters in Nashua, N.H., and categorically rebuffed questions about the Sanders turnout machine.

''His movement is working, which is evidenced by the fact that he is winning,'' Mr. Weaver said.

Although Mr. Sanders has not yet realized his goal of spurring greater voter turnout, there are signs his campaign strategy is flourishing in other respects. One of the biggest changes between his previous presidential bid and the one this year is that he now seems to fare as well among nonwhite voters as his nearest rivals.

In Nevada, Mr. Sanders won nonwhite voters by a 19-point margin, according to an entrance poll, far greater than his 10-point margin among white voters. The result is consistent with recent national surveys, such as ones this month by Monmouth University and NBC/Marist, which show Mr. Sanders winning a higher vote share among nonwhite than white voters.

His campaign aggressively courted Latinos in the state for months, sending out mailers, knocking on doors and making calls urging them to caucus. In the end, Mr. Sanders won Latino voters by an overwhelming 51 to 17 percent margin, according to the entrance polls, a feat that would leave him well positioned in Texas and California on Super Tuesday.

Yet Latino voters, surprisingly, appeared to represent an even smaller share of the Nevada caucus electorate than they did four years ago, according to entrance poll results, even as the same polls showed Mr. Sanders riding their overwhelming support to victory statewide.

Larry Cohen, a longtime adviser to Mr. Sanders who serves as chairman of Our Revolution, the organization that spun out of the senator's 2016 presidential campaign, said it was incumbent upon grass-roots groups and the 2020 campaign ''to demonstrate that we can significantly boost turnout,'' especially in swing states like Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin.

During a rally at the University of Houston on Sunday after his commanding victory in Nevada, Mr. Sanders -- as he had in Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada -- aspired to a ''large voter turnout'' on Super Tuesday, when voting takes place in Texas and 13 other states.

Saying he wanted to motivate ''working people and young people, people who have given up on the political process, people of all shades who believe in economic justice, social justice, racial justice, environmental justice,'' he forecast a victory in Texas both in the primary and against Mr. Trump in November.

Sydney Ember reported from Charleston, and Nate Cohn from New York.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/us/politics/bernie-sanders-democratic-voters.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/us/politics/bernie-sanders-democratic-voters.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders won nonwhite voters by a 19-point margin in Nevada, according to an entrance poll, far greater than his 10-point margin among white voters. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIDGET BENNETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** February 25, 2020

**End of Document**



[***9 Great Godard Films to Stream Now***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66CJ-JV51-DXY4-X4R4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1288 words

**Byline:** Noel Murray

**Highlight:** From the youthful New Wave excitement of “Breathless” to the experimental works of his old age, Godard changed cinema.

**Body**

From the youthful New Wave excitement of “Breathless” to the experimental works of his old age, Godard changed cinema.

Jean-Luc Godard[*has died at 91*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/13/obituaries/jean-luc-godard-dead.html). One of the pioneers of the French New Wave, Godard and his movie-mad contemporaries rebelled against the square cinematic conventions of the 1950s. They redefined the canon to include then-disreputable American genre pictures, created characters who articulated their own passions and opinions, and illustrated that the tried-and-true techniques of professional filmmaking were stifling and unnecessary.

Between 1960 and 1967, the prolific Godard made over a dozen feature films in a multiplicity of styles — presented with exuberance and wit — creating a body of work that later directors would draw on for inspiration. He excited his peers and his successors with how he expanded the vocabulary and potential of the medium. He then shifted into cine-essays that alternated direct political commentary and poetic imagery, forging a new genre that could best be called “Godardian.”

These nine streaming Godard movies feature the work that won his international fame and his more challenging later films, which saw him trying to stretch his audience’s understanding of what a movie could be.

“Breathless”

Godard’s feature-length debut is as startlingly radical now as it was back in 1960. Ostensibly about a cool, remorseless criminal (played by Jean-Paul Belmondo) and his capricious American lover (Jean Seberg), “Breathless” changed cinema with the way its director told the story. Godard is just as interested in watching his characters goof around on an ordinary Parisian day as in seeing them shoot guns or break laws. Whenever the action in any given scene starts to bore him, he and his editor jump-cut to something else, regardless of whether the results look clean. Rather than coming across as amateurish, the experiments with form still feel fresh and youthful — proving that maybe cinema doesn’t need any rules.

Stream it on [*HBO Max,*](https://play.hbomax.com/page/urn:hbo:page:GXnvVsAz4WICgwwEAAA6X:type:feature) [*Criterion*](https://www.criterionchannel.com/breathless) or[*Kanopy*](https://www.kanopy.com/en/product/113371); rent or buy it on [*Amazon Prime*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0NPXH5090P20TI7RPDOKWW9K1Y/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20), [*Apple TV,*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/breathless/umc.cmc.5x8h6lz4jhr5dx98yte0noogi?playableId=tvs.sbd.9001%3A474378935) [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/Breathless?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=KuBCXRtFvO8), [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Breathless%2Bmovie)or [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Breathless/286076?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=dd58a442335511ed825e2fed0a82b836&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_9523ad32596a44999d6d776c3eb430fa&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww).

“A Woman Is a Woman”

Arguably the director’s most frivolous film, “A Woman Is a Woman” was described at the time as “a neorealist musical” — two genres that would seem pretty incompatible. Godard’s soon-to-be wife Anna Karina plays a stripper, trying to rope one of the men in her life into impregnating her. Emboldened by the success of “Breathless,” Godard shreds even more conventions. He chops Michel Legrand’s lush score into disconnected fragments, has characters address the camera, exposes his own artifice, and generally expresses his sense that real life is just one long movie.

Rent or buy it on [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/a-woman-is-a-woman/umc.cmc.1sd1uk8wxzmzg8a26mswkiqhl?at=1000l3V2&amp;ct=justwatch_tv&amp;playableId=tvs.sbd.9001%3A895314380), [*Amazon Prime*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0KRD5PFCPA2STLET9OXDWOTZGD/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/A_Woman_Is_A_Woman_Aka_Une_Femme_Est_Une_Femme?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=J-WWDfgLDg8), [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=A+Woman+Is+A+Woman+%28Aka+Une+Femme+Est+Une+Femme%29%2Bmovie), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Une-Femme-est-Une-Femme-A-Woman-is-a-Woman/13660?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=53e1eddb335611ed82f600570a82b820&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_a142892d824e4f5caf08bbbbf41f5a8c&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww) or [*Microsoft.*](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/p/a-woman-is-a-woman/8d6kgwztzx2n?activetab=pivot%3aoverviewtab)

“Vivre Sa Vie”

Godard followed the giddy playtime of “A Woman Is a Woman” with the much bleaker, unusually straightforward “Vivre Sa Vie” (a.k.a. “My Life to Live”). Anna Karina plays an aspiring actress who has to work as a prostitute to get by, finding herself adopting a variety of different roles to keep her clients satisfied. Leaving aside the self-reference and winks at the audience, the director instead tells this highly metafictional story in a dozen docu-realistic vignettes, revealing the alienation of urban life and the cruelty of men.

Stream it on [*HBO Max*](https://play.hbomax.com/page/urn:hbo:page:GXnAoKg8wyp4_wwEAAEou:type:feature), [*Criterion*](https://www.criterionchannel.com/vivre-sa-vie) or [*Kanopy*](https://www.kanopy.com/en/product/113397).

“Alphaville”

A chilly take on dystopian science-fiction, this rare Godard fantasy film was shot in early 1960s Paris, unaltered in any way to look more futuristic. “Alphaville” puts a rumpled, noir-ready secret agent against a backdrop of mid-20th-century modernism, and lets the visual clash between the character and his habitat reflect the artist’s own dim view of how technology strangles the life out of humanity. Genre filmmakers in a post-“Alphaville” world would have to reckon with how Godard made the ordinary seem alien.

Stream it on [*Kanopy*](https://www.kanopy.com/en/product/5435455) or rent it on [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/alphaville/umc.cmc.464a3max0ikefa6s52wzseg9x?at=1000l3V2&amp;ct=justwatch_tv&amp;playableId=tvs.sbd.9001%3A337784103), [*Amazon Prime*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0GQFRMPDI5UGDYIF6EWUDHPMWZ/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/Alphaville?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=VX4Dyj47dWY), [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Alphaville/13362?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=ef54f4fb335f11ed816000600a82b839&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_1d9871928c0344e7938ad9563ac57c86&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww) or [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Alphaville%2Bmovie).

“Weekend”

The apotheosis of Godard’s early work, “Weekend” crams astonishing imagery and provocative ideas into nearly every minute, all while telling a grabby satirical story about a truly horrible and casually violent upper-middle-class couple, whose trip into the country becomes a suitably ironic nightmare. The film’s centerpiece sequence is a long tracking shot across an epic traffic jam, dotted with pathetic rage and punctuated by stomach-turning gore. Altogether, this movie is one long howl of disgust, delivered with enough energy and humor to be gripping.

Stream it on [*HBOMax*](https://www.hbomax.com/?offer_id=5&amp;transaction_id=1026df19891b4e98e082bc6f6b5bfc&amp;affiliate_id=1001&amp;aff_click_id=a80303bf542f42c39d2be50e3fabd23c&amp;utm_source=JustWatch+GmbH&amp;utm_medium=affiliate&amp;utm_id=27047578) or [*Criterion*](https://www.criterionchannel.com/weekend).

1968

“Sympathy for the Devil”

After “Weekend,” Godard’s frustration with cinema — even his boundary-less variety — reached a peak. For the next half-decade, he dedicated himself to pioneering something new. He shed the dry humor of his early experiments and replaced it with ever more strident politics, forcing his audience to confront the realities of racism, the Vietnam War, and what he assumed was the coming revolution. One of the most enduring artifacts of this era is “Sympathy for the Devil” (a.k.a. “One Plus One”), which combines disconnected documentary footage with The Rolling Stones’ grueling recording process for the titular song. It’s not “entertaining” per se, but it’s fascinating as a portrait of a time when “Godard” had become a brand — so much so that he was allowed to reduce one of the most popular rock acts in the world into a mere motif in his stream-of-consciousness Marxist tract.

Rent it on [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/sympathy-for-the-devil/umc.cmc.21uwrl121ehyesi4wiodurcj0?at=1000l3V2&amp;ct=justwatch_tv&amp;playableId=tvs.sbd.9001%3A1434177760) or [*Amazon Prime*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/0H3BA153H7N1XSZFP0AXWQLE7T/ref=atv_dl_rdr?tag=justus1ktp-20).

“First Name: Carmen”

An atypical exercise in adaptation, 1983’s “First Name: Carmen” turns Georges Bizet’s opera into the erotically charged tale of a revolutionary and the soldier she bewitches. Godard revives his love of American genre movies, staging both a bank-robbery and a kidnapping — while riffing on the forbidden romance of old Hollywood melodramas. He also carries his bomb-throwing ’70s politics into the era of Reagan and Thatcher, for one of his most accessible and impassioned films.

Stream it on [*Kanopy*](https://www.kanopy.com/en/product/5534959) or rent it on [*Kino*](https://kinonow.com/film/first-name-carmen/5cf535b3ea906d5cb7736034).

“Hail Mary”

Largely out of the cultural conversation for the better part of a decade, Godard suddenly became scandalous again in 1985 with his movie about a ***working-class*** virgin named Mary, who gets mysteriously pregnant. Removed from the reactionary conservative politics of the mid-80s — and considered in the context of Godard’s entire filmography — “Hail Mary” is nowhere near as shocking as it once seemed. It’s actually a film of great sensitivity and yearning; and it’s beautiful to look at too, with images of suns and moons designed to echo the heroine’s round tummy. Hardly anti-religion, this picture is primarily a meditation on miracles, as they appear in nature and in human interactions.

Stream it on [*Kanopy*](https://www.kanopy.com/product/231465?frontend=kui); rent it on [*Vudu*](https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Hail-Mary/81841?cj=--8484082--5014360-_-Deep+Link+Text+Link&amp;cjevent=c3368aff336011ed816000610a82b839&amp;cjid=cj_14516778_8484082_34a98763a9f24b8a88901391e4d6b0e5&amp;cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww), [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/hail-mary/umc.cmc.3zgi9onxguh984ttdrps0ck8m?at=1000l3V2&amp;ct=justwatch_tv&amp;playableId=tvs.sbd.9001%3A1490341620), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/Hail_Mary?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=pc9fLet74CQ.P), [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Hail+Mary%2Bmovie), [*Microsoft*](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/p/hail-mary/8d6kgwzj5n4p) or [*Kino*](https://kinonow.com/film/hail-mary/5f6c9d3e3685bd00019e9b46).

“Goodbye to Language”

One of Godard’s final films takes a slim story about a bickering couple and threads it through a succession of academic discussions about semantics. “Goodbye to Language” was shot in 3-D, and takes one of the more original approaches to the format by sending different pictures into the viewers’ right and left eyes during some scenes. Yet even without that gimmick (which is absent from the streaming version), the movie is both artful and challenging, pitting images against words in what might be called a uniquely Godardian war movie: where ideas fight ideas.

Stream it on [*Kanopy*](https://www.kanopy.com/en/product/175895) or [*Plex*](https://watch.plex.tv/movie/goodbye-to-language?autoplay=1&amp;utm_content=629a10badee29e6426c8d7f8&amp;utm_medium=deeplink&amp;utm_source=justWatch-catalog); rent it on [*Apple TV*](https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/goodbye-to-language/umc.cmc.5v5gqc2j5leaw8do28kimn5e7?at=1000l3V2&amp;ct=justwatch_tv&amp;playableId=tvs.sbd.9001%3A967337981), [*Google Play*](https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/Goodbye_To_Language?gl=US&amp;hl=en&amp;id=Rtn8RreQ06o), [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Goodbye+To+Language%2Bmovie), or [*Kino*](https://kinonow.com/film/goodbye-to-language/5cc8b114526dbc6bdc730d42).

PHOTOS: PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY RIALTO PICTURES/STUDIOCANAL; JANUS FILMS; PATHÉ CONSORTIUM CINÉMA; ATHOS FILMS) (A24); PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CRITERION COLLECTION ABKCO FILMS; SARA FILMS; SARA FILMS, VIA EVERETT COLLECTION; KINO LORBER) (A25)

**Load-Date:** September 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Sanders Says He’ll Attract a Wave of New Voters. It Hasn’t Happened.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y8Y-FP01-JBG3-61WS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 24, 2020 Monday 11:38 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1472 words

**Byline:** Sydney Ember and Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Bernie Sanders has so far prevailed by expanding his appeal among traditional Democratic voters, not by driving record turnout.

**Body**

Bernie Sanders has so far prevailed by expanding his appeal among traditional Democratic voters, not by driving record turnout.

CHARLESTON, S.C. — It is the most politically provocative part of Senator Bernie Sanders’s campaign pitch: that his progressive movement will bring millions of nonvoters into the November election, driving record turnout especially among disaffected ***working-class*** Americans and young people.

And yet despite a virtual tie in Iowa, a narrow victory in New Hampshire and a big triumph in Nevada, the first three nominating contests reveal a fundamental challenge for Mr. Sanders’s political revolution: He may be winning, but not because of his longstanding pledge to expand the Democratic base.

The results so far show that Mr. Sanders has prevailed by broadening his appeal among traditional Democratic voters, not by fundamentally transforming the electorate.

In Iowa, for instance, turnout for the caucuses was lower than expected, up 3 percent compared with 2016, and the increase was concentrated in more well-educated areas where Mr. Sanders struggled, according to a New York Times analysis; in the Iowa precincts where Mr. Sanders won, turnout increased by only 1 percentage point.

There was no sign of a Sanders voter surge in New Hampshire either, nor on Saturday in Nevada, where the nearly final results indicated that turnout would finish above 2016 but well short of 2008 levels, despite a decade of population growth and a new early voting option that attracted some 75,000 voters. The low numbers are all the more striking given the huge turnout in the 2018 midterm elections, which was the highest in a century.

There was also no clear evidence across the early states of much greater participation by young people, a typically low-turnout group that makes up a core part of Mr. Sanders’s base and that he has long said he can motivate to get out to the polls. And Mr. Sanders has struggled to overcome his longstanding weakness in affluent, well-educated suburbs, where Democrats excelled in the midterm elections and where many traditionally Republican voters are skeptical about President Trump’s performance, meaning they could be up for grabs in November.

Because the moderate wing opposing Mr. Sanders, a Vermont liberal, is so fragmented, the lower-than-hoped-for turnout has not slowed his ascent. Sanders aides point to the simple fact that he has won, finishing atop all three states with a coalition of young people, ***working-class*** voters and people of color — which was crucial to his victory in Nevada. And they say it is still early.

But many Democrats believe that for a general election, their nominee will need to pull in new voters, including those who sat out 2016 and moderate Republicans repelled by Mr. Trump. Even some inside the Sanders campaign expressed concern about the race’s initial turnout.

“I grant that the turnouts aren’t at the level that we would hope,” Representative Ro Khanna of California, one of the campaign’s national co-chairs, said before the Nevada caucuses.

“Do I think that there is room for growth,” he said, “and do I think that Senator Sanders would have liked the numbers to have been even further up among voters of color, among young voters, among ***working-class*** voters? Absolutely.”

Mr. Khanna expressed confidence that the numbers would increase in a general election contest against Mr. Trump, but said that the campaign had to “keep pushing harder.”

On the campaign trail, Mr. Sanders, 78, has proclaimed that his “is the campaign of energy, is the campaign of excitement, is the campaign that can bring millions of people into the political process who normally do not vote.” In rallies in Texas over the weekend, as his resounding victory in Nevada was becoming clear, he conveyed an air of triumph, drawing enormous crowds as his campaign made plans to solidify his front-runner status by Super Tuesday on March 3.

“If the cameras turn on this crowd, and our friends in Wall Street and the drug companies see this kind of crowd, you’re going to really get them nervous,” Mr. Sanders declared to thousands at a rally in Austin on Sunday.

Mr. Sanders’s rivals have rejected the premise that he will expand the Democratic Party’s base, saying he is too rigid in his worldview. “Senator Sanders believes in an inflexible, ideological revolution that leaves out most Democrats, not to mention most Americans,” Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., said in his concession speech in Nevada on Saturday.

As Mr. Sanders and his opponents prepare for the South Carolina primary on Saturday, The Times’s analysis of the first three states show some challenging signs for his goal of producing a surge in turnout. In New Hampshire, for instance, turnout increased far less in townships he won than it did in townships won by Mr. Buttigieg and by Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota.

The share of the electorate made up of first-time Democratic voters also decreased in Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada compared with 2016. And unlike four years ago, when Mr. Sanders mobilized far more first-time voters than Hillary Clinton did (averaging a 30-point lead over Mrs. Clinton across the three states), he had only a modest 10-point edge over his closest rival, Mr. Buttigieg, in that metric this time around.

Among young people, entrance poll data showed that the share of those voters remained essentially unchanged across the three early states. Participation was basically flat in precincts and townships in New Hampshire and Iowa where 18- to 24-year-olds made up more than 50 percent of the population.

For months, Mr. Sanders has consolidated support on the left and successfully parried challenges from moderates in the race. He has amassed the largest war chest of any Democratic candidate and has an army of loyal supporters. His aides and advisers are optimistic about his path to the nomination as the most crucial delegate-rich phase of the race approaches.

Jeff Weaver, a top strategist to Mr. Sanders, pointed to strong performances with ***working-class*** voters in places like Manchester, N.H., and Latino voters in Nashua, N.H., and categorically rebuffed questions about the Sanders turnout machine.

“His movement is working, which is evidenced by the fact that he is winning,” Mr. Weaver said.

Although Mr. Sanders has not yet realized his goal of spurring greater voter turnout, there are signs his campaign strategy is flourishing in other respects. One of the biggest changes between his previous presidential bid and the one this year is that he now seems to fare as well among nonwhite voters as his nearest rivals.

In Nevada, Mr. Sanders won nonwhite voters by a 19-point margin, according to an entrance poll, far greater than his 10-point margin among white voters. The result is consistent with recent national surveys, such as ones this month by Monmouth University and NBC/Marist, which show Mr. Sanders winning a higher vote share among nonwhite than white voters.

His campaign aggressively courted Latinos in the state for months, sending out mailers, knocking on doors and making calls urging them to caucus. In the end, Mr. Sanders won Latino voters by an overwhelming 51 to 17 percent margin, according to the entrance polls, a feat that would leave him well positioned in Texas and California on Super Tuesday.

Yet Latino voters, surprisingly, appeared to represent an even smaller share of the Nevada caucus electorate than they did four years ago, according to entrance poll results, even as the same polls showed Mr. Sanders riding their overwhelming support to victory statewide.

Larry Cohen, a longtime adviser to Mr. Sanders who serves as chairman of Our Revolution, the organization that spun out of the senator’s 2016 presidential campaign, said it was incumbent upon grass-roots groups and the 2020 campaign “to demonstrate that we can significantly boost turnout,” especially in swing states like Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin.

During a rally at the University of Houston on Sunday after his commanding victory in Nevada, Mr. Sanders — as he had in Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada — aspired to a “large voter turnout” on Super Tuesday, when voting takes place in Texas and 13 other states.

Saying he wanted to motivate “working people and young people, people who have given up on the political process, people of all shades who believe in economic justice, social justice, racial justice, environmental justice,” he forecast a victory in Texas both in the primary and against Mr. Trump in November.

Sydney Ember reported from Charleston, and Nate Cohn from New York.

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders won nonwhite voters by a 19-point margin in Nevada, according to an entrance poll, far greater than his 10-point margin among white voters. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIDGET BENNETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2020

**End of Document**



[***This Time, a Michigan Surprise Could Sting Sanders***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YCK-5331-DXY4-X1YC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 7, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1013 words

**Byline:** By Nate Cohn

**Body**

An analysis of how states have voted so far, particularly white voters, shows he's vulnerable to a reversal of his striking victory there in 2016.

It seems clear that Bernie Sanders needs to change the fundamental trajectory of the Democratic primary over the coming 12 days. And at first glance, the next contests -- the states voting Tuesday -- would seem to offer a promising set of opportunities. Among them is Michigan, where he posted the signature victory of his 2016 bid.

But an analysis of the primary results so far suggests that Michigan might not be as favorable to him as it was four years ago. Instead of giving him a chance to reclaim his momentum, Michigan could wind up dealing him a stinging and symbolic defeat.

[Read: As Bernie Sanders pushed for closer ties, the Soviet Union spotted opportunity.]

Of course, Super Tuesday demonstrates that a lot can change in just a few days. Perhaps Elizabeth Warren's departure will provide a needed boost. Maybe Mr. Sanders will succeed in blunting Joe Biden's support in Michigan by attacking his record on trade, or perhaps Mr. Biden will come under scrutiny and lose momentum, just as Mr. Sanders did after his big victory in Nevada.

Michigan will also be the first state in the industrial Midwest to vote; it is possible that the trends evident elsewhere won't materialize there.

But Mr. Sanders has so far failed to match his 2016 strength across the white, ***working-class*** North this year, and that suggests it will be hard for him to win Michigan.

This pattern has held without exception this primary season. It was true in Iowa and New Hampshire against Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar. It was true in Maine, Minnesota, Massachusetts and even Vermont on Super Tuesday against Mr. Biden.

Over all, Mr. Biden defeated Mr. Sanders by 10 points, 38 percent to 28 percent, in counties across Maine, Minnesota and Massachusetts where white voters made up at least 80 percent of the electorate and where college graduates represented less than 40 percent of the electorate. According to the exit polls, Mr. Biden was tied or ahead among white voters in every state east of the Mississippi River on Super Tuesday.

This is a marked departure from 2016. Back then, Mr. Sanders tended to excel among white, ***working-class*** and rural voters across the North. This made Michigan, where white voters represent a well-above-average share of the Democratic electorate, one of his stronger states. He dominated in Michigan's small towns and rural areas, losing only in few counties that tended to have older voters.

It is hard to say why Mr. Sanders has faltered among these voters, given the consistency of his message and his improved name recognition. One possibility is that many of his 2016 supporters were casting protest votes against Hillary Clinton. Another possibility is that many former supporters of Mr. Sanders ultimately backed the president and are now lost to the Democrats.

Whatever the cause, Mr. Sanders has often made up for losses in white, ***working-class*** areas this year with gains among Latino voters and white voters who live in left-liberal areas. In a sense, he has traded strength in states like Maine and Minnesota for strength in California. This is a bad trade in Michigan, where Latino voters make up only a sliver of the Democratic electorate. It may be an even worse trade in Michigan than it was in Minnesota or Maine, since there are relatively few overwhelmingly Democratic left-liberal enclaves akin to Minneapolis or Portland, Maine. Only Ann Arbor and Lansing fall into a similar category.

There are few obvious opportunities for Mr. Sanders to make up ground in Michigan. It has an above-average black population, and Mr. Biden will most likely win black voters by a comfortable margin, even if a more modest one than in the South. The suburbs around Detroit are not likely to be particularly favorable for Mr. Sanders, either. He lost suburban Oakland and Macomb Counties in 2016, and he has consistently struggled in affluent suburbs this cycle.

One area where Mr. Sanders might hope to rekindle his old magic is in Western Michigan, where he defeated Mrs. Clinton by a wide margin in metropolitan Grand Rapids. But this region is probably not populous enough to carry Mr. Sanders to victory on its own. Mr. Biden might also excel among more moderate voters who chose to participate in the more competitive 2016 Republican primary last time, but might now vote in the Democratic race.

The rest of the states voting Tuesday offer few obvious opportunities for Mr. Sanders to turn around the race. Yes, there are Washington and Idaho, two states with liberal Democratic voters similar to those in California, Utah and Colorado, where Mr. Sanders won on Super Tuesday.

But even big wins in these two states may not impress. They won't be surprises, for one thing, given his record of success in the region. Mr. Sanders is also highly likely to underperform his 50-point wins there from 2016. This is not a fair comparison for Mr. Sanders -- these were caucus states four years ago, a format he excelled in, and they are now holding primaries -- but it may not stop the comparison from being made.

Mr. Biden will have strong states of his own Tuesday. Mississippi could be Mr. Biden's strongest state in the country, as it was for Mrs. Clinton in 2016, because black voters there make up a larger share of the electorate than in any other state. Missouri poses a Michigan-like challenge for Mr. Sanders, but here the more conservative white vote would seem to offer even fewer opportunities for Mr. Sanders.

Without a decisive shift to Mr. Sanders on Tuesday, Mr. Biden could keep his momentum rolling into the next wave of states on March 17: Florida, Illinois, Arizona and Ohio. After Georgia votes a week later, 64 percent of all the delegates to the Democratic National Convention will have been awarded. If Mr. Biden fares as well in these states as he did in demographically similar areas on Super Tuesday, he will probably claim a delegate lead that is impossible to reverse.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/upshot/bernie-sanders-michigan-problem.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/upshot/bernie-sanders-michigan-problem.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders is hoping Michigan will help him reclaim momentum, but the race so far suggests the state might not be as favorable to him as it was in 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLISON FARRAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Bernie Sanders Might Have a Michigan Problem***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC4-TG01-JBG3-600W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 6, 2020 Friday 18:24 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 1030 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** An analysis of how states have voted so far, particularly white voters, shows he’s vulnerable to a reversal of his striking victory there in 2016.

**Body**

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PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders is hoping Michigan will help him reclaim momentum, but the race so far suggests the state might not be as favorable to him as it was in 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLISON FARRAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2020

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[***A space heater is blamed for the deadly fire in a Bronx apartment building.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GY-22T1-DXY4-X42P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 9, 2022 Sunday 19:07 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 685 words

**Byline:** Matthew Haag, Ashley Southall and Jeffery C. Mays

**Highlight:** The blaze started in a duplex apartment on the second and third floors, and its smoke quickly spread throughout the building.

**Body**

The blaze started in a duplex apartment on the second and third floors, and its smoke quickly spread throughout the building.

A malfunctioning space heater caused the fire in a Bronx apartment Sunday, and an open door to the apartment allowed thick, black smoke to quickly fill the high-rise building, Fire Department Commissioner Daniel Nigro said.

The blaze started just before 11 a.m. in a duplex apartment on the second and third floors of the building, on East 181st Street, according to the Fire Department.

At a news conference on Sunday, Mayor Eric Adams and Mr. Nigro said that the fire was caused by an electric space heater that malfunctioned, but they didn’t give additional details. The Commissioner said he believed the heat was working in the building and that the heater was being used to supplement the heat.

The fire started in a bedroom of the apartment, Mr. Nigro said.

“The door to that apartment, unfortunately, when the residents left, was left open. It did not close by itself,” Mr. Nigro said. “The smoke spread throughout the building, thus the tremendous loss of life and other people fighting for their lives right now in hospitals all over the Bronx.”

Because the door was open, the fire reached the hall, Mr. Nigro said, but it never extended anywhere else in the building.

One of the first calls about the fire came from a neighbor who heard the smoke alarm, the commissioner said.

The building had 120 units, including studios and four-bedroom apartments. The building had internal stair wells, not external fire escapes, and residents should have known where escape routes were located, Mr. Nigro said. However, the volume of smoke likely obstructed people’s ability to escape, he added.

The Department of Buildings sent inspectors to conduct a structural stability inspection of the building.

The building, named Twin Parks North West, is home to ***working-class*** families, many of whom depend on Section 8 rental assistance. Several residents said that the fire alarms were heard so frequently, they were often ignored. Dana Nicole Campbell, who lives on the third floor, said the fire alarms in the building go off five or six times a day. When they do, she said, “I roll my eyes.”

Kelly Magee, a spokeswoman for the property owners, said that the fire alarm system was working and that there were no known problems with the smoke alarms.

Some victims were found trapped in the stairwells and others in their apartments, and one man narrowly escaped when the elevator arrived as he was losing consciousness, Mr. Feliz said.

The specific vouchers they use in the development are not transferable, Mr. Feliz said, adding that it would be difficult for them to find permanent housing.

“It’s a tragedy,” he said. “We’re talking about some of the poorest New Yorkers.”

The Bronx building is owned by a group of investors, LIHC Investment Group, Belveron Partners and Camber Property Group, who bought it as part of a $166 million deal in early 2020 for eight rent-regulated buildings in the borough.

Camber Property Group, which operates affordable housing properties across New York City, most of which are in the Bronx, is one of the fastest-growing developers of affordable housing in the city.

Camber’s co-founder, Rick Gropper, was named as a member of Mr. Adams’s transition team for housing issues before Mr. Adams took office this month.

“We are devastated by the unimaginable loss of life caused by this profound tragedy,” the property owners said in a statement. “We are cooperating fully with the Fire Department and other city agencies as they investigate its cause, and we are doing all we can to assist our residents. Our thoughts are with the families and friends of those who lost their lives or were injured, and we are here to support them as we recover from this horrific fire.”

Azi Paybarah contributed to this article.

Azi Paybarah contributed to this article.

PHOTO: The door to the apartment where the fire started was left open, which helped fuel the fire and allowed the smoke to spread.  (PHOTOGRAPH BY David Dee Delgado for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Roving Eye / Lived Experience***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66C4-DGT1-DXY4-X10P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 11, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 16; ROVING EYE

**Length:** 1357 words

**Byline:** By J. Hoberman

**Body**

To read ''Last Times,'' by Victor Serge, is to watch the accelerating catastrophe of the Nazi invasion of France.

Franz Kafka speaks for us all but there may be no other European writer who experienced the tumultuous first half of the 20th century more profoundly than Victor Serge (1890-1947).

A man of action and letters, the author of seven works of fiction plus two confiscated by the Soviet police, a history, a memoir and a recently published journal that is the equal of any novel, Serge was also an anarchist agitator, a participant in two revolutions (Barcelona in 1917 and Russia in 1919), a Bolshevik, a Comintern agent, a radical journalist and pamphleteer (defending Trotsky, attacking Stalin), a political prisoner, a cause célèbre and a stateless fugitive.

Serge was born in one exile, as the child of Russian dissidents who sought refuge in Belgium, and died in another, having escaped to Mexico from German-occupied France. His life is the stuff of novels, including his own.

LAST TIMES (New York Review Books, 390 pp., paper, $19.95), Serge's penultimate work of fiction, was written in Mexico in the early 1940s while the nearly penniless writer was taking in pre-Columbian monuments, consorting with refugee Surrealists, dodging Stalinist hit men and, apparently, wondering how best to write a popular novel. Serge's last, most modernist fiction, ''Unforgiving Years,'' can serve as a final testament. ''Last Times'' is something else. According to Richard Greeman, Serge's longtime critical champion and frequent English-language translator, the author's American friends, including the Partisan Review editor Dwight Macdonald, were frustrated in their attempts to get his earlier books published in the United States, hence his attempt to write something more commercial.

Translated by Ralph Manheim and released in the United States as ''The Long Dusk'' in 1946, ''Last Times'' would be the lone Serge novel to have an American edition in his lifetime. (His best-known work, ''The Case of Comrade Tulayev,'' highly regarded for its evocation of the Stalinist show trials, was published in English in 1950.) ''Last Times'' opens with a long, evocative portrait of the Marais, then a ***working-class***, immigrant district in Paris, frozen in the searchlight of history. Denial gives way to mounting panic as a trickle of French deserters and then German troops enter the city; after the Fall, the book kicks into an exciting, mordant rondo of arrests, denunciations, assassinations and executions, as experienced by a large, varied cast of talkative characters. Although not all of these characters are authorial mouthpieces, ''Last Times'' begins with a laconic bit of personal wisdom: ''Everything doesn't collapse all at once.''

To read ''Last Times'' is to watch an accelerating catastrophe. Watch is the operative word. Serge's novel suggests a treatment for a social disaster movie. Written in the midst of World War II, it spans a bit more than a year, from the capture of Paris in June 1940 to the German invasion of the Soviet Union the following June, and often evokes a three-hour film epic with an all-star international cast.

When the arrival of German tanks dissolves the initial tenement symphony, the narrative spills south in a chaotic exodus from Paris, described with the observed immediacy of Irène Némirovsky's ''Suite Française.'' The principal characters make their way to Marseille, as did Serge in 1940, desperately seeking a way out of Europe. The book's final section has affinities to the novel ''Transit,'' written in Mexico around the same time by Anna Seghers, a fellow refugee who escaped on the same overcrowded boat that Serge took (along with André Breton and Claude Lévi-Strauss), and who, as a Stalinist, was Serge's mortal enemy.

''Transit'' is steeped in existential angst. ''Last Times,'' by contrast, is suffused with the bitterness of revolutionary failure, although, perhaps mindful of America's wartime alliance with the Soviets, Serge waits until the boat leaves Marseille to fully reveal the fanatical cunning of a Stalinist triple agent.

Unlike Seghers (or Némirovsky), Serge puts himself -- or at least a version -- in the book. His alter ego is Dr. Simon Ardatov, 63, a marginally employed political refugee and (implicitly) a stateless old Bolshevik, haunted by memories of revolutionary Petrograd. His traveling companions include Pepe Ortiga, another of Serge's ''experts in defeat,'' having fought on the losing side of the Spanish Civil War, and a young Polish Jew, Maurice Silber, already slated for deportation. As in a Hollywood platoon film, many of the characters and all of the women are types. Hilda, the courageous young militant who shares a psychic bond with Ardatov, would not be out of place in a Howard Hawks movie.

Augustin Charras, a salt-of-the-earth dealer in coal, a veteran of the trenches easily visualized as Jean Gabin, best articulates Serge's mystical sense of the collective: ''It is not we who think, but thought that lives all by itself inside us.'' But it's the aging poet Félicien Mûrier, decorated with the Legion of Honor, who affords Serge a degree of grim enjoyment. The scenes with loquacious Mûrier provide the poet's parody of ''Brave New World,'' and allow Serge to deliver a sardonic aside on Louis-Ferdinand Céline: ''lyrical and half-mad, lewd, scatological and prophetic, foamed at the mouth for a thousand pages on the Jews, the Jew-infected, the sodomized and the Negroids -- in a word, the greatest writer of the century.''

Attuned to those refugee agents whose actual names and nationalities were known to no one, Serge excels in ensemble scenes, particularly under confinement. (His first novel, ''Men in Prison,'' written in Russia after his expulsion from the Communist Party and mailed out for publication in France, has always struck me as his most heartfelt -- a story he had to tell.) Serge is also an observer. A French detention camp offers ''the spectacle of a calm riot.'' The camp's Communist cell deliberates while peeling potatoes in the kitchen yard between the latrines, the storeroom and the cooks' dormitory.

Greeman writes in an introduction to this edition that Serge most likely saw ''Casablanca'' in Mexico City and modeled his spontaneous singing duel, between chauvinists and internationalists at the prison camp, after the one at Rick's Café, in which ''La Marseillaise'' drowns out ''Die Wacht am Rhein.'' Certainly, he would have been stirred by what, for many wartime viewers, was the movie's key scene. (According to my mother, who first saw ''Casablanca'' as a student at Brooklyn College, the antifascist audience stood up and sang along.)

Late in ''Last Times,'' word comes that the Germans have attacked the Soviets. ''It was at this precise moment that Simon Ardatov became a man doubly hunted'' -- as both a stateless Russian national and an anti-Stalinist Red. ''What can a shipwrecked man out of the last lifeboat explain to anyone about his experience, his despair, the certainty of his expectations -- as certain as the storm in the gathering clouds,'' Ardatov wonders, clearly speaking for the author. Ardatov is granted something that Serge, as a former Communist, could never have been (namely a visa to enter the United States), but Serge lived long enough to accomplish something his fictional alter ego could not, writing this book.

''Last Times'' has two endings. One is fatalistic. The other, bravely affirmative, has a few surviving characters redeem themselves by joining the Resistance. Anticipating Samuel Fuller's didactic, if problematic, antiracist western, ''Run of the Arrow,'' which closes with a title card addressing the audience -- ''The end of this story can only be written by you'' -- Serge bows out with a parenthetical postscript: ''(... but nothing has ended.)''

J. Hoberman is at work on a chronicle of New York City's 1960s avant-garde underground.

LAST TIMES, by Victor Serge | Translated by Ralph Manheim | 390 pp. | New York Review Books | Paper, $19.95J. Hoberman is at work on a chronicle of New York City's 1960s avant-garde underground.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/23/books/review/victor-serge-last-times.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/23/books/review/victor-serge-last-times.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Victor Serge, left, not long after fleeing occupied Paris. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM ALAMY)

**Load-Date:** September 11, 2022

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[***French Lessons for the Biden Administration***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:659W-H121-DXY4-X2RJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 27, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22; BRET STEPHENS

**Length:** 899 words

**Byline:** By Bret Stephens

**Body**

You probably breathed a deep sigh of relief when you heard that Emmanuel Macron trounced Marine Le Pen by a 17-point margin in Sunday's French presidential election. A Le Pen victory would have been a boon to Vladimir Putin, Viktor Orban and Steve Bannon and a disaster for NATO, Europe and France.

The center held, thank God -- because Macron governed from the center. He was hated by the far left and the far right and never entirely pleased those closer to the center. But he also became the first president to be re-elected in France in 20 years.

There's a lesson in that for the Biden administration and Democrats in Congress, especially when it comes to immigration.

It has become an article of progressive faith in recent years that efforts to control immigration are presumptively racist.

A border wall is ''a monument to white supremacy,'' according to a piece published in Bloomberg. The ''remain in Mexico'' policy is ''racist, cruel and inhumane,'' according to the Justice Action Center. An essay published by the Brookings Institution calls U.S. immigration policy ''a classic, unappreciated example of structural racism.''

It wasn't long ago that Bernie Sanders was an avowed restrictionist on the view that immigration depresses ***working-class*** wages. Did that position make him a racist? The Wall Street Journal's editorial board, where I once worked, used to make the case for open borders with Mexico. Were we left-wing progressives? People of good will should be able to take different and nuanced views on immigration -- and change their minds about it -- without being tagged as morally deficient.

But that's no longer how it works in progressive circles. The results are policy choices that are bad for the country and worse for Democrats and are an unbidden gift to the far right.

The issue is now acute with the Biden administration simultaneously seeking to end the Trump administration's ''remain in Mexico'' policy in a case before the Supreme Court while accepting a recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to let the use of Title 42, which allowed border authorities to expel illegal immigrants as a public health measure, expire on May 23.

There's not much doubt as to what will happen if the administration gets its way: An already straining southern border will burst. In fiscal year 2020 there were 646,822 ''enforcement actions'' at the border. In 2021 the number was a little shy of two million. Without the authority of Title 42, under which 62 percent of expulsions took place in 2021, the number of migrants being released in the United States will increase drastically.

You don't have to be opposed to immigration as a general matter to have serious doubts about the administration's course.

Is there a practical and available legal alternative to regulating immigration through Title 42 enforcement? Where is the logic of ending Title 42 even as the administration seeks to extend mask mandates because the pandemic is far from over? Given housing shortages, how much capacity is there to absorb the next wave of migrants? Even if an overwhelming majority of migrants are merely seeking a better life, what system is there to find those with less honorable intentions?

More to the point: What does the administration's utter failure at effective control of the border say about its commitment to enforcing the rule of law?

To raise such questions should be an invitation to propose balanced and practical immigration legislation and try to win over moderate Republicans. Instead it tends to invite cheap accusations of racism, along with policy paralysis in the White House. As Politico reported last week, some think the administration's secret policy is to call for an end to Title 42 to satisfy progressives while crossing fingers that the courts continue it -- which a federal judge did on Monday, at least temporarily.

Leading from behind Trump-appointed judges is probably not what Americans elected Joe Biden to do.

Which brings us back to the example of France. When Jean-Marie Le Pen made his first presidential bid on an anti-immigration platform in 1974, he took 0.75 percent of the ballot in the first round -- fewer than 200,000 votes. When his daughter Marine ran on a similar platform this year, she took 41.5 percent in the second round, or more than 13 million. The Le Pens are thoroughgoing bigots.

But decades of pretending that only bigots had worries about immigration only made their brand of politics stronger.

As president, Macron tacked right on immigration -- not to weaken France's historic position as an open society, friendly to newcomers, but rather to save it. He has cracked down on some asylum seekers, demanded that immigrants learn French and get jobs and taken a hard line against Islamic separatism. But he's also tried to make France a more welcoming place for legal immigration. The left thinks of him as Le Pen lite, the right as a feckless impostor. Maybe he's both. Then again, he also saved France for the free world.

Democrats could stand to brush up on their French.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/26/opinion/france-biden-immigration.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/26/opinion/france-biden-immigration.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Samuel Boivin/NurPhoto, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 27, 2022

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[***Sharing the Stress Of Troubled Lives***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60P1-WJ61-DXY4-X3FB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 26, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 315 words

**Byline:** By Jeannette Catsoulis

**Body**

A transgender migrant and a recovering alcoholic form a connection in this modest ***working-class*** drama.

A low-key blend of romance and immigration drama, ''Lingua Franca'' follows Olivia (Isabel Sandoval, who also wrote and directed), an undocumented Filipino transgender woman living in Brighton Beach.

Desperate to obtain legal residency, Olivia works as a caregiver to an aging Russian expatriate named Olga (Lynn Cohen). Solicitous to her mentally declining charge, Olivia is anxiously saving the money she needs to pay off a man who has promised to marry her. She has been let down before; but, in the absence of a genuine relationship, she sees no other option. Then she meets Alex (Eamon Farren), Olga's troubled grandson, and recognizes that her immigration status might not be her most paramount concern after all.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Glancingly addressing major issues -- privacy, personal liberty, sexual satisfaction -- Sandoval, working from an idea formed during her own gender transition, quietly contemplates lives under stress. Against a backdrop of ICE raids and anti-immigrant commentary, Olivia navigates green-card setbacks while Alex juggles dependency issues, a distrustful family and a dangerous new job.

As Alex finds tenderness in their connection and an escape from judgment, Farren brings a heat to the role that the movie instinctively bends toward. Sandoval's directing style is humane and empathetic, but her acting has an aloofness that risks leaving Olivia unattended, an emotional question mark. The mood is meditative, the camera patient; yet the film is too dramatically shy and narratively slight to stir.

''You're safe now,'' Alex promises Olivia at one point. Yet, strangely, he's the one who finally seems at peace.

Lingua FrancaNot rated. In English, Tagalog and Russian, with subtitles. Running time: 1 hour 29 minutes. Watch on Netflix.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/movies/lingua-franca-review-lives-under-stress.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/movies/lingua-franca-review-lives-under-stress.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Isabel Sandoval plays an undocumented worker in ''Lingua Franca.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY ARRAY)

**Load-Date:** August 26, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Debtors, Unite! You Have Nothing to Lose but Your Shame.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66BW-JJD1-DXY4-X0R0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 10, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1389 words

**Byline:** By Astra Taylor

**Body**

Conversations about debt are never purely about economics. They are always, also, conversations about power, morality and shame. The debate over President Biden's student loan relief plan is no exception.

Immediately after the initiative was announced, opponents of debt cancellation began denouncing slacker baristas, overeducated Ivy League lawyers and impractical lesbian dance theory majors. Immune to accusations of hypocrisy, Republican members of Congress who had received hundreds of thousands, even millions, of dollars in federal relief castigated student debtors who might receive $10,000 to $20,000 in aid.

It was a stark reminder that shame, like wealth, is not evenly distributed in our society. For ***working-class*** people, insolvency is often seen as a sign of profligacy and personal irresponsibility, while large corporations and the wealthy routinely walk away from their obligations and are celebrated as savvy for doing so. Donald Trump can boastfully call himself the ''king of debt'' for his string of strategic bankruptcies; the average debtor would never dare.

Debts are, first and foremost, financial burdens. But most people in arrears must shoulder a boulder of shame as well. This is the factor most commentary about Mr. Biden's student debt relief plan has missed.

The mass cancellation of federal student loans will not only remove a crushing economic weight for tens of millions of people; it will lift a significant emotional one, too. This psychological shift could, in turn, have further political implications, by emboldening those who find their obligations overwhelming to engage in collective action aimed at winning more relief and changing the policies that make indebtedness so pervasive.

To understand what a pivotal moment this is, we must first appreciate just how profoundly the moral decks are usually stacked against regular debtors. Even the seemingly innocuous phrase ''loan forgiveness'' implies culpability and blame, when in reality the majority of debtors are simply struggling to make ends meet -- a problem likely to be most acute for Black and brown people, who tend to lack family wealth and access to credit on fair terms.

Why is our society so invested in steeping debtors in shame? The answer lies in debt's role as a core building block of our economy and unequal social order. Debt is wrapped around every necessity of life: We use credit to make daily purchases and pay for medical care, take out mortgages, finance our cars and borrow for college; cities and states issue debt to pay for roads and schools. Monthly repayments are often a form of wealth transfer to the affluent investors who hold these debts as assets, fueling inequality.

If debt is a dual source of profit and power, shame is its handmaiden. Shame isolates and divides, making class solidarity more difficult. The knee-jerk anger at the idea of student debt cancellation in some circles, while ostensibly about fairness, reflects the common though misguided view that when one person gains, another loses. Imagining a zero-sum game, some ask why student loans were eliminated and not, say, medical debt -- a reasonable question. But medical debt, too, should be erased, as a way to ease the unjust financial hardship that getting hurt or sick often entails. For example, Mr. Biden could, and should, take executive action to cancel all medical debt owed to veterans' hospitals.

Meanwhile, the fever pitch of opposition to debt cancellation among conservative and centrist elites reflects a different fear: that debt's utility as an instrument of social control may be weakening. Consider the reaction of Representative Jim Banks, Republican of Indiana, to Mr. Biden's cancellation news: ''Student loan forgiveness undermines one of our military's greatest recruitment tools at a time of dangerously low enlistments.'' Student debt, or the fear of it, pushes people into certain careers and limits their life choices.

No wonder soaring student debt became a catalyst for protest, though only after borrowers began to overcome their shame. Under pressure from a growing coalition that traces its origins directly to the Occupy Wall Street movement a decade ago, Mr. Biden was forced to act -- an outcome that is all the more remarkable, given his previous allegiances. When he was a senator from Delaware, which is home to the nation's biggest issuers of credit cards, he tended to side with lenders over debtors. He was a driving force behind the 2005 Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act, which made it harder for distressed borrowers to discharge their student loans.

Now Mr. Biden appears to be switching sides in time for the midterm elections. Tweeting moving stories from people eligible to receive loan cancellation, he seemed to be hosting a debtors' assembly -- an Occupy-inspired forum where people share their financial tribulations out loud, thus transforming burdens of shame into bonds of empowerment -- in the Oval Office.

The president's actions are certainly a break with the political status quo, but they are not unprecedented. In his groundbreaking work on debt, my friend the anthropologist David Graeber, reported on the periodic debt amnesties, or ''jubilees,'' of the ancient world. Seeking to quell unrest, Sumerian and Babylonian kings periodically wiped away debts and liberated people from peonage, often over the objections of creditors. The Code of Hammurabi, written around 1750 B.C., proclaims that if a ''storm wipes out the grain or the harvest fails or the grain does not grow for lack of water, in that year he need not give his creditor any grain in payment.''

For these leaders, debt relief had little to do with the guilt of individual debtors. Jubilees were a practical way to recover from crises and avert societal collapse. Now, as then, inequality and insolvency imperil economic and political stability. Wiping the slate restores balance.

Many of today's debtors have more in common with unlucky Mesopotamian farmers, subject to forces beyond their control, than it may initially appear. In a society where the federal minimum hourly wage is stuck at $7.25, public services are paltry and racial and gender discrimination run rampant, a majority of Americans have no choice but to borrow to make ends meet. Where student loans are concerned, the steady erosion of state funding for higher education, and the resultant debt-for-degree system, is to blame, not individual borrowers.

Prominent critics of Mr. Biden's plan have pointed out that granting relief this once will not permanently solve the student debt crisis or the attendant problem of rising college costs, and here they are correct. The only permanent solution to the problem of runaway student debt is to make public education free for all (a model that was relatively common in the United States a few generations ago, which is why so many older people graduated debt-free). Only then can students who lack wealth avoid indenturing themselves for the chance to learn.

Though I believe Mr. Biden's plan is inadequate in terms of the monetary relief it offers, his actions have already dealt a blow to debt's symbolic, shame-inducing power. Everyone now knows federal student loans can be canceled with the flick of a president's pen. And instead of feeling guilty and unworthy, millions of regular people suddenly feel entitled to relief, an entitlement previously reserved for society's elites.

Hundreds of millions of people are in debt not because they are immoral and live beyond their means but because they are denied the means to live. Debt jubilees are part of righting this wrong, but as Mr. Biden's student debt relief plan shows, they won't happen unless debtors rise up and demand them. The first step is abolishing the shame that makes us reluctant to fight for what we deserve.

Astra Taylor (@astradisastra) is a filmmaker and a co-founder of the Debt Collective and the author, most recently, of ''Remake the World: Essays, Reflections, Rebellions.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/06/opinion/biden-student-loan-debt-relief.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/06/opinion/biden-student-loan-debt-relief.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Shawn Thew/EPA, via Shutterstock FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Your Tuesday Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66KG-9T91-JBG3-6364-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 11, 2022 Tuesday 00:52 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1432 words

**Byline:** Natasha Frost

**Highlight:** Russia unleashes mass strikes on Ukrainian civilians.

**Body**

Russia unleashes mass strikes on Ukrainian civilians.

A barrage of missiles hits cities across Ukraine

In Russia’s largest aerial assault since the early days of the war, [*missiles rained down on at least 11 cities across Ukraine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/world/europe/russia-missiles-ukraine-civilians.html), including Kyiv. Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, said it was retaliation for a blast that destroyed sections of a bridge linking Russia to the Crimean Peninsula.

More than 80 cruise missiles and 24 self-destructing drones exploded in cities in nearly every corner of the country, killing at least 14 people and wounding almost 100 more. The attacks changed little or nothing on the battlefield, where Russia has been losing ground for weeks. But the assault left neighborhoods across Ukraine battered and bloodied, and without power and water. In Kyiv, the smells of gas and fire [*lingered in the air*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/world/europe/ukraine-kyiv-russia-missiles.html).

Russia’s targeting of civilian areas drew condemnations from leaders across the West, including Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Commission, and President Biden, who vowed to stand with the people of Ukraine. Even countries that have generally avoided criticizing the Kremlin, like China and India, spoke out against the strikes.

In other news from the war:

* The Russian state media [*flaunted images of the damage*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/world/europe/russia-putin-ukraine-strikes.html) in Ukraine after months of insisting that troops were hitting only military targets there.

1. The attacks [*are expected*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/10/10/world/russia-ukraine-war-news/the-russian-missile-barrage-will-likely-pressure-the-west-to-give-ukraine-more-air-defense-systems-analysts-say?smid=url-share) to add pressure on the Biden administration to send more sophisticated air defenses to Ukraine more quickly.
2. In southern Ukraine, Russian soldiers [*are dug in*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/world/europe/ukraine-war-south.html) more securely, though there are signs of declining morale.

Britain’s young hobbled by inflation

Many young Britons had hoped that after two years of the pandemic, they could finally start enjoying their lives. Instead, many are moving back home and staying in — this time for financial reasons, as [*they confront rising costs and a slowing economy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/world/europe/uk-inflation-young-generations.html). Affordable housing in major centers is limited, socializing is expensive and energy bills are set to increase.

The Conservative government’s vow to revive the economy after its proposed tax cuts has shaken Britain’s financial markets, sending the pound plunging and forcing the Bank of England to intervene. For young people, who are less likely to be insulated against financial shocks and for whom wage growth has been weak, the situation is precarious, economists say.

With six in 10 young Britons holding low-paid jobs, young people have been hit harder by inflation than most. Local youth centers, some of which began providing free hot meals during the pandemic, are experiencing a drastic uptick in interest for their services, just as they face higher costs because of the energy crisis.

Related: Britain’s government said that [*its next fiscal policy announcement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/business/economy/uk-government-fiscal-plan-tax.html) would be released on Oct. 31 and that it would provide an independent assessment of the policies’ impact on the nation’s economy and public finances.

Intelligence concerns about China

Jeremy Fleming, the head of the British electronic and cyber intelligence-gathering agency GCHQ, has [*warned about the urgent threat to the West*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/us/politics/uk-gchq-china-russia.html) from China’s expanding use of technology to control dissent, as well as its growing ability to attack satellite systems, control digital currencies and track individuals.

GCHQ plays an increasingly central role in tracking Russian communications and preparing for the day when China’s advances in quantum computing may defeat the kinds of encryption used to protect both government and corporate communications. The U.S. and its allies may soon discover that they cannot maintain a military or technological edge over Beijing, Fleming said.

China’s technological power — in particular its central bank digital currencies — may allow it to evade the sort of sanctions being applied to Russia because of the war in Ukraine, Fleming said. In the event of military action against Taiwan, those digital currencies could limit the international community’s ability to isolate China economically.

Context: Last week, the Biden administration announced sweeping new limits on the sale of semiconductor technology to China, hoping to cripple Beijing’s access to critical technologies that are needed for supercomputers, advanced weapons and artificial intelligence applications.

THE LATEST NEWS

Around the World

* The North Korean state media [*reported on the test launches*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/world/asia/north-korea-underwater-nuclear-missiles.html) of several nuclear-capable short-range ballistic missiles, including one that was fired from under water.

1. Growing global demand for sustainable textiles — especially for reusable shopping bags — is [*rescuing the jute industry in India*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/business/india-jute-reusable-shopping-bags.html).
2. As climate change dries out Europe, the Netherlands, a country long shaped by its overabundance of water, is [*suddenly confronting drought*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/climate/netherlands-drought-climate-change.html).

Other Big Stories

* After resigning as Britain’s prime minister, Boris Johnson is [*poised to become a one-man private corporation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/business/boris-johnson-inc-is-about-to-go-public.html) as an author and speaker.

1. Researchers hope that [*vaccines could eventually protect people*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/health/cancer-vaccines.html) against pancreatic, colon and breast cancers.
2. Criminal defense lawyers in Britain ended a five-week strike by [*accepting a new pay offer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/world/europe/uk-barristers-lawyers-end-strike.html) from the Justice Ministry.
3. Airbus and Air France went on trial yesterday over [*a 2009 plane crash in which 228 people died*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/world/europe/airbus-france-plane-crash-trial.html).

A Morning Read

A [*blizzard of research in the last decade on black holes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/science/black-holes-cosmology-hologram.html) has mind-bending implications, including the possibility that our three-dimensional universe — and we ourselves — may be holograms, like the ghostly anti-counterfeiting images that appear on some credit cards and driver’s licenses.

In this version of the cosmos, there is no difference between here and there, cause and effect, inside and outside or perhaps even then and now.

SPORTS NEWS FROM THE ATHLETIC

Iker Casillas, Carles Puyol and the ‘I’m gay’ tweet that covered no one in glory: Joke gone wrong? Twitter hacking? Either way, the furor around Casillas ‘coming out’ served as [*a reminder soccer has a long way to go*](https://theathletic.com/3673401/2022/10/10/casillas-puyol-gay-tweet/).

Why Liverpool’s Premier League title hopes are gone: Jurgen Klopp’s side [*have become their own worst enemies*](https://theathletic.com/3673735/2022/10/10/arsenal-liverpool-title-hopes/). A quarter of the way through the Premier League season his side sit in 10th place, and hopes of a title are out the window.

A fight over equal pay: The success of the U.S. women’s soccer team on the field and at the negotiating table has been a model for players elsewhere, The Times reports. Now, in countries like Britain and Spain, [*those battles are heating up*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/sports/soccer/uswnt-equal-pay.html).

ARTS AND IDEAS

‘Sensation’ at 25

Twenty-five years ago, an exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts in London alerted the world to the radically new kind of art being made by young, ***working-class*** graduates like Angus Fairhurst, Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin and Jake and Dinos Chapman. It drew 300,000 visitors and set off a media storm.

These days, the artists shown at “Sensation” are middle-aged. Most are no longer the innovators they once were. Hirst is now a quasi-industrial-artistic brand, and the Chapman brothers have parted creative ways. Emin, who is creating a free art school, is arguably the only one who is still at the forefront of British contemporary art.

Britain has also changed. It has had four Conservative prime ministers in 12 years, left the E.U. and abandoned free study at universities and art colleges for those who could not otherwise afford it. And the optimism that pervaded 1997 has been replaced by dawning pessimism among many Britons.

“They were reflecting the concerns of young people at the time,” Norman Rosenthal, a co-curator of the “Sensation” show, said of the artists. “They were an art movement. Now it’s broken up: They’re different; times change.”

Read more about [*an epoch-defining exhibition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/arts/design/sensation-exhibition-anniversary.html).

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

[*Roast chicken thighs*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023472-roasted-chicken-thighs-with-tangy-apricots-and-carrots) with tangy apricots and carrots.

Fashion

[*How many clothes do you really need*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/style/clothes-wardrobe-need.html)

Alan Moore’s first story collection, “Illuminations,” showcases [*the comic-book titan’s strengths as a fantasist*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/10/books/review/alan-moore-illuminations.html).

Now Time to Play

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: What a bird builds (four letters).

And here are [*today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html) and [*the Spelling Bee*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

[*You can find all our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — Natasha

P.S. Join [*this livestreamed Times event*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/climate-event.html?liveEventId=nyPoM) on how technology and art can address the current climate challenge.

There is no new episode of “The Daily.” Check out “[*Hard Fork*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/04/podcasts/hard-fork-technology.html?action=click&amp;module=audio-series-bar&amp;region=header&amp;pgtype=Article),” a new Times technology podcast. The [*first episode*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/07/podcasts/hard-fork-elon-musk-twitter.html?action=click&amp;module=audio-series-bar&amp;region=header&amp;pgtype=Article) tackles Elon Musk’s hidden motives and meeting in the Metaverse.

You can reach Natasha and the team at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing@nytimes.com?subject=Europe%20Briefing%20Feedback).

PHOTO: Smoke rising over Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital, on Monday after the Russian bombardment. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Finbarr O&#39;Reilly for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***How Real-Life and Fictional Horror Seeped Into ‘The Black Phone’; Mood Board***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65RD-9NB1-DXY4-X02S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 20, 2022 Monday 16:59 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1016 words

**Byline:** Elisabeth Vincentelli

**Highlight:** Influenced by “Rosemary’s Baby” and “The Devil’s Backbone,” the filmmaker wove details from his childhood into this supernatural movie starring Ethan Hawke.

**Body**

Influenced by “Rosemary’s Baby” and “The Devil’s Backbone,” the filmmaker wove details from his childhood into this supernatural movie starring Ethan Hawke.

After scoring a hit with the Marvel movie “Doctor Strange” in 2016, the director Scott Derrickson started working on its sequel, “Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness.” In January 2020, however, he abruptly left that movie because of creative differences.

For his next film, he started with a short story by Joe Hill, which he layered with autobiographical material. “I had been in therapy for a couple of years, dealing with a lot of childhood trauma issues,” Derrickson, 55, said in a video interview.

The result is [*“The Black Phone,”*](https://youtu.be/3eGP6im8AZA) out on Friday, in which Derrickson and Ethan Hawke reunite 10 years after their collaboration in the terrifying horror movie “Sinister.” Now Hawke plays the Grabber, a masked psychopath who kidnaps and kills children in 1978 Colorado. Until, that is, he sets his sights on the resourceful 13-year-old Finney (Mason Thames), who gets unexpected help from the Grabber’s previous victims — their ghosts communicate tasks for survival via a derelict landline — and his own sister, Gwen (Madeleine McGraw).

Considering how personal the film is to Derrickson, it comes as little surprise to hear him start off with his own story when asked to list five influences on “The Black Phone.” These are edited excerpts from the conversation.

His childhood

“The Black Phone” is set in North Denver, where Derrickson grew up. “It was a ***working-class***, kind of blue-collar neighborhood, half-Mexican, half-white,” he said. “There was a lot of violence — everybody got whipped by their parents, there was fighting on the way to school, on the way home from school, at school.”

In the film, Finney is always on edge: His dad has a temper when drunk, and there are all these mysterious disappearances. “I think I was 8 or 9 years old when my friend next door knocked on the door,” Derrickson said. “He was crying and he said, ‘Somebody murdered my mom.’ His mother had been abducted and raped and killed and wrapped in phone wire — I remember that detail — and thrown in the local lake,” he continued. “So the serial killer who could just grab you out of nowhere was a real thing for us in that neighborhood. That was always in the air.”

‘The 400 Blows’ (1959)

[*François Truffaut’s debut feature*](https://youtu.be/GbNrP0DhZMo) retraces much of his upbringing — via a cinematic alter ego portrayed by the 14-year-old Jean-Pierre Léaud — in a way that is warm yet also devoid of sentimentality. “The first idea I had was to take a lot of the traumatic events of my childhood and try to make a kind of American ‘400 Blows,’” Derrickson said. “It’s a movie for adults about children that I wouldn’t describe as nostalgic — that’s a really interesting way to approach one’s own childhood experience as a filmmaker.”

And yet Derrickson was also keen to show that fortitude is hard to snuff out. “It’s a really wonderful picture and somehow as bleak as it is, it also shows the resilience of children,” he said. “There’s a lot of joy in that movie, too. Even as this kid keeps getting blow after blow, his spirit is very strong. And I think that shows in both Finney and Gwen.”

‘The Devil’s Backbone’ (2001)

Derrickson is a huge fan of [*Guillermo del Toro’s supernatural horror film,*](https://youtu.be/hLfd9435XQI) which is set in an orphanage in 1939 Spain, and he initially brings up the way it visually represented ghost children, as well as the communal relationship between the orphans. “From a storytelling point of view, it was a really influential movie on me,” Derrickson said.

But he also picked up tips from the commentary the Mexican filmmaker recorded for the movie’s DVD release. “One of the things that Guillermo del Toro says in that commentary is that when he casts a child actor, he makes sure that the child can imitate him, and this has been so helpful to me,” Derrickson said. “If you’re giving them a direction and it’s just not working, you need to be able to do it for them and have them just do it back for you the exact same way.”

‘Rosemary’s Baby’ (1968)

Derrickson gets granular in his admiration for Roman Polanski’s classic shocker, in which a pregnant woman (Mia Farrow) begins to suspect she might be surrounded by Satan worshipers. In particular, he zeros in on a scene in which we watch [*Rosemary call her therapist from a phone booth*](https://youtu.be/9IsHIyvhhNw).

“I remember watching the scene and being immediately struck by the distorted phone filter on the psychiatrist’s voice — and her voice had the same filter,” he said. “I was very struck by how powerful and strange it felt. There was an otherworldliness to it and somehow it felt scary to me.”

Derrickson started by putting a similar filter on Finney’s voice when he’s talking to the Grabber’s victims on the black phone. In postproduction, though, he slightly modified that approach so the filter is applied to the dead children when they manifest. “It creates a real tactile feeling of ethereal unpresence and presence at the same time,” Derrickson said. “And all of that was the result of me thinking about the phone filter that’s in ‘Rosemary’s Baby’ in that one shot.”

‘A Prayer for Owen Meany’

On the surface, there is not much linking “The Black Phone” to [*John Irving’s novel from 1989*](https://www.nytimes.com/1989/03/08/books/a-prayer-for-owen-meany.html), in which the title character is convinced that he has a connection to God and his life is building up to a preordained event. But it inspired Derrickson when he and co-writer C. Robert Cargill were trying to figure out what to do with the characters they were adding to the original short story. “The big expansions were Gwen and adding four other kids based on kids I knew in middle school,” Derrickson said.

But then he was stumped: How would those children fit in the plot? “When I thought about ‘A Prayer for Owen Meany,’ I thought, ‘Oh, that’s it: They’re giving Finney missions,’ ” Derrickson said. “And when I did that, I felt, ‘OK, I know how to do this movie. I know how the structure works.’ ”

PHOTOS: ‘THE 400 BLOWS’; ‘ROSEMARY’S BABY’; THE DEVIL’S BACKBONE’; ‘A PRAYER FOR OWEN MEANY’ (PHOTOGRAPH BY UNIVERSAL PICTURES (“THE BLACK PHONE”))

**Load-Date:** June 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[***French Lessons for the Biden Administration; Bret Stephens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:659S-5R01-DXY4-X1X7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 26, 2022 Tuesday 08:01 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 903 words

**Byline:** Bret Stephens

**Highlight:** Macron’s victory is a reminder to Democrats to find the center on immigration.

**Body**

You probably breathed a deep sigh of relief when you heard that Emmanuel Macron trounced Marine Le Pen by a 17-point margin in Sunday’s French presidential election. A Le Pen victory would have been a boon to Vladimir Putin, Viktor Orban and Steve Bannon and a disaster for NATO, Europe and France.

The center held, thank God — because Macron governed from the center. He was hated by the far left and the far right and never entirely pleased those closer to the middle. But he also became the first president to be re-elected in France in 20 years.

There’s a lesson in that for the Biden administration and Democrats in Congress, especially when it comes to immigration.

It has become an article of progressive faith in recent years that efforts to control immigration are presumptively racist.

A border wall is “[*a monument to white supremacy*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-01-16/trump-s-border-wall-is-a-monument-to-white-supremacy),” according to a piece published in Bloomberg. The “remain in Mexico” policy is “[*racist, cruel and inhumane*](https://justiceactioncenter.org/the-racist-cruel-and-inhumane-remain-in-mexico-policy-is-now-the-shameful-legacy-of-the-biden-administration/),” according to the Justice Action Center. An essay published by the [*Brookings Institution*](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/how-we-rise/2021/03/26/us-immigration-policy-a-classic-unappreciated-example-of-structural-racism/) calls U.S. immigration policy “a classic, unappreciated example of structural racism.”

It wasn’t long ago that Bernie Sanders was an avowed restrictionist on the view that [*immigration depresses* ***working-class*** *wages*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/03/16/years-bernie-sanders-warned-that-increased-immigration-would-lower-wages-us-workers-now-he-barely-mentions-it/). Did that position make him a racist? The Wall Street Journal’s editorial board, where I once worked, used to [*make the case for open borders*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB994028904620983237) with Mexico. Were we left-wing progressives? People of good will should be able to take different and nuanced views on immigration — and change their minds about it — without being tagged as morally deficient.

But that’s no longer [*how it works in progressive circles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/29/us/politics/democratic-debates-immigration.html). The results are policy choices that are bad for the country, worse for Democrats and an unbidden gift to the far right.

The issue is now acute with the Biden administration simultaneously seeking to end the Trump administration’s “remain in Mexico” policy in a case before the Supreme Court while accepting a recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to let the use of Title 42, which allowed border authorities to expel illegal immigrants as a public health measure, expire on May 23.

There’s not much doubt as to what will happen if the administration gets its way: An already straining southern border will burst. In fiscal year 2020 there were 646,822 “[*enforcement actions*](https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/cbp-enforcement-statistics)” at the border. In 2021 the number was a little shy of two million. Without the authority of Title 42, [*under which 62 percent of expulsions took place in 2021*](https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/national-media-release/cbp-releases-operational-fiscal-year-2021-statistics), the number of migrants being released in the United States will increase drastically.

You don’t have to be opposed to immigration as a general matter to have serious doubts about the administration’s course.

Is there a practical and available legal alternative to regulating immigration through Title 42 enforcement? Where is the logic of ending Title 42 even as the administration seeks to extend mask mandates because the pandemic is far from over? Given [*housing shortages*](https://www.npr.org/2022/03/29/1089174630/housing-shortage-new-home-construction-supply-chain), how much capacity is there to absorb the next wave of migrants? Even if an overwhelming majority of migrants are merely seeking a better life, what system is there to find those with less honorable intentions?

More to the point: What does the administration’s utter failure at effective control of the border say about its commitment to enforcing the rule of law?

To raise such questions should be an invitation to propose balanced and practical immigration legislation and try to win over moderate Republicans. Instead it tends to invite cheap accusations of racism, along with policy paralysis in the White House. As Politico [*reported last week*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/04/22/biden-title-42-fallout-00027109), some think the administration’s secret policy is to call for an end to Title 42 to satisfy progressives while crossing fingers that the courts continue it — which [*a federal judge*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/04/25/politics/title-42-blocked/index.html) did on Monday, at least temporarily.

Leading from behind Trump-appointed judges is probably not what Americans elected Joe Biden to do.

Which brings us back to the example of France. When Jean-Marie Le Pen made his first presidential bid on an anti-immigration platform in 1974, he took 0.75 percent of the ballot in the first round — fewer than 200,000 votes. When his daughter Marine ran on a similar platform this year, she took 41.5 percent in the second round, or more than 13 million. The Le Pens are thoroughgoing bigots. But decades of pretending that only bigots had worries about immigration only made their brand of politics stronger.

As president, Macron tacked right on immigration — not to weaken France’s historic position as an open society, friendly to newcomers, but rather to save it. He has cracked down on some asylum seekers, demanded that immigrants learn French and get jobs and taken a hard line against Islamic separatism. But he’s also tried to make France a more welcoming place for legal immigration. The left thinks of him as Le Pen lite, the right as a feckless impostor. Maybe he’s both. Then again, he also saved France for the free world.

Democrats could stand to brush up on their French.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/31/opinion/letters/letters-to-editor-new-york-times-women.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://help.nytimes.com/hc/en-us/articles/115014925288-How-to-submit-a-letter-to-the-editor). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](mailto:letters@nytimes.com).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Samuel Boivin/NurPhoto, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[***New in Paperback: ‘How Much of These Hills Is Gold’ and ‘Coffeeland’; Paperback Row***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62BR-6VR1-DXY4-X45Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 2, 2021 Friday 05:00 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 445 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Krauss

**Highlight:** Six new paperbacks to check out this week.

**Body**

HOW MUCH OF THESE HILLS IS GOLD, by C Pam Zhang. (Riverhead, 336 pp., $16.) Our reviewer, Martha Southgate, compared this “arresting” debut novel, about the long journey of two Chinese-American siblings to bury their failed gold-rush-prospector father in the sweepingly beautiful and barren American West, to, yes, Faulkner’s “As I Lay Dying” and Steinbeck’s “The Grapes of Wrath.”

MISS AUSTEN: A Novel of the Austen Sisters, by Gill Hornby. (Flatiron, 288 pp., $16.99.) In her answer to those who wonder what was in the letters Jane Austen’s older sister destroyed after the celebrated writer’s death, Hornby depicts “a romance that could have emerged from an Austen novel,” our reviewer, Alida Becker, wrote, and provides a “persuasive” portrait of that “bane of scholars and biographers” Cassandra Austen.

COFFEELAND: One Man’s Dark Empire and the Making of Our Favorite Drug, by Augustine Sedgewick. (Penguin, 448 pp., $18.) This “engaging,” “sprawling” account of “how coffee made modern El Salvador” and helped “remake consumer habits worldwide,” as our reviewer, Lizabeth Cohen, put it, contains many “fascinating threads,” including the post-World War II invention of the coffee break, which fed our growing habit.

AFTERLIFE, by Julia Alvarez. (Algonquin, 288 pp., $16.95.) While continuing to mine the “intimacies of immigrant sisterhood” that her previous work explored, Alvarez’s latest novel “ably tackles” privilege, according to our reviewer, Francisco Cantú. A retired Dominican-American widow wakes up to migrants’ plight when a pregnant, undocumented Mexican girl seeks refuge at her house in Vermont.

HORROR STORIES: A Memoir, by Liz Phair. (Random House, 288 pp., $18.) “We can be monsters, we human beings,” the indie rock star declares, and “she is including herself in that company,” Stacey D’Erasmo noted in her review of what she called a “uniquely thoughtful, self-aware” memoir. The horrors Phair describes are “small-scale, but they act as metaphors for larger questions … much as song lyrics.”

BREASTS AND EGGS, by Mieko Kawakami. Translated by Sam Bett and David Boyd. (Europa Editions, 432 pp., $16.95.) A literary sensation in Japan, Kawakami writes with “a bracing lack of sentimentality,” in the words of our reviewer, Katie Kitamura, about ***working-class*** single motherhood. The novel’s title refers to one character’s quest for breast augmentation and another’s for a sperm donor.

PHOTOS

**Related Articles**

* [*New in Paperback: ‘Deacon King Kong’ and ‘The Undocumented Americans’*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/26/books/review/new-paperbacks.html)

1. [*New in Paperback: ‘Minor Feelings’ and ‘Bubblegum’*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/26/books/review/new-paperbacks.html)
2. [*New in Paperback: ‘Dirt’ and ‘The Night Watchman’*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/26/books/review/new-paperbacks.html)
3. [*New in Paperback: ‘Thinking Inside the Box’ and ‘The Mountains Sing’*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/26/books/review/new-paperbacks.html)

**Load-Date:** April 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Uncomfortable Truths That Could Yet Defeat Fascism; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66MS-VFP1-JBG3-600D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 17, 2022 Monday 10:41 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3078 words

**Byline:** Anand Giridharadas

**Highlight:** In the longer contest to tell the better story about America and draw people into that story, there is a great worry among organizers that the left is badly falling short.

**Body**

Polls swing this way and that way, but the larger story they tell is unmistakable. With the midterm elections, Americans are being offered a clear choice between continued and expanded liberal democracy, on the one hand, and fascism, on the other. And it’s more or less a dead heat.

It is time to speak an uncomfortable truth: The pro-democracy side is at risk not just because of potential electoral rigging, voter suppression and other forms of unfair play by the right, as real as those things are. In America (as in various other countries), the pro-democracy cause — a coalition of progressives, liberals, moderates, even decent Republicans who still believe in free elections and facts — is struggling to win the battle for hearts and minds.

The pro-democracy side can still very much prevail. But it needs to go beyond its present modus operandi, a mix of fatalism and despair and living in perpetual reaction to the right and policy wonkiness and praying for indictments. It needs to build a new and improved movement — feisty, galvanizing, magnanimous, rooted and expansionary — that can outcompete the fascists and seize the age.

I believe pro-democracy forces can do this because I spent the past few years reporting on people full of hope who show a way forward, organizers who refuse to give in to fatalism about their country or its citizens. These organizers are doing yeoman’s work changing minds and expanding support for true multiracial democracy, and they recognize what more of their allies on the left must: The fascists are doing as well as they are because they understand people as they are and cater to deep unmet needs, and any pro-democracy movement worth its salt needs to match them at that — but for good.

In their own circles and sometimes in public, these organizers warn that the right is outcompeting small-d democrats in its psychological insight into voters and their anxieties, its messaging, its knack for narrative, its instinct to make its cause not just a policy program but also a home offering meaning, comfort and belonging. They worry, meanwhile, that their own allies can be hamstrung by a naïve and high-minded view of human nature, a bias for the wonky over the guttural, a self-sabotaging coolness toward those who don’t perfectly understand, a quaint belief in going high against opponents who keep stooping to new lows and a lack of fight and a lack of talent at seizing the mic and telling the kinds of galvanizing stories that bend nations’ arcs.

The organizers I’ve been following believe they have a playbook for a pro-democracy movement that can go beyond merely resisting to winning. It involves more than just serving up sound public policy and warning that the other side is dangerous; it also means creating an approachable, edifying, transcendent movement to dazzle and pull people in. For many on the left, embracing the organizers’ playbook will require leaving behind old habits and learning new ones. What is at stake, of course, is everything.

Command Attention

The right presently runs laps around the left in its ability to manage and use attention. It understands the power of provocation to make people have the conversation that most benefits its side. “Tucker Carlson said what about the war on ‘legacy Americans’?” “Donald Trump said what about those countries in Africa?” It understands that sometimes it’s worth looking ridiculous to achieve saturation of the discourse. It knows that the more one’s ideas are repeated — positively, negatively, however — the more they seem to millions of people like common sense. It knows that when the opposition is endlessly consumed by responding to its ideas, that opposition isn’t hawking its own wares.

Democrats and their allies lag on this score, bringing four-point plans to gunfights. Mr. Trump’s wall was a bad policy with a shrewd theory of attention. President Biden’s Build Back Better was a good policy with a nonexistent theory of attention. The political left tends to be both bad at grabbing attention for the things it proposes and bad at proposing the kinds of things that would command the most attention.

An attentional lens, for example, would focus a light on the pressure applied on Mr. Biden, successfully, to wipe out some student debt. In a traditional analysis, the plan is a mixed bag, because it creates many winners but also engenders resentments among nonbeneficiaries. What that analysis underplays is that giving even a minority of Americans something that absolutely knocks their socks off, changes their lives forever and gets them talking about nothing else to every undecided person in earshot may be worth five Inflation Reduction Acts in political, if not policy, terms.

Make Meaning

A concept you often hear among organizers (but less in electoral politics) is meaning making. Organizers tend to think of voters as being in a constant process of making sense of the world, and they see their job as being not simply to ask for people’s vote but also to participate in the process by which voters process their experiences into positions.

Voters read things. They hear stories on cable news. They notice changes at work and in their town. But these things do not on their own array into a coherent philosophy. A story, an explanation, a narrative — these form the bridge that transports you from noticing the new Spanish-speaking cashiers at Walgreens to fearing a southern invasion or from liking a senator from Chicago you once heard on TV to seeing him as a redemption of the ideals of the nation.

The rightist ecosystem shrewdly understands this mental bridge building to be part and parcel of the work of politics. Mr. Carlson of Fox News and Mr. Trump know that you know your town is changing, your office is doing unfamiliar training on race, you are shocked by the price you paid for gas. They know you’re thinking about it, and they devote themselves to helping you make meaning of it, for their dark purposes.

And while the right inserts itself into this meaning-making process 24/7, the left mostly just offers policy. Policy is a worthy remedy for material problems, but it is grossly inadequate as a salve for the psychological transitions that change foists on citizens. We are asking people in this era to live through a great deal of change — in the economy, technology, race and demographics, gender and sexuality, world trade and beyond. All of this can be stressful. And this stress can be exploited by the cynical, and it can also be addressed, head-on, by the well intentioned — as it is by a remarkable if still small-scale door-to-door organizing project nationwide known as deep canvassing. But it cannot be ignored.

Meet People Where They Are

There is a phrase that all political organizers seem to learn in their first training: Meet people where they are. The phrase doesn’t suggest watering down your goal as an organizer because of where the people you are trying to bring along are. It suggests meeting them at their level of familiarity and knowledge and comfort with the ideas in question and then trying to move them in the desired direction.

Many organizers I spoke to aired a concern that, in this fractious and high-stakes time, a tendency toward purism, gatekeeping and homogeneity afflicts sections of the left and threatens its pursuits.

“The thing about our movement is that we’re too woke, which is why we don’t have mass mobilization in the way that we should,” Linda Sarsour, a progressive organizer based in Brooklyn, said to me. She added: “It’s like when you’re going into a prison. You have to go through this door, and then that door closes, and then you go through another door, and then another door closes. And my thing is, like, if we’re going to do that, it’s going to be one person at a time coming into the movement, versus opening the door wide enough, having room to err and not be perfect.”

In a time of escalating and cynical right-wing attacks on so-called wokeness, some practitioners I spoke to called for their movements to do better at making space for the still waking. They want a movement that, on the one hand, is clear that things like respecting pronouns and fighting racism and misogyny and xenophobia are nonnegotiable and that, on the other hand, shows a self-interested gentleness toward people who haven’t got it all figured out, who are confused or even unsettled by the onrushing future.

Meeting people where they are also involves a pragmatic willingness to make the pitch for your ideas using moral frames that are not your own. The victorious abortion-rights campaigners in Kansas recently showcased this kind of approach when they ran advertisements obliquely comparing government-compelled pregnancies with government-compelled mask mandates for Covid-19. The campaigners themselves believed in mask mandates. But they understood they were targeting moderate and even some rightist voters who have intuitions different from theirs. And they played to those intuitions — and won stunningly.

And meeting people where they are also requires taking seriously the fears of people you are trying to win over, as the veteran reproductive justice advocate Loretta Ross told me. This doesn’t mean validating or capitulating to the fears you are hearing from voters. But it does mean not dismissing them. Whether on fears of crime or inflation or other subjects, figures on the left often give voters the sense that they shouldn’t be worried about the things that they are, in fact, worried about. A better approach is to empathize profoundly with those fears and then explain why your policy agenda would address those fears better than the other side’s.

Pick Fights

If the left could use a little more grace and generosity toward voters who are not yet fully on board, it could also benefit from a greater comfort with making powerful enemies. It needs to be simultaneously a better lover and a better fighter.

“What Republicans are great at doing is telling you who’s to blame,” Senator Chris Murphy, Democrat of Connecticut, told me. “Whether it’s big government or Mexican immigrants or Muslims, Republicans are going to tell you who’s doing the bad things to you. Democrats, we believe in subtleties. We don’t believe in good and evil. We believe in relativity. That needs to change.”

Once again, the exceptions prove the rule. Why did the Texas Democratic gubernatorial candidate, Beto O’Rourke, go viral when he confronted the Republican governor, Greg Abbott, during a news conference or called a voter an incest epithet? Why does the Pennsylvania Senate candidate John Fetterman so resonate with voters for his ceaseless trolling of his opponent, the celebrity surgeon and television personality Mehmet Oz, about his residency status and awkward grocery videos? In California, why has Gov. Gavin Newsom’s feisty postrecall persona, calling out his fellow governors on the right, brought such applause? Because, as Anat Shenker-Osorio, a messaging expert who advises progressive causes, has said, people “are absolutely desperate for moral clarity and demonstrated conviction.”

Provide a Home

Many leading political thinkers and doers argue that the right’s greatest strength isn’t its ideological positioning or policy ideas or rhetoric. It is putting a metaphorical roof over the head of adherents, giving them a sense of comfort and belonging to something larger than themselves.

“People want to find a place that they call home,” Alicia Garza, an activist prominent in the Black Lives Matter movement, told me. “Home for a lot of people means a place where you can feel safe and a place where someone is caring for your needs.

“The right deeply understands people,” Garza continued. “It gives them a reason for being, and it gives them answers to the question of ‘Why am I suffering?’ On the left, we think a lot about facts and figures and logic that we hope will change people’s minds. I think what’s real is actually much closer to Black feminist thinkers who have said things like ‘People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.’”

The Democratic Party establishment is abysmal at this kind of appeal. It is more comfortable sending emails asking you to chip in $5 to beat back the latest outrage than it is inviting you to participate in something. As Lara Putnam and Micah L. Sifry [*have observed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/01/opinion/democrats-2024-election.html) in these pages, the left has invested little in “year-round structures in place to reach voters through trusted interlocutors,” opting instead for doom-and-chip-in emails, while the right channels its supporters’ energy “into local groups that have a lasting, visible presence in their communities, such as anti-abortion networks, Christian home-schoolers and gun clubs.”

There is nothing preventing the Democratic Party and its allies from doing more of this kind of association building. Learn from the Democratic Socialists of America’s New Orleans chapter, which in 2017 started offering free brake light repairs to local residents — on the surface, a useful service to help people avoid getting stopped by the police and going into ticket debt and, deeper down, an ingenious way to market bigger political ideas like fighting the carceral system and racism in policing while vividly demonstrating to Louisiana voters potentially wary of the boogeyman of “socialism” that socialists are just neighbors who have your back.

As Bhaskar Sunkara, the founder of Jacobin, the leftist magazine, has observed, the political parties most effective at galvanizing ***working-class*** voters in the 20th century were “deeply rooted” in civil society and trade unions, “tied so closely with ***working-class*** life that, in some countries, every single tenement building might have had a representative.” He suggests rehabilitating the idea of political machines, purged of connotations of corruption, signifying instead a physical closeness to people’s lives and needs, offering not just invitations to vote on national questions but also tangible, local material help navigating public systems and getting through life.

Tell the Better Story

As befits a polity on the knife’s edge, Democrats have good political days, and Republicans have good political days. But in the longer contest to tell the better story about America and draw people into that story, there is a great worry among organizers that the left is badly falling short.

The left has a bold agenda: strengthen voting rights, save the planet, upgrade the safety net. But policies do not speak for themselves, and the cause remains starved for a larger, goosebumps-giving, heroes-and-villains, endlessly quotable story of America that justifies the policy ambitions and helps people make sense of the time and place they’re in.

There are reasons this is harder for the left than for the right. As the writer Masha Gessen said to me not long ago, it is easier to tell a story about a glorious past that people vividly remember (and misremember) than it is to tell the story of a future they can’t yet see and may not believe can be delivered. It is easier to simplify and scapegoat than to propose actual solutions to complex problems.

Still, there are better stories to tell, stories that would point to where we are going, allay the diverse anxieties about getting there, explain the antidemocracy movement’s successes in recent years and galvanize and inspire and conflagrate.

One could tell the story of a country that set out a long time ago to try something, that embarked on an experiment in self-government that had little precedent, that committed itself to ideals that remain iconic to people around the world. It’s a country that also struggled since those beginnings to be in practice what its progenitors thought it was in theory, because its founding fathers “didn’t have the courage to do exactly what they said,” as the artist Dewey Crumpler recently put it to me. America was blinded by its own parchment declarations to the exploitation and suffering and degradation and death it allowed to flourish. But since those days, it has tried to get better. The country has seen itself more clearly and sought to improve itself, just as people do.

Over the last generation or two, in particular, it has dramatically changed in the realm of law and norms and culture, opening its promise to more and more of its children, working fitfully to become what it said it would be. It is now a society that still struggles with its original sins and unfinished business but has also made great strides toward becoming a kind of country that has scarcely existed in history: a great power forged of all the world, with people from every corner of the planet, of every religion, language, ethnicity and back story. This is something to feel patriotic about, an authentic patriotism the left should loudly claim.

What the country is trying to do is hard. Alloying a country from all of humankind, with freedom and dignity and equality for every kind of person, is a goal as complicated and elusive as it is noble. And the road to get there is bumpy, because it has yet to be paved. Embracing a bigger “we” is hard.

The backlash we are living through is no mystery, actually. It is a revolt against the future, and it is natural. This, too, is part of the story. The antidemocracy upheaval isn’t a movement of the future. It is a movement of resistance to progress that is being made — progress that we don’t celebrate enough and that the pro-democracy movement doesn’t take enough credit for.

It is time for the pro-democracy cause to step it up, ditch the despair, claim the mantle of its achievements and offer a thrilling alternative to the road of hatred, chaos, violence and tyranny. It’s going to take heart and intelligence and new strategies, words and policies. It’s going to take an army of persuaders, who believe enough in other people to try to move — and join — them. This is our righteous struggle that can and must be won.

Anand Giridharadas is the author, most recently, of “[*The Persuaders: At the Front Lines of the Fight for Hearts, Minds, and Democracy*](https://thepersuadersbook.com/),” from which this essay is adapted.

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[***Net Gains***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63GH-F7W1-JBG3-60JN-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

ALL INAn AutobiographyBy Billie Jean King with Johnette Howard and Maryanne Vollers

Billie Jean King isn't interested in being a legend -- she's interested in succession. Her latest memoir follows two previous efforts to sum up her extraordinary career -- one spent as a former No. 1-ranked tennis player, a 12-time Grand Slam champion, a founder of the Women's Tennis Association and, of course, winner of the Battle of the Sexes versus Bobby Riggs in 1973. She's up to something more overtly political now with ''All In,'' and the urgency with which she writes -- here with Johnette Howard and Maryanne Vollers -- about her life's work as an activist gives one the sense that it's essential to her that the mantle is passed to the next generations (and that they're fired up about it!).

The book is concerned with King's work to make tennis a more equal and inclusive sport -- work she knows to be perennial and prone to setbacks -- and it reads as a playbook of sorts, a life narrative peppered throughout with instructions for how to win the game. Yes, there are ready-made aphorisms everywhere: ''Champions adjust,'' ''Pressure is a privilege'' and the widely applicable ''Every decision should be for a tactical advantage, period.''

Like many professional tennis players, King is in constant motion, not given to dwelling on highs and lows, as there's always another battle that awaits. But she's also an ardent student of history and a compelling narrator. She walks us through her remarkable life, which includes some of recent history's most remarkable events.

There's a clear through-line from King conferring with Gloria Steinem in the offices of Ms. magazine, to embracing the fight for racial equity in South Africa as Arthur Ashe also grappled with apartheid, to playing on a high school court in Honolulu while a young Barack Obama looked on. King's instincts to shape seismic events in culture have set the table for (and in some cases, created) conversations about race, gender identity, sexuality and equity that are especially resonant now, and it's hard not to read this book as a call to arms.

But it's also plenty personal: ''All In'' traces King's ***working-class*** beginnings as a Long Beach public courts kid, with a firmly traditional family and a Southern California cultural context more '50s Bob's Big Boy than '60s Laurel Canyon. While she exhibited precocious talent as a junior player and translated her skills into collegiate and international success, no structure existed to provide women with a viable professional tennis career until she made one in the early '70s.

She and her fellow amateur female athletes asked again and again for ''prize money commensurate with that of men, equal exposure in center court matches and better treatment by the news media, which subordinates women's tennis to the men's game,'' and were continually denied. It was only after lengthy battles with the tennis establishment -- led by the promoter Jack Kramer, who worked diligently with male superstars of the era, including Ashe and Stan Smith, to ensure that women remained diminished -- that she decided to act, spearheading the organization of a group now known as the Original 9 to create the Virginia Slims tour.

From there King went on a tear on the court -- racking up her career Grand Slam and completing a triple crown at Wimbledon (the singles, doubles and mixed-doubles championships). Upon winning the Battle of the Sexes against Riggs, the self-proclaimed male chauvinist pig, she developed a growing understanding that she'd have to be the first female athlete-activist.

'''This is the culmination of 19 years of work,' I told the press that night. 'Since the time they wouldn't let me be in the picture because I didn't have on a tennis skirt, I've wanted to change the game around. Now it's here.'''

In 1972, her testimony in front of Congress all but guaranteed the passage of Title IX, which ended discrimination based on sex and is hailed as the single most important moment in women's sports history. That 94 percent of women in American C-suites say they played sports as girls, and that collegiate athletes like me had their education paid for because of Title IX, is evidence of its generational impact.

In the '80s King's career slowed down, featuring fewer titles and some business calamities, and her life was upturned by a palimony suit filed by a former female lover. King's outing, along with costing her millions in sponsorships, set in motion a period of deep introspection and allowed her to finally deal with lifelong struggles with eating disorders and internalized homophobia, and it also seems to have clarified for her the need to battle the sport's elitism in a more tactical and intentional way.

When she was a young girl, her dust-ups with the tennis establishment at the stuffy and exclusionary Los Angeles Tennis Club -- over everything from sexist dress codes to racist door policies -- had irritated the ***working-class*** kid, and while she might not have had a road map, exactly, for what shape her future activism would take, she definitely saw the road. ''There was this gap between what I thought I was capable of and the world as it was,'' King writes. ''I saw that gulf clearly. I was less sure how to breach it.''

Her continuous fight to be included -- and her instinct to include others in the fight -- made her a force in real time. But it's from these years in the wilderness when she took stock -- particularly following the deaths of ultimately close friends like Ashe and Riggs -- that King began to put a contemporary activist framework around her trailblazing.

Her efforts in the decades since, from advising the '99ers -- the U.S. women's national soccer team, which turned their victory in the 1999 World Cup into a viable professional league -- to defending L.G.B.T.Q. rights, work that was recognized by Obama with a Presidential Medal of Freedom, have been defined so much by her activism that it's easy to take her for granted, and easy to assume that someone is ready to take her place.

''I've told people if I die right now I'd be really ticked off because I'm not finished,'' she writes, scanning the horizon. ''Time is running out for real, and I've always had a sense of urgency.''

Despite a resurgence in recreational popularity and huge money at the top of the ecosystem, tennis is at a crossroads: Equity, parity and inclusion are still not always the priority. The absence of a clear new leader means that King must view her work as imperiled. With the sport currently in turmoil over player unions, the lack of a viable domestic violence policy, a vociferous battle over press obligations and rumors of venture capital at the gates, ready (for better or worse) to buy it all up, King's book arrives with the same exquisite timing that has defined her style of play as well as her life.

It's easy work to be a former champion, easier still to be a legend -- after all, the job requirements are nothing beyond showing up. But it's not easy to be an activist, and it's certainly not easy to commit your life to pushing the world closer to how you want it to be. ''All In'' reads as a manifesto, like ''Letters to a Young Poet'' with a heavy dash of bell hooks. Billie Jean King is not done yet, but as she says here, ''If you're in the business of change, you have to be prepared to play the long game.'' Her book is a powerful rallying cry, in a life full of them, for how she hopes we play the game after she's gone.Caitlin Thompson is the publisher of Racquet.ALL INAn AutobiographyBy Billie Jean King with Johnette Howard and Maryanne VollersIllustrated. 482 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $30.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/17/books/review/all-in-billie-jean-king.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/17/books/review/all-in-billie-jean-king.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Billie Jean King in 1974. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ASSOCIATED PRESS)

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[***In 'Toxic' Professor's Speech, a Test of Tenure***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67S4-2D31-DXY4-X205-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Amy Wax, a law professor, has said publicly that ''on average, Blacks have lower cognitive ability than whites,'' that the country is ''better off with fewer Asians'' as long as they tend to vote for Democrats, and that non-Western people feel a ''tremendous amount of resentment and shame.''

At the University of Pennsylvania, where she has tenure, she invited a white nationalist to speak to her class. And a Black law student who had attended UPenn and Yale said that the professor told her she ''had only become a double Ivy 'because of affirmative action,''' according to the administration.

Professor Wax has denied saying anything belittling or racist to students, and her supporters see her as a truth teller about affirmative action, immigration and race. They agree with her argument that she is the target of censorship and ''wokeism'' because of her conservative views.

All of which poses a conundrum for the University of Pennsylvania: Should it fire Amy Wax?

The university is now moving closer to answering just that question. After long resisting the call of students, the dean of the law school, Theodore W. Ruger, has taken a rare step: He has filed a complaint and requested a faculty hearing to consider imposing a ''major sanction'' on the professor.

His about-face prompted protests from free speech groups, which cited one of tenure's key tenets -- the right of academics to speak freely, without fear of punishment, whether in public or in the classroom.

For years, Mr. Ruger wrote in his 12-page complaint, Professor Wax has shown ''callous and flagrant disregard'' for students, faculty and staff, subjecting them to ''intentional and incessant racist, sexist, xenophobic and homophobic actions and statements.''

The complaint said she has violated the university's nondiscrimination policies and ''standards of professional competence.''

Her statements, the complaint added, ''have led students and faculty to reasonably believe they will be subjected to discriminatory animus if they come into contact with her.''

Professor Wax has fought back, arguing that the university is trying to trample on her academic freedom.

Universities want to ''banish and punish'' anyone ''who dares to dissent, who dares to expose students to different ideas,'' she said on a recent podcast. ''That is a really dangerous and pernicious trend.''

Professor Wax did not agree to interview requests, but at a time when scholars say their speech is under attack from the left and the right, many free speech groups, including the Academic Freedom Alliance, PEN America and the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, have criticized the dean and said that Professor Wax should not be fired because of her public statements.

''Academic freedom cannot be a privilege of those who only espouse prevailing views but a protected right of all faculty,'' the Academic Freedom Alliance wrote in July to the university's president, M. Elizabeth Magill, arguing that the school should end the process to sanction Professor Wax.

But for many students, her public speech, which often mixes public policy with insulting broadsides, is the point.

Students have asked: Aren't these statements relevant to her performance in the classroom? Don't they show the potential for bias? And does this professor, and this speech, deserve the protection of tenure?

Dean Ruger, who declined an interview request, seemed to embrace these concerns by including a litany of Professor Wax's public statements in his complaint.

Free speech groups acknowledge that some personal discussions with students -- if true -- could be deemed abusive, and are not protected by tenure. But they have winced at the dean's inclusion of public statements in his complaint.

Professor Wax is a test case of academic freedom, ''right up on the line,'' said Alex Morey, the director of campus rights advocacy for the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression.

But, she said, ''We have not seen any evidence that it crosses the line.''

She added, ''Academic freedom has to protect the Amy Waxes of the academic world, so that it can be there for the Galileos of the academic world.''

Building a Public Profile

Professor Wax cut an unconventional path to Penn law school.

Raised in an observant, conservative Jewish family, she received a bachelor's degree from Yale and a medical degree from Harvard.

On a podcast, she said she realized medicine was not for her, and in 1987, received a law degree from Columbia University. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, as an assistant to the U.S. solicitor general, she argued 15 cases before the Supreme Court. And after seven years at the University of Virginia, she joined Penn with tenure in 2001.

Though Professor Wax had been a subject of debate for years, student demands for sanctions began in earnest in 2017, after she co-wrote an opinion article in The Philadelphia Inquirer. She argued that many of the country's social problems could be traced to veering from 1950s norms, like getting married before having children, respecting authority and avoiding coarse language.

The article said ''all cultures are not equal'' and lamented ''the single-parent, antisocial habits, prevalent among some ***working-class*** whites; the anti-'acting white' rap culture of inner-city blacks; the anti-assimilation ideas gaining ground among some Hispanic immigrants.''

After some students called for her firing, conservative media rallied, allowing Professor Wax to spread her views across the conservative firmament over the years, including writing for The Wall Street Journal and appearing on Tucker Carlson's daytime show on Fox Nation.

Along the way, her rhetoric grew more extreme. She has described some non-Western countries as ''shitholes'' and stated that ''women, on average, are less knowledgeable than men.''

Speaking with Mr. Carlson last year, she said ''American Blacks'' and people from non-Western countries feel shame for the ''outsized achievements and contributions'' of Western people.

On a recent podcast, she said, ''I often chuckle at the ads on TV which show a Black man married to a white woman in an upper-class picket-fence house,'' she said, adding, ''They never show Blacks the way they really are: a bunch of single moms with a bunch of guys who float in and out. Kids by different men.''

She has also acted as something of a provocateur on campus.

In 2021, she invited a white nationalist, Jared Taylor, to a class and then lunch with students. She argued that he was an appropriate speaker for a seminar on conservative thought, according to a grievance she filed against Dean Ruger this past January and obtained by The Daily Pennsylvanian, the student newspaper. Mr. Taylor has said that ''when blacks are left entirely to their own devices, Western Civilization -- any kind of civilization -- disappears.''

Throughout, the administration had supported her right to speak and took significant action only once, in 2018, in reaction to her comments on a podcast about affirmative action, when she said that Black students at the law school do not perform well.

''I can think of one or two students who've scored in the top half in my required first-year course,'' she told the host, Glenn Loury, a professor at Brown University.

After some students objected, Dean Ruger disputed her data and took away her first-year course. She did not have a right, he said, to violate confidentiality about student grades.

Professor Loury, a Black economist known for his contrarian views, agreed in an interview that disclosing confidential student data to make racial comparisons would be unacceptable.

But, he said, Professor Wax did not do that -- she was just engaging in ''loose talk.'' Perhaps, he said, a teacher should not discuss students that way.

''But violating privacy?'' he said. ''I think that's a stretch.''

'Finally, an American'

Many students, especially Asian, Black and Latino students, have described a series of what they say are racist incidents involving Professor Wax.

According to the university complaint, after a series of students with ''foreign-sounding names'' introduced themselves, Professor Wax commented that one student was 'Finally, an American.''' She added, ''It's a good thing, trust me.''

In an investigator's report obtained by The Washington Free Beacon, a student alleged that while repeating language used in a 19th-century case, Professor Wax said ''Negro'' in such a ''snide and smug'' way that the student left the classroom. And in the same report, a student said that in 2014, when discussing an eyewitness, Professor Wax said, ''He was a Black man'' with a ''distasteful'' tone. ''She spat it out of her mouth,'' the student said.

Mr. Ruger's complaint also outlined an alleged interaction between Professor Wax and Lauren O'Garro-Moore, a 2012 graduate, saying that Ms. Moore was a ''double Ivy'' -- attending Penn and Yale -- only because of affirmative action.

In the complaint, Ms. O'Garro-Moore said she was ''stunned'' and wanted to cry but did not. Ms. O'Garro-Moore, saying she could be a witness in the hearing, declined an interview.

Some of these personal interactions may not be protected by tenure. And Ms. Wax has denied making many of these statements, including the ''double Ivy'' comment.

''In what class?'' she asked on Professor Loury's podcast. ''What was the lesson? What was the context? Nothing is supplied'' -- echoing critics of the complaint, who have said it is vague and lacks transparency.

Students are often accused of being oversensitive, but Professor Wax's colleagues have shared their own uncomfortable moments with her in public forums.

Tobias Barrington Wolff, a Penn law school professor, said that he once sat with her on a panel where she decried same-sex relationships as self-centered, selfish and not focused on family or community, according to Dean Ruger's complaint.

Professor Wolff, who is gay, said that it was ''striking she would choose to hold forth that way with me sitting there.''

Disagreements with Professor Wax, he added, make you feel that ''you are a fundamentally debased human being.'' Professor Wolff did not respond to an interview request and it is unclear whether he supports sanctions.

Even Professor Loury, a strong supporter of Professor Wax, has a story.

In 2011, he gave a talk at Penn law school in which he argued that too many Black people were in prison.

During the discussion, he said that Professor Wax, whom he did not know, raised her hand and said: There are not too many Black people in prison, there are too few.

Afterward, Professor Loury wrote an email to an event organizer, stating that her behavior was ''openly hostile'' and that he felt ashamed he did not respond forcefully enough.

Professor Loury, who frequently laments the oversensitivity of college students, said he would not send such an email now, because her comments were an opportunity for vigorous debate.

Even so, Professor Wax was ''being performative,'' he said, and ''seemed to enjoy it a little too much.'' He recalled, ''She's got this snarl on her face.''

Free Expression for Whom?

In 2017, after Professor Wax had published her piece about 1950s values, Jonah Gelbach, then a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, organized an open letter signed by 33 law professors, rejecting her views about cultural superiority but affirming her right to state them.

He said that Professor Wax tried to pressure him to retract his letter, writing in an email that if he did not, she would publicize the negative online responses at an upcoming talk.

He declined, and she went through with her threat. In her talk, which has been viewed almost 40,000 times on YouTube, she portrayed him as a crusher of speech and an ''anti-role model.''

Professor Gelbach, now at the University of California, Berkeley, said the encounter revealed how Professor Wax uses speech as sword and shield, portraying herself as the victim of cancel culture, while also trying to create ''a safe-space bubble of protection from others' reactions.''

Still, he does not support sanctions for her public statements. ''I view Amy as both a scholarly embarrassment and a toxic presence at Penn and in the academy generally,'' he said, but added, ''She is nevertheless a tenured faculty member at a university, and I do not support university sanctions for public expressions of horrible views.''

The University Acts

In late 2021, on Professor Loury's podcast, Professor Wax warned against an ''influx of Asian elites.'' He pushed back, suggesting that Asian engineers and computer scientists bring value to the United States.

''Does the spirit of liberty beat in their breast, Glenn?'' she shot back, arguing that Asians tend to be ''more conformist.''

Dean Ruger denounced her comments but once again resisted action.

A petition, started by Apratim Vidyarthi, who was then a student, demanded an investigation and stated that it was impossible to believe that Professor Wax would treat nonconservative, nonwhite students fairly. It garnered more than 2,500 signatures, including about 800 from the law school's current and former students, Mr. Vidyarthi said.

Mr. Vidyarthi said that he and other students of color would not feel comfortable or safe in the two classes she continued to teach, on legal remedies and conservative thought.

Ty Parks, the advocacy chair for the Black Law Students Association, said having Professor Wax on staff sends a mixed message about the school's commitment to inclusion.

''When we walk into the building of the law school, we see a portrait of Dr. Sadie Alexander, who was the first Black woman to graduate from Penn law,'' Mr. Parks said. ''Then down the hall, you have a professor who is a literal white supremacist.'' (Professor Wax describes herself as a ''race realist.'')

Mr. Parks rejected the argument that students were censoring her politics.

''We have conservative professors in the law school that I don't agree with,'' he said. ''But they're not making harmful remarks that are clearly racist. They're not crossing those boundaries.''

Two weeks after the petition, after arguing for years that Professor Wax's speech was protected by academic freedom, Mr. Ruger said he would begin a disciplinary process.

What Should Tenure Protect?

Many free-speech advocates say that Dean Ruger's complaint overstepped by including the professor's public statements.

Jonathan Friedman, an official at PEN America, said the idea that off-campus comments can lead to an investigation ''is concerning.''

Those who want heavy sanctions, he said, ''have to think about how the same powers can be wielded in other ways, against other professors whose comments can be deemed offensive or hostile.''

And some professors say her interactions with students are enough to warrant punishment.

''There's a bright line between 'I don't like affirmative action' and 'You, African American student, only got in because of affirmative action,''' said Jonathan Zimmerman, a Penn history professor who had previously defended Professor Wax against calls for punishment.

The latter comment, if true, he said, is ''singling out a student for abuse.'' But students question the professor's free-speech protections. Andrew Bookbinder, of the university's Asian Pacific American Law Student Association, said Professor Wax was using tenure to be intentionally offensive in ways that do not further academic speech.

The process playing out at Penn, he said, ''is the system working.''

''It's not like a group of students has voiced their concern, and she's been terminated,'' Mr. Bookbinder said. There will be a hearing, he noted, with ''her fellow tenured professors, who will surely hold those same protections very dearly themselves.''

Alain Delaquérière contributed research. Alain Delaquérière contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/13/us/upenn-law-professor-racism-freedom-speech.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/13/us/upenn-law-professor-racism-freedom-speech.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Amy Wax, a law professor at the University of Pennsylvania, said on a podcast that universities want to ''banish and punish'' anyone ''who dares to dissent.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIO SOSA / THE DAILY PENNSYLVANIAN)

TY PARKS, the advocacy chair for the Black Law Students Association.

JONAH GELBACH, a former professor at the University of Pennsylvania.

ANDREW BOOKBINDER, of the university's Asian Pacific American Law Student Association. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANNAH YOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

GLENN LOURY, a professor at Brown recalling Professor Wax's behavior at one of his talks. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BEA OYSTER) (A12) This article appeared in print on page A1, A12.

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Macron Aims for a National Dialogue at a Meeting, but Faces No-Shows***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66BH-C9G1-DXY4-X3FN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 8, 2022 Thursday 10:55 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1295 words

**Byline:** Catherine Porter and Constant Méheut

**Highlight:** The inaugural meeting of a council to examine France’s most pressing problems had an issue of its own: boycotts.

**Body**

The inaugural meeting of a council to examine France’s most pressing problems had an issue of its own: boycotts.

PARIS — Seemingly humbled by the fractures in French society exposed during the election that ultimately led to his second term as France’s president, Emmanuel Macron promised to rule in a new way — fewer dictates from above and more collaborating.

So he announced the creation of a council with members from all parts of French political and civil society, holding regular meetings all across the country, to find answers to some of the country’s most pressing problems and restitch the broken connections of democracy.

To underline its importance, he called it the National Council for Reconstruction — an obvious echo of the country’s venerated multiparty resistance committee that fought against France’s occupiers during World War II and re-envisioned the country literally from rubble.

Except that on Thursday, there were many notable no-shows for the council’s inaugural meeting, set in the national rugby team’s training center just south of Paris. All opposition political parties boycotted the meeting, as did many of the country’s powerful unions and the head of the country’s Senate. They denounced the council as a publicity stunt at best and a hastily constructed ramp to bypass democracy at worst.

The scene offered a foreshadowing of the headwinds that Mr. Macron, who no longer controls Parliament, will face during his second term governing a country facing a looming energy crisis, growing inflation, the daunting effects of climate change and clear democratic disillusionment.

“We don’t wish to participate” in a “substitute Parliament or a fake consultation,” the leaders of the Socialist Party said in a [*public letter*](https://twitter.com/faureolivier/status/1567608095387303936) to the president.

Mr. Macron won [*his second term in April*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/24/world/europe/french-election-results-macron-le-pen.html), in a runoff against the far-right leader Marine Le Pen. But in the legislative elections that followed shortly afterward, his centrist coalition lost an absolute majority in the National Assembly, the lower and more powerful house of Parliament, and Ms. Le Pen’s anti-immigrant National Rally party won a record 89 seats.

Voter turnout in the first round of voting was the lowest on record, reflecting a widespread disillusionment with politics.

Known during his first term as “[*Jupiter,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/22/world/europe/france-election-emmanuel-macron.html)” for governing like a god hurling down thunderbolt orders from above while sidelining even the parliamentarians from his own party, the president realized he needed to change his style of governing for practical reasons — to push his agenda through Parliament — as well as philosophical ones.

On the night of his re-election, he delivered [*a sober acceptance speech*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ymynAkAdTNc), promising a “new era” that “will not be the continuation of the five years now ending but the collective invention of a new method for five better years.”

Soon after, Mr. Macron announced the reconstruction commission.

“He is craving political legitimacy,” explained Vincent Martigny, a professor of political science at the University of Nice. He added, “The real question that everyone is asking themselves is, will he be able to change after five years?”

Since the announcement, the council’s mission, structure and mandate have remained vague. Last week, Prime Minister Élisabeth Borne clarified that the group would dig into five voluminous issues, including the country’s strained public health and education systems, a planned green transition of the economy and Mr. Macron’s campaign promise to reduce the country’s unemployment rate to zero. Opposition politicians took to simply calling it the “thingy.”

“It seems a complete improvisation,” said Yves Sintomer, a professor of political science at the Paris University of Vincennes Saint-Denis. “The rules of the game are unclear. It’s very probable that it won’t be a success — which is a pity.”

Mr. Macron waxed poetic from the rugby field where Thursday’s meeting took place, saying the new committee would help “rebuild consensus” and change France in a profound way.

“I want to put our compatriots back at the heart of the nation’s major choices,” he said. To those boycotting, he responded defiantly: “There is a common sense saying, ‘Those who are absent are always wrong.’”

But, he added, the door would remain open should they change their minds.

The skepticism is well earned. This isn’t Mr. Macron’s first attempt to reinvigorate democracy.

After the Yellow Vest protests — a series of violent demonstrations by ***working-class*** people in 2018 and 2019 over the rise in gasoline and diesel taxes — Mr. Macron attempted to defuse the anger [*by setting up the “Great National Debate.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/08/world/europe/france-macron-yellow-vest.html)The two-month national consultation in which 1.5 million citizens weighed in on what they wanted and filled out “grievance notebooks” didn’t lead to any major reforms, and [*Mr. Macron often did most of the talking*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/23/world/europe/macron-yellow-vests-france.html).

Later, he set up the Citizen’s Climate Convention, a panel of randomly selected people from across France who formulated more than 100 ambitious proposals to tackle climate change, which Mr. Macron vowed to submit “unfiltered” to a parliamentary vote.

But when the legislation largely inspired by the convention was finally passed, critics said many of the measures were watered down to the point of absurdity, and protesting activists pointed out that France would be unable to meet its commitments to the [*Paris climate agreement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/21/climate/biden-paris-climate-agreement.html).

“It’s a bit harmful for democracy,” said Cyril Dion, an environmental activist who oversaw the work of the convention, adding that “launching ambitious projects, creating expectations but then failing to keep promises fuels distrust.”

To the French, Mr. Macron’s new venture is an obvious allusion to the cherished National Resistance Council — an underground group formed during World War II. That council brought together disparate factions under the leadership of Charles de Gaulle to coordinate tactics against the occupying Nazis and, later, to prepare for the country’s hopeful reconstruction. Much of France’s generous social safety net is its legacy.

Though many French mocked and contested the comparison, few would dismiss the great challenges the country faces.

There is the threat of blackouts this winter, rising living costs, an insecure climate — which caused vast wildfires and a damaging drought this summer — and Russia’s enduring invasion of Ukraine. The country, Mr. Macron said in a speech last month, has entered [*“the end of abundance.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/05/business/russia-gas-europe-france.html)

Facing these problems is a population increasingly distrustful of politics and greatly divided along ideological lines, noted Jean Garrigues, a leading historian on France’s political culture.

Different communities “talk to one another less and less,” Mr. Garrigues said. “The interests of Bourgeois-Bohemian Parisiens aren’t those of farmers from Lozère, and the interests of the farmers from Lozère aren’t those of the youth from the suburbs. France is fractured and needs more than ever to recreate a form of dialogue.”

Already, some of the country’s opposition parties have [*vowed to block the government’s budget*](https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2022/09/04/pour-eviter-le-recours-au-49-3-gabriel-attal-propose-aux-parlementaires-d-echanger-autour-du-budget-2023_6140160_823448.html) in the National Assembly next month, even before debating it.

In part, that reflects the uncompromising nature of French politics, said Chloé Morin, a political scientist at the Jean-Jaurès Foundation. But it also underlined the need for Mr. Macron’s new democracy re-engagement project to succeed and prevent another potential social uprising in the country.

“The government is aware of the fragility of social harmony,” she said. “There is, in the background, the threat of a new kind of Yellow Vest protest hanging in the air.”

PHOTOS: President Emmanuel Macron said the national committee would bring profound change to France.; Opposition parties boycotted the National Council for Reconstruction’s first meeting on Thursday. (POOL PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHEL EULER)

**Load-Date:** September 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Struggling Seaside Town Shows Challenges Facing Truss***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66BF-KVF1-DXY4-X234-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 8, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1326 words

**Byline:** By Megan Specia

**Body**

Blackpool contains one of the most deprived areas to turn to the Conservatives in Britain's last general election. But with costs rising, there are already signs of cracks in that support.

BLACKPOOL, England -- The famed annual light show still illuminates the sky each night in the seaside town of Blackpool in England's northwest, having survived the nationwide effort to conserve energy. But beneath the glitter, the evidence of decades of decline is everywhere.

The signs on the small hotels that line long stretches of the coastline have faded, and ''vacancy'' notices flash in their front windows. Shuttered storefrontsâ€Œ dotâ€Œ the roads in the center of town. The doorways of defunct nightclubs are crowded with those sleeping rough.

Liz Truss, who took over as Britain's prime minister on Tuesday, will have no shortage of issues to address in a country facing grave economic crises. On Thursday, Ms. Truss is set to announce a plan to limit the sharp rise in energy costs.

But the most daunting challenges will come in towns like Blackpool, already one of the most deprived in England, according to government statistics.

Blackpool South, where the popular Pleasure Beach amusement park stands, long supported the Labour Party but switched to backing the Conservative Party in the 2019 election that brought Boris Johnson to power. It was one of the poorest areas of England to switch parties.

But with costs for nearly everything rising, and worries that energy bills could skyrocket to thousands of pounds a year for the average household, there are already indications of cracks in the Conservative coalition.

''I do not think that having Liz Truss or Rishi Sunak would have made any difference to the economy of Blackpool,'' said Ava Makepeace, a resident, referring to Ms. Truss's opponent in the leadership race that ended this week in her victory.

Ms. Makepeace, 51, was critical of Conservative policies, and said that Brexit, which Blackpool overwhelmingly favored in a 2016 referendum, had also had a negative effect on the town.

''No one can get decent staff anymore,'' she said of the restaurants and hotels that had relied on overseas workers. ''And poverty in certain areas of central Blackpool are the worst they have ever been.''

She said it seemed like northern towns like hers had been entirely forgotten.

Once a thriving beachside resort, Blackpool has seen a steady decline in recent decades, as the popularity of destination vacations to more exotic locales took off and a once bustling tourism sector dwindled. In its wake, the town was left with deep social problems. Both men and women there have the lowest life expectancy of any local authority in England, according to the Office for National Statistics.

An erosion of support among northern, ***working-class*** towns like Blackpool would be a serious blow to the Tories, who benefited from a shift of loyalties away from Labour in Mr. Johnson's landslide 2019 win. Many had voted in favor of Brexit and were eager to see a government deliver on that 2016 decision. And in struggling areas where industry no longer drives the economy, people were looking for a way to restore and revitalize their towns and cities.

The Conservative Partyâ€Œ had garnered support there with plans to deliver on the Brexit vote and the promiseâ€Œ â€Œof nationwide ''leveling up'' -- â€Œ a program to bolster living standards and promote economic and social development in less prosperous parts of the countryâ€Œ. That pledgeâ€Œ, which buoyed the party in the last election, has yet to fully materialize here, locals and policy experts say.

Nigel Heckford was walking his dogs on Blackpool's promenade on Monday, shortly after the news of Ms. Truss's victory, and said the town's decline made him fear for his young children.

He said he had little faith that Ms. Truss, or the Conservative Party for that matter, could deliver the broad changes needed to restore a place like Blackpool.

''Her policies of large-scale tax cuts are likely to only benefit the rich and could mean more cuts to services in the council here, which makes me really worried,'' said Mr. Heckford, 52. ''The issues Blackpool is already facing are probably going to get worse.''

A yearslong government policy of austerity, on the heels of the 2008 global financial crisis, led to billions of pounds in cuts to welfare payments, housing subsidies and children's services, among other programs.

The coronavirus crisis dealt another serious blow to Blackpool, leaving businesses struggling as tourism ground to a halt â€Œduring nationwide lockdowns. Now, the rising prices will present particular challenges to the north, said Jonathan Webb, a senior research fellow at the Institute for Public Policy Research North, a British think tank.

In places like Blackpool, leveling up has always been taking place ''against the specter of austerity,'' Mr. Webb said, which reduced the ability of local government to provide for people and respond to their needs.

As an area that had historically voted with Labour before the last election, the unfulfilled campaign promises are likely to be met with distrust by communities who now feel forgotten, he said.

The continuing erosion, he said, would be ''a major challenging for Liz Truss in the north and across the country.''

In general, the quality of available housing in the north is worse, and as a result less energy efficient, making the cost to heat homes higher. Incomes in northern England also tend to be significantly lower than the national average, he said.

Shop owners and residents of Blackpool are already feeling the pinch. Michael Yale, 59, who was out of work for some time and only recently began a permanent job at a printing warehouse, said he was looking for ways to cut back.

''I am getting worried about turning on my stove because of the cost,'' Mr. Yale said. He is using his microwave instead because it uses less electricity.

Still, Mr. Yale said he remained hopeful that things would improve despite the difficulties. He was glad that Ms. Truss had been elected as the new prime minister, saying he had confidence that the tax cuts he expects her to announce would somehow trickle down to benefit people like him.

This week, on a cool early September evening, tourists still strolled among the amusement piers, packed with arcades, candy shops and food stands. But business owners were worried about a tough winter ahead.

There have been some signs of positive development in recent years. Blackpool was awarded Â£39.5 million (about $45 million) this year by the government to revamp tourist attractions, address the effects of the pandemic and create a hub for young people seeking jobs. There are efforts underway to improve the quality of education and develop better transportation links.

This year, a newly refurbished Â£30 million conference center opened, hoping to draw new visitors to the town.

The Conservative Party held its spring conference there in March, and Mr. Johnson, then prime minister, vowed that the party would ''do everything we can to help people with their daily costs, help people with the cost of living.''

The authorities have vowed to maintain one of the town's signature attractions, the Blackpool Illuminations light show, despite the concerns about surging energy costs. The show, which was switched on over the weekend and will run through the fall and winter, features twinkling lights over the main promenade that stretches for six miles along the seafront and dates to the Victorian era.

But Craig Smalley, who was born and raised in Blackpool and has owned a fast-food stall there for the past 16 years, and other small business owners worry that the cost of the show could eventually become unsustainable and fear that they could lose another tourism draw.

''It could get to a stage where they have to turn it off early,'' Mr. Smalley said. ''And I really hope that doesn't happen.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/07/world/europe/uk-truss-blackpool-conservative-party.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/07/world/europe/uk-truss-blackpool-conservative-party.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, Blackpool Tower in June, illuminated for the queen's jubilee. Left, a soup kitchen in Blackpool last year. The town's severe economic distress exemplifies the problems inherited by Prime Minister Liz Truss of Britain. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MOLLY DARLINGTON/REUTERS

PAUL ELLIS/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[***How Health Care Became the Big Industry in Steel City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62BB-DRK1-DXY4-X2BG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 31, 2021 Wednesday 00:32 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1089 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Szalai

**Highlight:** Pittsburgh’s once strong unions are part of the answer, Gabriel Winant explains in his book “The Next Shift,” but the change hasn’t come without complications.

**Body**

Bad times for American labor have also meant boom times for a certain strain of American nostalgia. According to a well-worn narrative, the postwar era was an idyll of heavy industry and stable union jobs; a family with 2.5 children could get by with just one breadwinner — the archetypical ***working-class*** man, who toiled in a sooty industrial plant before coming home to a house that was impeccably maintained by his doting wife.

Decades after the collapse of its steel industry, Pittsburgh exemplifies how the trace memory of an old identity can live on in a football team (the Steelers), a nickname (Steel City) and even a local beer (Iron City), while the industry that actually flourishes there now — health care — garners no such reverence or recognition. The fastest growth in the sector isn’t for anesthetists or X-ray technicians but for poorly paid caregiving jobs; most of these care workers are women, and many of them are Black.

During the pandemic, these workers have been called “essential” — but as the historian Gabriel Winant explains in “The Next Shift,” remuneration and job protections haven’t kept up. “Care workers are at once everywhere and nowhere,” Winant writes. “They are responsible for everyone, but no one is responsible for them.”

The replacement of blue-collar work by pink-collar work has been much discussed, but what makes this book stand out is Winant’s argument that two seemingly distinct phenomena are in fact inextricably connected: “It was not a coincidence that care labor grew as industrial employment declined.” In the 1970s, deindustrialization pushed an ailing and aging population into unemployment, toward the welfare state — always tentative, in the American case — for their survival. Unlike other social institutions, which buckled under political pressure and austerity cuts, the American health care system flourished, having grown already in response to the rise of collectively bargained health insurance during the flush postwar years.

Winant traces the surprising story of how this happened, taking Pittsburgh as his focus. The city and its surrounding county offer one of the starkest examples of a local economy not simply shaped but warped by the steel industry, whose reach extended through the entire social fabric, right down to the level of family relationships. Winant, who teaches at the University of Chicago, consulted the archives, examined the data and conducted his own interviews to glean an intimate look at how a city of steel became a city of health care aides.

“The Next Shift” is an original work of serious scholarship, but it’s also vivid and readable; Winant has an eye for the telling, and occasionally crushing, detail. One ambivalent steelworker recalled that he always brought his lunch in a brown paper bag that consistently failed to protect his sandwich from hungry rats; he resisted getting a proper lunch pail like the others because it would mean that he was resigning himself to staying put. A woman remembered growing up amid the hushed silence of a house that had to be kept quiet and dark so that the father she barely saw, who worked night shifts, could get some sleep during the day. Households had to organize themselves around the needs of the industry. Each family became “a little factory.”

Despite the sentimentality that has attached to the steel mill, the work it generated was not only dangerous, it was also unpredictable and not infrequently alienating. Winant describes how a coke shoveler working night shifts lost “control over his body’s rhythms — eating, sleeping, toiling,” which in turn made it harder to maintain the performance of masculinity that was so central to his identity. Not to mention that the job security afforded by the union’s collective bargaining wasn’t evenly distributed. In the 1950s, as the demand for steel slackened with the end of the Korean War, layoffs hit Black workers first — they tended to be marginalized within the union, and kept in the worst positions at the mill.

For a time, steelworker unions obtained higher wages, outstripping inflation; then, responding to government pressure to keep wages down, they bargained for better health insurance, which generated its own inflationary dynamic in the health care system. Winant offers a lucid explanation of how the peculiarities of this system developed into what he calls the “public-private welfare state” — a dysfunctional realm of escalating health care costs and entrenched and entangled interests that no one seems capable of replacing.

This public-private welfare state was what awaited the workers cast off by a collapsing industry. Winant notes that the two social institutions that have prospered since the 1980s have been prisons and health care delivery: “Like the expansion of the prison system in the final decades of the 20th century, the rise of the health care industry afforded an economic fix to the social crisis brought about by deindustrialization.”

Hospital work was labor intensive, and it opened a job market for those Black Americans, including domestic workers, who were the first to be displaced by automation and industrial decline. Their exploitation, Winant says, “formed the basis of the bonanza for everyone else.” This work force was largely excluded from the midcentury prosperity and security it helped to create, and the ensuing cycle was vicious: “Caregiving could be offered at large volume to the insured fractions of the ***working class*** because its costs were passed on in such significant proportion to hospital employees via low wages.”

This system, as depicted in Winant’s eye-opening book, is not only inhumane but unsustainable. Toward the end of “The Next Shift,” he introduces us to Nila Payton, a medical secretary who takes calls all day from patients with mesothelioma and black lung at the pathology office where she works. The place is part of Pittsburgh’s enormous hospital complex, but her office is so understaffed that it’s sometimes hard to find someone to cover the phone when she needs to use the bathroom. She says this has damaged her bladder, and in nine years of working there she has never received more than a 15 cent raise.

“Like many patients,” Winant writes, “Payton is now in medical debt — though in her case it is to her own employer.”

Follow Jennifer Szalai on Twitter: @jenszalai. The Next Shift The Fall of Industry and the Rise of Health Care in Rust Belt America By Gabriel Winant Illustrated. 350 pages. Harvard University Press. $35.

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEANNETTE ESTRUTH)

**Load-Date:** April 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***UPenn Accuses a Law Professor of Racist Statements. Should She Be Fired?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67S4-77P1-DXY4-X2M2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 13, 2023 Monday 08:32 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 2723 words

**Byline:** Vimal Patel

**Highlight:** Amy Wax and free speech groups say the university is trampling on her academic freedom. Students ask whether her speech deserves to be protected.

**Body**

Amy Wax, a law professor, has said publicly that “on average, Blacks have lower cognitive ability than whites,” that the country is “better off with fewer Asians” as long as they tend to vote for Democrats, and that non-Western people feel a “tremendous amount of resentment and shame.”

At the University of Pennsylvania, where she has tenure, she invited a white nationalist to speak to her class. And a Black law student who had attended UPenn and Yale said that the professor told her she “had only become a double Ivy ‘because of affirmative action,’” according to the administration.

Professor Wax has denied saying anything belittling or racist to students, and her supporters see her as a truth teller about affirmative action, immigration and race. They agree with her argument that she is the target of censorship and “wokeism” because of her conservative views.

All of which poses a conundrum for the University of Pennsylvania: Should it fire Amy Wax?

The university is now moving closer to answering just that question. After long resisting the call of students, the dean of the law school, Theodore W. Ruger, has taken a rare step: He has filed a complaint and requested a faculty hearing to consider imposing a “major sanction” on the professor.

His about-face prompted protests from free speech groups, which cited one of tenure’s key tenets — the right of academics to speak freely, without fear of punishment, whether in public or in the classroom.

For years, Mr. Ruger [*wrote in his 12-page complaint*](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11Sfwa4PU9oTuvvw-xHhfUPDJqWD7lxex/view), Professor Wax has shown “callous and flagrant disregard” for students, faculty and staff, subjecting them to “intentional and incessant racist, sexist, xenophobic and homophobic actions and statements.”

The complaint said she has violated the university’s nondiscrimination policies and “standards of professional competence.”

Her statements, the complaint added, “have led students and faculty to reasonably believe they will be subjected to discriminatory animus if they come into contact with her.”

Professor Wax has fought back, arguing that the university is trying to trample on her academic freedom.

Universities want to “banish and punish” anyone “who dares to dissent, who dares to expose students to different ideas,” [*she said on a recent podcast*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gJv2BRW7mc&amp;t=3391s). “That is a really dangerous and pernicious trend.”

Professor Wax did not agree to interview requests, but at a time when scholars say their speech is under attack from the left and the right, many free speech groups, including the Academic Freedom Alliance, PEN America and the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, have criticized the dean and said that Professor Wax should not be fired because of her public statements.

“Academic freedom cannot be a privilege of those who only espouse prevailing views but a protected right of all faculty,” the Academic Freedom Alliance [*wrote in July*](http://academicfreedom.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Rev-Amy-Wax-Letter-7_14_2022.pdf)to the university’s president, M. Elizabeth Magill, arguing that the school should end the process to sanction Professor Wax.

But for many students, her public speech, which often mixes public policy with insulting broadsides, is the point.

Students have asked: Aren’t these statements relevant to her performance in the classroom? Don’t they show the potential for bias? And does this professor, and this speech, deserve the protection of tenure?

Dean Ruger, who declined an interview request, seemed to embrace these concerns by including a litany of Professor Wax’s public statements in his complaint.

Free speech groups acknowledge that some personal discussions with students — if true — could be deemed abusive, and are not protected by tenure. But they have winced at the dean’s inclusion of public statements in his complaint.

Professor Wax is a test case of academic freedom, “right up on the line,” said Alex Morey, the director of campus rights advocacy for the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression.

But, she said, “We have not seen any evidence that it crosses the line.”

She added, “Academic freedom has to protect the Amy Waxes of the academic world, so that it can be there for the Galileos of the academic world.”

Building a Public Profile

Professor Wax cut an unconventional path to Penn law school.

Raised in an observant, conservative Jewish family, she received a bachelor’s degree from Yale and a medical degree from Harvard.

[*On a podcast*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhyeUd7vOe4), she said she realized medicine was not for her, and in 1987, received a law degree from Columbia University. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, as an assistant to the U.S. solicitor general, [*she argued 15 cases before the Supreme Court*](https://www.law.upenn.edu/faculty/awax/). And after seven years at the University of Virginia, she joined Penn with tenure in 2001.

Though Professor Wax had been a [*subject of debate*](https://www.middleburycampus.com/article/wax-lecture-stirs-controversy/) for years, student demands for sanctions began in earnest in 2017, after she [*co-wrote an opinion article*](https://www.inquirer.com/philly/opinion/commentary/paying-the-price-for-breakdown-of-the-countrys-bourgeois-culture-20170809.html) in The Philadelphia Inquirer. She argued that many of the country’s social problems could be traced to veering from 1950s norms, like getting married before having children, respecting authority and avoiding coarse language.

The article said “all cultures are not equal” and lamented “the single-parent, antisocial habits, prevalent among some ***working-class*** whites; the anti-‘acting white’ rap culture of inner-city blacks; the anti-assimilation ideas gaining ground among some Hispanic immigrants.”

After some students called for her firing, conservative media rallied, allowing Professor Wax to spread her views across the conservative firmament over the years, including [*writing for The Wall Street Journal*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/what-cant-be-debated-on-campus-1518792717?emailToken=8d3cb21783eec81ef9ead7c0878da9fbcauiCE70Z1uh6tKMlX9ijePKkIRDsVcvJMRys8yVTw%2Faw15RXd3yoab88xcwjmvriS3qDWha8gv1J%2BCS%2B3X5DQ%3D%3D)and appearing on Tucker Carlson’s daytime show on Fox Nation.

Along the way, her rhetoric grew more extreme. She has described some non-Western countries as “shitholes” and [*stated that*](https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/a-penn-law-professor-wants-to-make-america-white-again) “women, on average, are less knowledgeable than men.”

Speaking with Mr. Carlson last year, she said “American Blacks” and people from non-Western countries feel shame for the “outsized achievements and contributions” of Western people.

On a recent podcast, she said, “I often chuckle at the ads on TV which show a Black man married to a white woman in an upper-class picket-fence house,” she said, adding, “They never show Blacks the way they really are: a bunch of single moms with a bunch of guys who float in and out. Kids by different men.”

She has also acted as something of a provocateur on campus.

In 2021, she invited a white nationalist, Jared Taylor, to a class and then lunch with students. She argued that he was an appropriate speaker for a seminar on conservative thought, according to a grievance she filed against Dean Ruger this past January and [*obtained by The Daily Pennsylvanian*](https://www.thedp.com/article/2023/01/penn-carey-law-amy-wax-grievance-dean-ruger), the student newspaper. Mr. Taylor has said that “when blacks are left entirely to their own devices, Western Civilization — any kind of civilization — disappears.”

Throughout, the administration had supported her right to speak and took significant action only once, in 2018, in reaction to her comments on a podcast about affirmative action, when she said that Black students at the law school do not perform well.

“I can think of one or two students who’ve scored in the top half in my required first-year course,” [*she told the host*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cb9Ey-SsNsg), Glenn Loury, a professor at Brown University.

After some students objected, Dean Ruger disputed her data and took away her first-year course. She did not have a right, he said, to violate confidentiality about student grades.

Professor Loury, a Black economist known for his contrarian views, agreed in an interview that disclosing confidential student data to make racial comparisons would be unacceptable.

But, he said, Professor Wax did not do that — she was just engaging in “loose talk.” Perhaps, he said, a teacher should not discuss students that way.

“But violating privacy?” he said. “I think that’s a stretch.”

‘Finally, an American’

Many students, especially Asian, Black and Latino students, have described a series of what they say are racist incidents involving Professor Wax.

According to the university complaint, after a series of students with “foreign-sounding names” introduced themselves, Professor Wax commented that one student was “Finally, an American.” She added, “It’s a good thing, trust me.”

In an [*investigator’s report*](https://freebeacon.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Rodriguez-WaxReport.final_.8.3.21_redacted.pdf)obtained by The Washington Free Beacon, a student alleged that while repeating language used in a 19th-century case, Professor Wax said “Negro” in such a “snide and smug” way that the student left the classroom. And in the same report, a student said that in 2014, when discussing an eyewitness, Professor Wax said, “He was a Black man” with a “distasteful” tone. “She spat it out of her mouth,” the student said.

Mr. Ruger’s complaint also outlined an alleged interaction between Professor Wax and Lauren O’Garro-Moore, a 2012 graduate, saying that Ms. Moore was a “double Ivy” — attending Penn and Yale — only because of affirmative action.

In the complaint, Ms. O’Garro-Moore said she was “stunned” and wanted to cry but did not. Ms. O’Garro-Moore, saying she could be a witness in the hearing, declined an interview.

Some of these personal interactions may not be protected by tenure. And Ms. Wax has denied making many of these statements, including the “double Ivy” comment.

“In what class?” she asked on Professor Loury’s podcast. “What was the lesson? What was the context? Nothing is supplied” — echoing critics of the complaint, who have said it is vague and lacks transparency.

Students are often accused of being oversensitive, but Professor Wax’s colleagues have shared their own uncomfortable moments with her in public forums.

Tobias Barrington Wolff, a Penn law school professor, said that he once sat with her on a panel where she decried same-sex relationships as self-centered, selfish and not focused on family or community, according to Dean Ruger’s complaint.

Professor Wolff, who is gay, said that it was “striking she would choose to hold forth that way with me sitting there.”

Disagreements with Professor Wax, he added, make you feel that “you are a fundamentally debased human being.” Professor Wolff did not respond to an interview request and it is unclear whether he supports sanctions.

Even Professor Loury, a strong supporter of Professor Wax, has a story.

In 2011, he gave a talk at Penn law school in which he argued that too many Black people were in prison.

During the discussion, he said that Professor Wax, whom he did not know, raised her hand and said: There are not too many Black people in prison, there are too few.

Afterward, Professor Loury wrote an email to an event organizer, stating that her behavior was “openly hostile” and that he felt ashamed he did not respond forcefully enough.

Professor Loury, who frequently laments the oversensitivity of college students, said he would not send such an email now, because her comments were an opportunity for vigorous debate.

Even so, Professor Wax was “being performative,” he said, and “seemed to enjoy it a little too much.” He recalled, “She’s got this snarl on her face.”

Free Expression for Whom?

In 2017, after Professor Wax had published her piece about 1950s values, Jonah Gelbach, then a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, [*organized an open letter*](https://www.thedp.com/article/2017/08/guest-column-by-33-penn-law-faculty-members-open-letter-to-the-university-of-pennsylvania-community) signed by 33 law professors, rejecting her views about cultural superiority but affirming her right to state them.

He said that Professor Wax tried to pressure him to retract his letter, writing in an email that if he did not, she would publicize the negative online responses at an upcoming talk.

He declined, and she went through with her threat. In her talk, which has been viewed almost 40,000 times on [*YouTube*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXZ-s5ASHnw), she portrayed him as a crusher of speech and an “anti-role model.”

Professor Gelbach, now at the University of California, Berkeley, said the encounter revealed how Professor Wax uses speech as sword and shield, portraying herself as the victim of cancel culture, while also trying to create “a safe-space bubble of protection from others’ reactions.”

Still, he does not support sanctions for her public statements. “I view Amy as both a scholarly embarrassment and a toxic presence at Penn and in the academy generally,” he said, but added, “She is nevertheless a tenured faculty member at a university, and I do not support university sanctions for public expressions of horrible views.”

The University Acts

In late 2021, on Professor Loury’s podcast, Professor Wax warned against an “influx of Asian elites.” He pushed back, suggesting that Asian engineers and computer scientists bring value to the United States.

“Does the spirit of liberty beat in their breast, Glenn?” [*she shot back*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1vQFMxPk54), arguing that Asians tend to be “more conformist.”

Dean Ruger denounced her comments but once again [*resisted*](https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/news/14369-a-statement-from-dean-ruger-in-response-to-recent) action.

[*A petition*](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1muCvT8lBZZnjIvWGboFJhNQnDs3bZ9ULTCyDFuPg1F8/edit), started by Apratim Vidyarthi, who was then a student, demanded an investigation and stated that it was impossible to believe that Professor Wax would treat nonconservative, nonwhite students fairly. It garnered more than 2,500 signatures, including about 800 from the law school’s current and former students, Mr. Vidyarthi said.

Mr. Vidyarthi said that he and other students of color would not feel comfortable or safe in the two classes she continued to teach, on legal remedies and conservative thought.

Ty Parks, the advocacy chair for the Black Law Students Association, said having Professor Wax on staff sends a mixed message about the school’s commitment to inclusion.

“When we walk into the building of the law school, we see a portrait of Dr. Sadie Alexander, who was the first Black woman to graduate from Penn law,” Mr. Parks said. “Then down the hall, you have a professor who is a literal white supremacist.” (Professor Wax describes herself as a “[*race realist*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gJv2BRW7mc&amp;ab_channel=TheGlennShow).”)

Mr. Parks rejected the argument that students were censoring her politics.

“We have conservative professors in the law school that I don’t agree with,” he said. “But they’re not making harmful remarks that are clearly racist. They’re not crossing those boundaries.”

Two weeks after the petition, after arguing for years that Professor Wax’s speech was protected by academic freedom, Mr. Ruger said he would begin a [*disciplinary process.*](https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/news/14406-january-18-statement-about-actions-regarding-amy)

What Should Tenure Protect?

Many free-speech advocates say that Dean Ruger’s complaint overstepped by including the professor’s public statements.

Jonathan Friedman, an official at PEN America, said the idea that off-campus comments can lead to an investigation “is concerning.”

Those who want heavy sanctions, he said, “have to think about how the same powers can be wielded in other ways, against other professors whose comments can be deemed offensive or hostile.”

And some professors say her interactions with students are enough to warrant punishment.

“There’s a bright line between ‘I don’t like affirmative action’ and ‘You, African American student, only got in because of affirmative action,’” said Jonathan Zimmerman, a Penn history professor who had [*previously defended*](https://www.inquirer.com/philly/opinion/commentary/amy-wax-penn-law-inquirer-free-speech-censorship-perspective-20180321.html) Professor Wax against calls for punishment.

The latter comment, if true, he said, is “singling out a student for abuse.”

But students question the professor’s free-speech protections. Andrew Bookbinder, of the university’s Asian Pacific American Law Student Association, said Professor Wax was using tenure to be intentionally offensive in ways that do not further academic speech.

The process playing out at Penn, he said, “is the system working.”

“It’s not like a group of students has voiced their concern, and she’s been terminated,” Mr. Bookbinder said. There will be a hearing, he noted, with “her fellow tenured professors, who will surely hold those same protections very dearly themselves.”

Alain Delaquérière contributed research.

Audio produced by Tally Abecassis.

Alain Delaquérière contributed research. Audio produced by Tally Abecassis.

PHOTOS: Amy Wax, a law professor at the University of Pennsylvania, said on a podcast that universities want to “banish and punish” anyone “who dares to dissent.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIO SOSA / THE DAILY PENNSYLVANIAN); TY PARKS, the advocacy chair for the Black Law Students Association.; JONAH GELBACH, a former professor at the University of Pennsylvania.; ANDREW BOOKBINDER, of the university’s Asian Pacific American Law Student Association. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANNAH YOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); GLENN LOURY, a professor at Brown recalling Professor Wax’s behavior at one of his talks. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BEA OYSTER) (A12) This article appeared in print on page A1, A12.

**Load-Date:** March 24, 2023

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[***Tracing a Steel City Meltdown***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62BH-D1K1-JBG3-61R3-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jennifer Szalai

**Body**

Bad times for American labor have also meant boom times for a certain strain of American nostalgia. According to a well-worn narrative, the postwar era was an idyll of heavy industry and stable union jobs; a family with 2.5 children could get by with just one breadwinner -- the archetypical ***working-class*** man, who toiled in a sooty industrial plant before coming home to a house that was impeccably maintained by his doting wife.

Decades after the collapse of its steel industry, Pittsburgh exemplifies how the trace memory of an old identity can live on in a football team (the Steelers), a nickname (Steel City) and even a local beer (Iron City), while the industry that actually flourishes there now -- health care -- garners no such reverence or recognition. The fastest growth in the sector isn't for anesthetists or X-ray technicians but for poorly paid caregiving jobs; most of these care workers are women, and many of them are Black.

During the pandemic, these workers have been called ''essential'' -- but as the historian Gabriel Winant explains in ''The Next Shift,'' remuneration and job protections haven't kept up. ''Care workers are at once everywhere and nowhere,'' Winant writes. ''They are responsible for everyone, but no one is responsible for them.''

The replacement of blue-collar work by pink-collar work has been much discussed, but what makes this book stand out is Winant's argument that two seemingly distinct phenomena are in fact inextricably connected: ''It was not a coincidence that care labor grew as industrial employment declined.'' In the 1970s, deindustrialization pushed an ailing and aging population into unemployment, toward the welfare state -- always tentative, in the American case -- for their survival. Unlike other social institutions, which buckled under political pressure and austerity cuts, the American health care system flourished, having grown already in response to the rise of collectively bargained health insurance during the flush postwar years.

Winant traces the surprising story of how this happened, taking Pittsburgh as his focus. The city and its surrounding county offer one of the starkest examples of a local economy not simply shaped but warped by the steel industry, whose reach extended through the entire social fabric, right down to the level of family relationships. Winant, who teaches at the University of Chicago, consulted the archives, examined the data and conducted his own interviews to glean an intimate look at how a city of steel became a city of health care aides.

''The Next Shift'' is an original work of serious scholarship, but it's also vivid and readable; Winant has an eye for the telling, and occasionally crushing, detail. One ambivalent steelworker recalled that he always brought his lunch in a brown paper bag that consistently failed to protect his sandwich from hungry rats; he resisted getting a proper lunch pail like the others because it would mean that he was resigning himself to staying put. A woman remembered growing up amid the hushed silence of a house that had to be kept quiet and dark so that the father she barely saw, who worked night shifts, could get some sleep during the day. Households had to organize themselves around the needs of the industry. Each family became ''a little factory.''

Despite the sentimentality that has attached to the steel mill, the work it generated was not only dangerous, it was also unpredictable and not infrequently alienating. Winant describes how a coke shoveler working night shifts lost ''control over his body's rhythms -- eating, sleeping, toiling,'' which in turn made it harder to maintain the performance of masculinity that was so central to his identity. Not to mention that the job security afforded by the union's collective bargaining wasn't evenly distributed. In the 1950s, as the demand for steel slackened with the end of the Korean War, layoffs hit Black workers first -- they tended to be marginalized within the union, and kept in the worst positions at the mill.

For a time, steelworker unions obtained higher wages, outstripping inflation; then, responding to government pressure to keep wages down, they bargained for better health insurance, which generated its own inflationary dynamic in the health care system. Winant offers a lucid explanation of how the peculiarities of this system developed into what he calls the ''public-private welfare state'' -- a dysfunctional realm of escalating health care costs and entrenched and entangled interests that no one seems capable of replacing.

This public-private welfare state was what awaited the workers cast off by a collapsing industry. Winant notes that the two social institutions that have prospered since the 1980s have been prisons and health care delivery: ''Like the expansion of the prison system in the final decades of the 20th century, the rise of the health care industry afforded an economic fix to the social crisis brought about by deindustrialization.''

Hospital work was labor intensive, and it opened a job market for those Black Americans, including domestic workers, who were the first to be displaced by automation and industrial decline. Their exploitation, Winant says, ''formed the basis of the bonanza for everyone else.'' This work force was largely excluded from the midcentury prosperity and security it helped to create, and the ensuing cycle was vicious: ''Caregiving could be offered at large volume to the insured fractions of the ***working class*** because its costs were passed on in such significant proportion to hospital employees via low wages.''

This system, as depicted in Winant's eye-opening book, is not only inhumane but unsustainable. Toward the end of ''The Next Shift,'' he introduces us to Nila Payton, a medical secretary who takes calls all day from patients with mesothelioma and black lung at the pathology office where she works. The place is part of Pittsburgh's enormous hospital complex, but her office is so understaffed that it's sometimes hard to find someone to cover the phone when she needs to use the bathroom. She says this has damaged her bladder, and in nine years of working there she has never received more than a 15 cent raise.

''Like many patients,'' Winant writes, ''Payton is now in medical debt -- though in her case it is to her own employer.''Follow Jennifer Szalai on Twitter: @jenszalai.The Next ShiftThe Fall of Industry and the Rise of Health Care in Rust Belt AmericaBy Gabriel WinantIllustrated. 350 pages. Harvard University Press. $35.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/31/books/review-next-shift-health-care-gabriel-winant.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/31/books/review-next-shift-health-care-gabriel-winant.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEANNETTE ESTRUTH)

**Load-Date:** April 1, 2021

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[***Struggling Seaside Town Shows Challenges for New U.K. Leader***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66B8-3CS1-JBG3-64RM-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Megan Specia

**Highlight:** Blackpool contains one of the most deprived areas to turn to the Conservatives in Britain’s last general election. But with costs rising, there are already signs of cracks in that support.

**Body**

Blackpool contains one of the most deprived areas to turn to the Conservatives in Britain’s last general election. But with costs rising, there are already signs of cracks in that support.

BLACKPOOL, England — The famed annual light show still illuminates the sky each night in the seaside town of Blackpool in England’s northwest, having survived the nationwide effort to conserve energy. But beneath the glitter, the evidence of decades of decline is everywhere.

The signs on the small hotels that line long stretches of the coastline have faded, and “vacancy” notices flash in their front windows. Shuttered storefronts‌ dot‌ the roads in the center of town. The doorways of defunct nightclubs are crowded with those sleeping rough.

[*Liz Truss*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/06/world/liz-truss-uk-prime-minister-cabinet.html), who took over as Britain’s prime minister on Tuesday, will have no shortage of issues to address in a country facing grave economic crises. On Thursday, Ms. Truss is set to announce a plan to[*limit the sharp rise in energy costs.*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-62801913)

But the most daunting challenges will come in towns like Blackpool, already one of the most deprived in England, according to government statistics.

Blackpool South, where the popular Pleasure Beach amusement park stands, long supported the Labour Party but switched to backing the Conservative Party in the 2019 election that brought Boris Johnson to power. It was one of the poorest areas of England to switch parties.

But with costs for nearly everything rising, and worries that [*energy bills could skyrocket*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/26/business/uk-energy-price-cap.html) to thousands of pounds a year for the average household, there are already indications of cracks in the Conservative coalition.

“I do not think that having Liz Truss or Rishi Sunak would have made any difference to the economy of Blackpool,” said Ava Makepeace, a resident, referring to Ms. Truss’s opponent in the leadership race that ended this week in her victory.

Ms. Makepeace, 51, was critical of Conservative policies, and said that Brexit, which Blackpool overwhelmingly favored in a 2016 referendum, had also had a negative effect on the town.

“No one can get decent staff anymore,” she said of the restaurants and hotels that had relied on overseas workers. “And poverty in certain areas of central Blackpool are the worst they have ever been.”

She said it seemed like northern towns like hers had been entirely forgotten.

Once a thriving beachside resort, Blackpool has seen a steady decline in recent decades, as the popularity of destination vacations to more exotic locales took off and a once bustling tourism sector dwindled. In its wake, the town was left with deep social problems. Both men and women there have the [*lowest life expectancy of any local authority in England*](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandlifeexpectancies/bulletins/lifeexpectancyforlocalareasoftheuk/between2001to2003and2017to2019), according to the Office for National Statistics.

An erosion of support among northern, ***working-class*** towns like Blackpool would be a serious blow to the Tories, who benefited from a shift of loyalties away from Labour in Mr. Johnson’s landslide 2019 win. Many had voted in favor of Brexit and were eager to see a government deliver on that 2016 decision. And in struggling areas where industry no longer drives the economy, people were looking for a way to restore and revitalize their towns and cities.

The Conservative Party‌ had garnered support there with plans to deliver on the Brexit vote and the promise‌ ‌of nationwide “leveling up” — ‌ a program to bolster living standards and promote economic and social development in less prosperous parts of the country‌. That pledge‌, which buoyed the party in the last election, has yet to fully materialize here, locals and policy experts say.

Nigel Heckford was walking his dogs on Blackpool’s promenade on Monday, shortly after the news of Ms. Truss’s victory, and said the town’s decline made him fear for his young children.

He said he had little faith that Ms. Truss, or the Conservative Party for that matter, could deliver the broad changes needed to restore a place like Blackpool.

“Her policies of large-scale tax cuts are likely to only benefit the rich and could mean more cuts to services in the council here, which makes me really worried,” said Mr. Heckford, 52. “The issues Blackpool is already facing are probably going to get worse.”

A yearslong government policy of austerity, on the heels of the 2008 global financial crisis, led to billions of pounds in cuts to welfare payments, housing subsidies and children’s services, among other programs.

The coronavirus crisis dealt another serious blow to Blackpool, leaving businesses struggling as tourism ground to a halt ‌during nationwide lockdowns. Now, the rising prices will present particular challenges to the north, said Jonathan Webb, a senior research fellow at the Institute for Public Policy Research North, a British think tank.

In places like Blackpool, leveling up has always been taking place “against the specter of austerity,” Mr. Webb said, which reduced the ability of local government to provide for people and respond to their needs.

As an area that had historically voted with Labour before the last election, the unfulfilled campaign promises are likely to be met with distrust by communities who now feel forgotten, he said.

The continuing erosion, he said, would be “a major challenging for Liz Truss in the north and across the country.”

In general, the quality of available housing in the north is worse, and as a result less energy efficient, making the cost to heat homes higher. Incomes in northern England also tend to be significantly lower than the national average, he said.

Shop owners and residents of Blackpool are already feeling the pinch. Michael Yale, 59, who was out of work for some time and only recently began a permanent job at a printing warehouse, said he was looking for ways to cut back.

“I am getting worried about turning on my stove because of the cost,” Mr. Yale said. He is using his microwave instead because it uses less electricity.

Still, Mr. Yale said he remained hopeful that things would improve despite the difficulties. He was glad that Ms. Truss had been elected as the new prime minister, saying he had confidence that the tax cuts he expects her to announce would somehow trickle down to benefit people like him.

This week, on a cool early September evening, tourists still strolled among the amusement piers, packed with arcades, candy shops and food stands. But business owners were worried about a tough winter ahead.

There have been some signs of positive development in recent years. Blackpool was [*awarded £39.5 million (about $45 million)*](https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/govt-signs-off-39-5m-blackpool-town-deal-projects/) this year by the government to revamp tourist attractions, address the effects of the pandemic and create a hub for young people seeking jobs. There are efforts underway to [*improve the quality of education*](https://blackpoolopportunityarea.co.uk/) and develop better transportation links.

This year, a newly refurbished £30 million conference center opened, hoping to draw new visitors to the town.

The Conservative Party held its spring conference there in March, and Mr. Johnson, then prime minister, vowed that the party would “do everything we can to help people with their daily costs, help people with the cost of living.”

The authorities have [*vowed to maintain one of the town’s signature attractions*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-62767405), the Blackpool Illuminations light show, despite the concerns about surging energy costs. The show, which was switched on over the weekend and will run through the fall and winter, features twinkling lights over the main promenade that stretches for six miles along the seafront and dates to the Victorian era.

But Craig Smalley, who was born and raised in Blackpool and has owned a fast-food stall there for the past 16 years, and other small business owners worry that the cost of the show could eventually become unsustainable and fear that they could lose another tourism draw.

“It could get to a stage where they have to turn it off early,” Mr. Smalley said. “And I really hope that doesn’t happen.”

PHOTOS: Above, Blackpool Tower in June, illuminated for the queen’s jubilee. Left, a soup kitchen in Blackpool last year. The town’s severe economic distress exemplifies the problems inherited by Prime Minister Liz Truss of Britain. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MOLLY DARLINGTON/REUTERS; PAUL ELLIS/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 8, 2022

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[***What Happens When a Striving Ingénue Gets Mixed Up With an Older Man?; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SB-NT31-DXY4-X01J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 717 words

**Byline:** Jessica Bennett

**Highlight:** Imogen Crimp’s debut novel, “A Very Nice Girl,” is a reminder of the dangers of caring too much about what other people think.

**Body**

A VERY NICE GIRL

By Imogen Crimp

In Imogen Crimp’s enjoyable debut novel, “A Very Nice Girl,” Anna is a ***working-class*** young woman from the outskirts of London who is training to be an opera singer and working in a jazz club for cash. It’s there that she meets Max, a not-quite-yet-divorced man who is more than a decade her senior. Charming though slightly mean (in a flirtatious way?), Max works in finance and takes her to fancy meals.

What ensues is almost so predictable as to not be: Max, with his expense account, his shiny high-rise flat with a view of the city and his weekend house in Oxford to which she’s not invited, makes clear that they are just “having fun.” And Anna, his “dark-eyed bohemian,” as he calls her — who initially agrees to the fun thing, of course — falls in love. The power dynamic between them, unaligned from the start, becomes gaping as he persuades her to abandon her studies to spend more time with him. He starts giving her money and she, once so committed to her art, starts to lose what little independence she’d found.

Anna, it turns out, is not so much “nice” as she is unformed. She is also: naïve, insecure, full of self-doubt, but also talented, trying to find her way in a place where she feels like an outsider among her wealthy classmates and shaping herself into the person she thinks Max wants her to be. “God, why am I being so boring?” she worries of their conversations. “I would do anything he wanted,” she thinks during sex.

Like her protagonist, Crimp briefly studied to be a singer at a London conservatory, which may explain why passages set in this milieu are the ones where her writing — and her protagonist — find their strength. Onstage, Anna is confident and brave, even “invincible,” feeling like “every nerve in my body was alive.”

“I liked that I could do something that made other people scared,” she recalls of finding her voice. “I liked discovering that I — who teachers often had to ask to repeat my answer several times, my voice was so quiet — could fill a room with sound.”

There are plenty of stories these days about what it is to be a woman observed by the “male gaze.” It’s a phrase Anna and her friends would no doubt use, if the at-times heavy-handed dialogue about tampons as “capitalist,” or Latin as the “language of the patriarchy,” is any indication. (Anna’s roommate is writing a book she describes as a “feminist deconstruction of the relationship between men and women in the internet age.”)

But Anna is not only an object of that gaze; she actually starts to mold herself into it — beginning to see herself, interpret herself, value herself, through how she perceives Max perceiving her.

“Looking at myself naked in the mirror, I’d try to see it how he would,” she says.

“I felt he was studying me too closely, appraising my worth, like I was a piece of jewelry he was considering buying.”

“I craved his look, and when I was away from him, I missed it.”

In some of these moments, “A Very Nice Girl” is an all-too-real reminder of what it is to be a woman in your 20s, searching for who you are, trying on identities or stuck in a complicated pseudo-relationship even when you know you shouldn’t be. It’s a book about assessing your worth through other people’s eyes — parents, friends, a lover — and about being observed: by an overprotective mother, by men on the tube, by those who assess her auditions, by classmates competing for her slot, and ultimately by the audience. And yet, for the strength of Crimp’s writing, it might have benefited from a less predictable plot. Vulnerable young woman alone in a new city, seduced by an older, richer man who turns out to be kind of a jerk … readers may be disappointed to find there’s no real twist here — unless, of course, you count that Anna must lose the guy to get herself back.

Jessica Bennett is a contributing editor in Opinion who writes on gender, politics and culture. Previously, she was The Times’s gender editor. A VERY NICE GIRL By Imogen Crimp 336 pp. Henry Holt & Company. $26.99.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Lily Snowden-Fine FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**Load-Date:** March 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Burna Boy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YF2-YB11-DXY4-X229-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 15, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MM; Column 0; Magazine Desk; Pg. 24

**Length:** 245 words

**Byline:** By Jody Rosen

**Body**

4

Dangote

3:45

A song about the 1 percent.

By Jody Rosen

Damini Ebunoluwa Ogulu, the singer-songwriter known as Burna Boy, is arguably the biggest star in Afrobeats, a catchall term for the plush, funky genre centered in Nigeria and Ghana. Afrobeats draws on American hip-hop, Jamaican dance hall and London club sounds, but in recent years the flow of influence has reversed, with superstars like Beyoncé and Drake borrowing from, and collaborating with, Afrobeats singers and producers. Burna Boy's 2019 album, ''African Giant,'' epitomizes the appeal: smooth vocals and slinky rhythms powering songs whose lyrics range from come-ons and braggadocio to forays into politics and protest.

This big hit, named for the billionaire industrialist Aliko Dangote, may at first appear to be a straightforward boast: Burna Boy touting his industriousness and indefatigable drive to ''find money.'' But the return, again and again, to the figure of Dangote -- and the catalog of other Nigerian tycoons and politicians invoked in the song's coda -- suggests a more ambivalent message. Burna Boy is describing a system that elevates a lucky few to positions of unimaginable wealth and leaves millions scraping and scrambling. The video, with its images of ***working-class*** Lagos, sides with the masses. But ultimately the song is reportorial: a dispatch from a pitiless world in which that refrain -- ''Dangote, Dangote'' -- functions as both a striver's mantra and a yelp of despair.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/magazine/burna-b-o-y.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/magazine/burna-b-o-y.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MAURY PHILLIPS/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Debtors, Unite! You Have Nothing to Lose but Your Shame.; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66B2-1X61-JBG3-63J1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 6, 2022 Tuesday 00:07 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1393 words

**Byline:** Astra Taylor

**Highlight:** Conversations about debt are never purely about economics. They are always also conversations about power and morality.

**Body**

Conversations about debt are never purely about economics. They are always, also, conversations about power, morality and shame. The debate over President Biden’s student loan relief plan is no exception.

Immediately after the initiative was announced, opponents of debt cancellation began denouncing [*slacker baristas,*](https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/08/29/nation/ted-cruz-blasted-after-calling-those-who-would-benefit-student-loan-relief-slacker-baristas/) overeducated [*Ivy League lawyers*](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/white-house-republican-critics-student-loan-cancellation-ppp-loan-forgiveness/) and impractical [*lesbian dance theory*](https://www.thewrap.com/lauren-boebert-trolled-lesbian-dance-theory/) majors. Immune to accusations of hypocrisy, Republican members of Congress who had received [*hundreds of thousands*](https://twitter.com/whitehouse/status/1562916200866267138), [*even millions*](https://twitter.com/WhiteHouse/status/1562916204011995136?s=20&amp;t=DIHHm1SMJpoxt2c1XIf0ww), of dollars in federal relief castigated student debtors who might receive $10,000 to $20,000 in aid.

It was a stark reminder that shame, like wealth, is not evenly distributed in our society. For ***working-class*** people, insolvency is often seen as a sign of profligacy and personal irresponsibility, while large corporations and the wealthy routinely walk away from their obligations and are celebrated as savvy for doing so. Donald Trump can boastfully call himself the “[*king of debt*](https://www.politico.com/story/2016/06/trump-king-of-debt-224642)” for his string of strategic bankruptcies; the average debtor would never dare.

Debts are, first and foremost, financial burdens. But most people in arrears must shoulder a boulder of shame as well. This is the factor most commentary about Mr. Biden’s student debt relief plan has missed.

The mass cancellation of federal student loans will not only remove a crushing economic weight for tens of millions of people; it will lift a significant emotional one, too. This psychological shift could, in turn, have further political implications, by emboldening those who find their obligations overwhelming to engage in collective action aimed at winning more relief and changing the policies that make indebtedness so pervasive.

To understand what a pivotal moment this is, we must first appreciate just how profoundly the moral decks are usually stacked against regular debtors. Even the seemingly innocuous phrase “loan forgiveness” implies culpability and blame, when in reality the majority of debtors are simply struggling to make ends meet — a problem likely to be most acute for Black and brown people, [*who tend to lack family wealth*](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/02/27/examining-the-black-white-wealth-gap/) and [*access to credit*](https://www.cnbc.com/2018/05/18/credit-inequality-contributes-to-the-racial-wealth-gap.html) on fair terms.

Why is our society so invested in steeping debtors in shame? The answer lies in debt’s role as a core building block of our economy and unequal social order. Debt is wrapped around every necessity of life: We use credit to make daily purchases and pay for [*medical care,*](https://www.consumerfinance.gov/about-us/newsroom/cfpb-estimates-88-billion-in-medical-bills-on-credit-reports/) take out mortgages, finance our cars and borrow for college; cities and states issue debt to pay for [*roads and schools*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/27/opinion/school-debt-economy.html). Monthly repayments are often a form of wealth transfer to the affluent investors who hold these debts as assets, fueling inequality.

If debt is a dual source of profit and power, shame is its handmaiden. Shame isolates and divides, making class solidarity more difficult. The knee-jerk anger at the idea of student debt cancellation in some circles, while ostensibly about fairness, reflects the common though misguided view that when one person gains, another loses. Imagining a zero-sum game, some ask why student loans were eliminated and not, say, medical debt — a reasonable question. But medical debt, too, should be erased, as a way to ease the unjust financial hardship that getting hurt or sick often entails. For example, Mr. Biden could, and should, take executive action to cancel all medical debt owed to [*veterans’ hospitals*](https://www.thenation.com/article/society/biden-debt-loans-covid/).

Meanwhile, the fever pitch of opposition to debt cancellation among conservative and centrist elites reflects a different fear: that debt’s utility as an instrument of social control may be weakening. Consider [*the reaction*](https://twitter.com/repjimbanks/status/1562820837140742144) of Representative Jim Banks, Republican of Indiana, to Mr. Biden’s cancellation news: “Student loan forgiveness undermines one of our military’s greatest recruitment tools at a time of dangerously low enlistments.” Student debt, or the fear of it, pushes people into certain careers and limits their life choices.

No wonder soaring student debt became a catalyst for protest, though only after borrowers began to overcome their shame. Under pressure from a growing coalition that traces its origins directly to the Occupy Wall Street movement a decade ago, Mr. Biden was forced to act — an outcome that is all the more remarkable, given his previous allegiances. When he was a senator from Delaware, which is [*home to the nation’s biggest issuers of credit cards*](https://www.forbes.com/sites/clairetsosie/2017/04/14/why-so-many-credit-cards-are-from-delaware/?sh=60e313801119), he tended to side with lenders over debtors. He was a [*driving force*](https://www.gq.com/story/joe-biden-bankruptcy-bill) behind the [*2005*](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/dec/02/joe-biden-student-loan-debt-2005-act-2020) [*Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act*](https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/usao/legacy/2006/09/07/usab5404.pdf), which made it harder for distressed borrowers to discharge their student loans.

Now Mr. Biden appears to be switching sides in time for the midterm elections. [*Tweeting*](https://twitter.com/POTUS/status/1564376470646149121) moving stories from people eligible to receive loan cancellation, he seemed to be hosting a debtors’ assembly — an Occupy-inspired forum where people share their financial tribulations out loud, thus transforming burdens of shame into bonds of empowerment — in the Oval Office.

The president’s actions are certainly a break with the political status quo, but they are not unprecedented. In his groundbreaking work on debt, my friend the anthropologist David Graeber, [*reported on the periodic debt amnesties*](https://www.mhpbooks.com/books/debt/), or “jubilees,” of the ancient world. Seeking to quell unrest, Sumerian and Babylonian kings periodically wiped away debts and liberated people from peonage, often over the objections of creditors. The Code of Hammurabi, written around 1750 B.C., proclaims that if a “storm wipes out the grain or the harvest fails or the grain does not grow for lack of water, in that year he need not give his creditor any grain in payment.”

For these leaders, debt relief had little to do with the guilt of individual debtors. Jubilees were a practical way to recover from crises and avert societal collapse. Now, as then, inequality and insolvency imperil economic and political stability. Wiping the slate restores balance.

Many of today’s debtors have more in common with unlucky Mesopotamian farmers, subject to forces beyond their control, than it may initially appear. In a society where the federal minimum hourly wage is stuck at $7.25, public services are paltry and racial and gender discrimination run rampant, a majority of Americans have no choice but to borrow to make ends meet. Where student loans are concerned, the [*steady erosion*](https://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/state-higher-education-funding-cuts-have-pushed-costs-to-students) of state funding for higher education, and the resultant debt-for-degree system, is to blame, not individual borrowers.

[*Prominent*](https://www.crfb.org/blogs/how-long-cancelled-student-debt-would-return) [*critics*](https://medium.com/third-way/blanket-student-loan-forgiveness-was-always-bad-policy-its-an-even-worse-idea-now-97152d5b4e13) [*of Mr. Biden’s*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/08/an-economists-case-against-biden-student-loan-forgiveness-plan/671259/) plan have pointed out that granting relief this once will not permanently solve the student debt crisis or the attendant problem of rising college costs, and here they are correct. The only permanent solution to the problem of runaway student debt is to make public education free for all (a model that was relatively common in the United States a few generations ago, which is why so many older people graduated debt-free). Only then can students who lack wealth avoid indenturing themselves for the chance to learn.

Though I believe Mr. Biden’s plan is inadequate in terms of the monetary relief it offers, his actions have already dealt a blow to debt’s symbolic, shame-inducing power. Everyone now knows federal student loans can be canceled with the flick of a president’s pen. And instead of feeling guilty and unworthy, millions of regular people suddenly feel entitled to relief, an entitlement previously reserved for society’s elites.

Hundreds of millions of people are in debt not because they are immoral and live beyond their means but because they are denied the means to live. Debt jubilees are part of righting this wrong, but as Mr. Biden’s student debt relief plan shows, they won’t happen unless debtors rise up and demand them. The first step is abolishing the shame that makes us reluctant to fight for what we deserve.

Astra Taylor ([*@astradisastra*](https://twitter.com/astradisastra)) is a filmmaker and a co-founder of the Debt Collective and the author, most recently, of “Remake the World: Essays, Reflections, Rebellions.”

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Shawn Thew/EPA, via Shutterstock FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 10, 2022

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[***Quiet Year for Hurricanes Is Bringing Little Comfort Along Louisiana's Coast***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66B1-PRJ1-JBG3-62X4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 6, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 14

**Length:** 1198 words

**Byline:** By Rick Rojas

**Body**

IOWA, La. -- In a community still etched with the scars of past storms that charged in from the Gulf of Mexico, the congregants at St. Pius X begin each service this time of year by petitioning God with the same solemn appeal: Please, spare us.

''We live in the shadow of a danger over which we have no control,'' they say, repeating the prayer at every Mass from the start of hurricane season in June through the end in November. ''The Gulf, like a provoked and angry giant, can awaken from its seeming lethargy, overstep its conventional boundaries, invade our land, and spread chaos and disaster.''

But so far this year, there has been no invasion. Any chaos and disaster are the residuals of devastating hurricanes that pummeled this stretch of the Louisiana coast two years ago.

It has been a hurricane season without hurricanes. But the quiet, however appreciated, does not bring much comfort.

''Who knows what next week holds?'' said the Rev. Jeffrey Starkovich, the pastor at St. Pius X, a Catholic parish in Ragley, La., an unincorporated community about 20 miles north of Lake Charles. ''You can't rest. You can't be confident it's going to stay quiet.''

Last month was the first August in 25 years without a named storm in the Atlantic Ocean. No hurricanes have made landfall this year in the United States. And though hurricane season spans six months, it is this time of year -- from late-August through October -- when the season typically packs its most powerful punch.

A weather system named Danielle strengthened last week into a Category 1 storm, becoming the first hurricane of the season; it weakened briefly to a tropical storm before regaining hurricane status. Entering the week, Danielle cut a meandering path over the Atlantic and posed little threat to land.

In a part of the world where so many routines and rituals are shaped by the rhythms of hurricane season, the relative calm has done anything but inspire complacency. Instead, it has offered communities often in the path of hurricanes yet another vivid illustration of how capricious nature can be.

''We really don't have any sighs of relief until hurricane season is completely over,'' said Nic Hunter, the mayor of Lake Charles, a ***working class*** city in southwestern Louisiana still staggering its way back from a powerful pair of storms in 2020. ''With all we've been through, I don't think anyone wants to test fate.''

The very existence of this article and others like it is a source of considerable unease. Asked about hurricane season while she and a friend were outside working on a lawn mower last week, Ricki Lonidier pressed her finger to her lips and glared.

''Don't speak it into existence!'' her friend Richelle Wiley said.

But she knew their luck would last only so long. ''We know it's coming,'' she said. ''It's inevitable.''

That evening, the humid air was thick with mosquitoes. She took it as a sign of brewing trouble.

Scientists still expect an ''above normal'' hurricane season this year, with 14 to 20 named storms in the Atlantic and up to 10 of those strengthening into hurricanes. Last year, there were 21 named storms. The year before that set a record with 30.

On the Gulf Coast, hurricanes are more than just weather events. Their names -- Audrey, Katrina, Rita, Ike, Laura -- become chronological reference points for marking history. Chain-link fences are often referred to as hurricane fences, and for several years, a newspaper on the Texas coast called its weekly entertainment guide ''cat5,'' for a Category 5 hurricane, because, well, why not?

Like clockwork, around June, hurricane-themed public service announcements start filling commercial breaks on TV and radio and appearing on highway signs. It is time to start stockpiling water, canned goods and batteries. It is time to use up the food in the freezer so you will not have to toss out too much when a storm surely will knock out power.

Then, the anxiety sets in.

''It's kind of like the proverbial sword of Damocles -- it hangs over your head,'' said Bishop Glen John Provost of the Diocese of Lake Charles, who leads worshipers through a ''Mass to Avert the Storms'' every year at the beginning of hurricane season. ''The apprehension grows from the unknown.''

But in recent years, along this slice of the Louisiana coast, the tumult and torment of a hurricane have become far less abstract. A changing climate has intensified the threat, and powerful storms are likely to become more frequent.

In 2020, Hurricane Laura made landfall in Cameron Parish, south of Lake Charles, as a Category 4 storm with 150-mile-per-hour winds -- one of the most powerful storms to strike Louisiana. Roughly six weeks later, Hurricane Delta hit, cutting a nearly identical path. ''What wasn't taken out by Laura was finished by Delta,'' Curtis Prejean said last week as he sat on his back porch with his wife, Shirley.

In the communities in and around Lake Charles, the recovery had been long and uneven. Mr. Prejean has a brother who has been living in a camper for two years. Ms. Wiley's home had been stripped down to its studs inside and the outside was still battered. She is in a constant fight to fend off black mold.

The next storm could take what little some have left.

''We were talking about the hurricanes yesterday,'' Ms. Wiley said, ''and reality is stopping me, because I have nowhere to go. I'm about to be homeless.''

During one recent storm, the Prejeans put down a mattress pad in the hallway of the modest home where they have lived for 33 years and rode it out with two dogs and a cat. The house vibrated, and the noise was terrifying. ''I told my husband we're never doing that again,'' Ms. Prejean said.

''I'm going to stay for a Cat. 1,'' Mr. Prejean said. ''A Cat. 2 ...'' He shrugged. That's where he was unsure.

No matter the category, Curtis Goodwin -- or as everyone knows him, Warrior War Dog -- vowed to stay put. Blue tarps covered parts of his roof, and his exterior walls were still damaged. But he had fortified part of his house with the expectation that his family and dogs would pile inside.

''I'm going to stay right here, and I'm going to ride it out,'' he said.

He knew what his cousin and her family had gone through when they left town in anticipation of Hurricane Laura. A few frightening hours at home were better than the weeks of frustration and turbulence that come with evacuating, he reasoned.

Katina Jackson, his cousin, was gone for several months. First, she fled her home in Lake Charles for San Antonio. On the way, the axle on her car broke. If it were not for a mechanic giving her a deal, her family would have been stranded. They stayed in hotels in San Antonio and Fort Worth before going home.

The return of hurricane season dredged up all of that.

''It's just going to be catastrophic again,'' Ms. Jackson said outside her cousin's house, helping her daughter take out her braids on a hot but otherwise pleasant evening. ''I feel like it's always quiet before the storm.''

A few minutes later, ominous clouds that had been lurking in the distance swarmed the neighborhood in darkness, and a surge of lightning ripped through the sky.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/05/us/hurricane-season-louisiana.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/05/us/hurricane-season-louisiana.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Ricki Lonidier and Richelle Wiley at a neighbor's house in Iowa, La. ''It's inevitable,'' Ms. Wiley said of storms' return.

Curtis Goodwin says he has fortified part of his house. ''I'm going to stay right here, and I'm going to ride it out,'' he said.

Susie Fawvor in her family home, which was built in 1915. It was damaged in Hurricane Laura and still needs repairs. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY EMILY KASK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 6, 2022

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[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Matthew Desmond; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:682G-N2B1-JBG3-62T4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 21, 2023 Friday 12:40 EST

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**Section:** PODCASTS

**Length:** 12108 words

**Highlight:** A conversation with the sociologist Matthew Desmond.

**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like today’s episode with Matthew Desmond. 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]

EZRA KLEIN: I’m Ezra Klein. This is “The Ezra Klein Show.”

“Books about poverty tend to be books about the poor.” Matthew Desmond writes that in his new book about poverty, “Poverty by America.” But “Poverty by America” is supposed to be something a bit different. It’s a book about everyone who benefits from the poor, their existence, their exploitation, all the people more comfortable with the perpetuation of poverty than what would be demanded of them for its abolition.

So this is a book, in other words, not so much about the poor as it is about the rest of us. Desmond is a sociologist at Princeton. He’s the author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning “Evicted,” and “Evicted,” which was a book about housing markets, particularly for the poor — it was a smash hit. It was beloved by Desmond’s fellow social scientists.

His new book has been a lot more controversial, in part due to disagreements about the way he reads the poverty data. And so we talk about. That there’s a good, wonky bit here about how to measure poverty.

But I also want to keep people focused on the big picture here — America has a lot of poverty. It could, if it chose, have much, much less poverty. So the question of why that choice isn’t made year after year — that is really a question worth asking. As always, my email, [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

Matt Desmond, welcome to the show.

MATTHEW DESMOND: Oh, it’s great to be here.

EZRA KLEIN: So I want to begin with you because something you say in the book, which I didn’t realize from past work, is that you come at the subject from really your own perspective. Tell me a bit about your own history with poverty and how it led you to this inquiry.

MATTHEW DESMOND: I grew up in a little railroad town in Arizona, Northern Arizona, Winslow, which is an Eagles song. And my dad was a pastor, and we never had a lot of money. Things were tight. Our gas got turned off from time to time.

And then we lost our home when I was in college, and I think that experience worked its way inside of me, made me see how poverty diminishes and stresses a family. And then I kind of took that to Milwaukee for my last book and followed families getting evicted and saw a level of poverty that I’ve just never seen before or experienced.

I saw grandmas living without heat in the winter, just piling under blankets. I saw kids getting evicted on a routine basis, and I kind of saw a hard bottom layer of deprivation that was just shocking and disturbing.

EZRA KLEIN: You mentioned losing your family’s home when you were in college, and that brings up the book that other people may know you for earlier, “Evicted.” but for people who aren’t as familiar with that dimension of your work, tell me a bit about that book, the nature of the research that led to it, and how, in a large scale way, it changed your thinking on the structure of American poverty.

MATTHEW DESMOND: So for “Evicted,” I moved into a mobile home park on the South Side of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and I lived there for about four or five months. And then I moved into a rooming house on the North Side of the city. It’s the inner city of Milwaukee.

And I lived there for about 10 months and, from those two neighborhoods, followed families getting evicted and went everywhere with those families, followed them to eviction court and to shelters, abandoned homes, watched their kids, slept on their floor, ate from their table, went to a bunch of funerals, went to a birth.

But I also recognize that if I wanted to understand how the low-income housing market worked, I needed to get close to landlords, too. So I got just as close to landlords doing the evicting as I did with tenants getting evicted, and I helped them pass that eviction notices and fix up their properties. And I learned a bit more about what makes landlords tick and what ticks them off.

And “Evicted” is the result of that work, and it’s a way of saying, look, if we’re going to understand inequality in America today, we have to understand the human cost of the housing crisis. And for me, seeing that toll on people, seeing folks lose not only their homes but their neighborhoods, kids losing their schools — families often lose all their stuff, which is piled on the street by movers or taken by neighbors. It takes so much time and money to build up at a home, and eviction could just delete all that.

Eviction comes with a mark, a blemish. It’s a court order, and that can prevent you from moving into a good neighborhood and a good home because many landlords see that blemish and say no. So we pushed those families into bad neighborhoods, and we pushed those families into really degrading housing situations, and on and on it goes. And I think that my conclusion was that eviction isn’t just a condition of poverty. It’s a cause of poverty. It’s making things worse.

EZRA KLEIN: It can be easy — and I’m certainly guilty of this at times — to try to apprehend questions like eviction, like poverty by reading some big policy reports, by looking at macro data, by trying to follow the lines on a chart. You do a bunch of that in this book, and you’ve done a bunch of that in your work. And there is a dimension of your work that is quite quantitative. But what do you think you see differently when you actually immerse yourself in it? What looks different from the ground than from the appendix table?

MATTHEW DESMOND: I think that it means that I’m accountable to folks that are struggling in a different way. In the university, there’s this old line that you have to have some distance and some objectivity to study a problem with rigor and truthfulness, and distance is not the problem of the university. We have plenty of distance.

And I think when you get proximate to families that are enduring a level of hardship that so many of us can’t even imagine, it really washes over you. It makes you accountable to the problem in a different way. I think we can write about these issues with conviction, and rigor, and truth and about people who we love and care about deeply.

So in this new book, I write about my friends, and I call them my friends. I don’t call them my research subjects because they’re not. They’re people that I’ve done a lot of life with.

And I think that experience not only is incredibly educational — I learned so much from just being on the ground with folks that are struggling, but it’s also this amazing reminder how beautifully, and elegantly, and gracefully people refuse to be reduced to their hardships, how poverty has not stolen folks’ humanity.

EZRA KLEIN: Tell me a bit about the scale of the poverty problem in America today. How would you describe it?

MATTHEW DESMOND: There is so much poverty in this rich land. If you just look at the official metric of poverty, there’s 38 million of us that can’t afford basic necessities, which means if folks below the official poverty line formed their own country, that country would be bigger than Australia. It would be bigger than Venezuela.

But the poverty line is very low, and there’s plenty of economic hardship above the poverty line. one in three people in America live in a home which is bringing in $55,000 or less, one in three of us. Now, many of those aren’t officially counted among the poor, but what else do you call like trying to get by on 55k or less and raising two kids in like Portland or Miami?

But poverty is not just a line. It’s not just an income level. Poverty is often pain and sickness. It’s living in degraded housing. It’s the fear of eviction. It is eviction and the homelessness. It’s getting roughed up by the police sometimes. It’s schools that are just bursting at the seams.

It’s neighborhoods where everyone around you is also struggling. It’s death, death come early, death come often. So for me, poverty isn’t a line. It’s this tight knot of agonies, and humiliations, and social problems, and this is experienced by millions of us in the richest country in the history of the world.

EZRA KLEIN: How has it changed over time?

MATTHEW DESMOND: So it depends what metric you use. If you look at the official poverty line, it hasn’t changed a lot — 1973, 50 years ago, there was 11 percent poverty, in 2018 12 percent, not a lot of change.

But the official poverty measures is flawed. It doesn’t account for a lot of regional variation and housing cost. It doesn’t count certain kind of government programs like food stamps, housing assistance. So in 2011, the Census launched a new poverty measure, the Supplemental Poverty Measure, and researchers at Columbia figured out a way to take that new poverty line and stretch it out over time.

And when you do that, you kind of come to the same conclusion. The supplemental poverty line, historically, in 1973, was 15.1 percent. In 2013, 40 years later, it was 15.5 percent. In 2018, it was 13 percent, so it had dipped down a little bit. That’s just not a lot of progress.

In Covid, the Supplemental Poverty Measure plunged, plunged to historic lows because of this bold relief that was issued by the federal government, things like the Child Tax Credit and Emergency Rental Assistance, but over the long view, a lot of measures are showing poverty being incredibly stubborn and stagnant.

EZRA KLEIN: One thing about the Supplemental Poverty Line, which I’ve seen really frustrating a lot of people who work on the poverty issue and I think are aligned with you on solutions is that where you start those dials really ends up mattering.

So you look at 1967. You see poverty falling from 25 percent then to about 8.4 percent in 2020 amidst all that stimulus spending. I think this matters because there’s real question as to whether or not these government programs are effective. You’ll hear people on the right say constantly, the Great Society did nothing. You spend more money on poor people, you get more poor people.

And the Supplemental Measure and some other measures that measure consumption do seem to show pretty sharp and significant drops over time. So defend for me a little bit more of this idea that there’s not been real progress, which is different than not enough progress.

MATTHEW DESMOND: Yeah, this is hard, and I think that we should all confront the problem of counting poor families with a lot of humility, a lot of curiosity. So one way to think about this is to say, OK, if poverty has declined, have other hardship measures also declined? If we’re seeing falling rates of poverty, we should see falling rates of eviction. We should see debt going down. We should see homelessness going down.

But in recent years, we haven’t seen that. Since 2000, eviction filings have increased by about 22 percent. Since 2000, the share of families who visit food pantries have increased by almost 19 percent. The number of homeless public school kids in America has increased by over 74 percent since the Great Recession.

Since the late 1990s, the number of families reporting no cash income but drawing on food stamps has more than quadrupled. These are really troubling signs on the horizon, and it suggests that measures that are showing a decline in poverty might be out of touch with the lived experience of hardship in America today.

We can also dig into those measures if you want to and kind of look under the hood and say, well, how can they show a decline and this other one doesn’t? Like what’s going on? I’m happy to go there if you want to.

EZRA KLEIN: Well, a little bit because one thing I do want to check in on there is, you can have problems that correlate but don’t cause each other or don’t tell you as much as you want to know about each other.

So there is a great book, “Homelessness is a Housing Problem,” and one of the points they make is that you have a bunch of urban areas with very high rates of poverty with very, very low rates of homelessness, so Detroit, Philadelphia. You have places with quite low poverty rates, or at least relatively so, so Santa Clara County, San Francisco, and they have really quite high rates of homelessness.

So that suggests to me that when you’re looking at homelessness, which, as you say, has been quite on the rise recently, you’re dealing with a housing supply problem and a housing prices problem that might be distinct from a lot of the poverty problem.

The point is often made here in San Francisco, where I currently live, that West Virginia — it has very high poverty. It has very high rates of the things people blame for homelessness here, like drug addiction and mental illness. But it doesn’t have the homelessness problem we do, so rolling those all up into one set of social maladies can obscure more than it’s really revealing.

MATTHEW DESMOND: Yeah, I think there’s something to that, but it’s not just homelessness right that’s going up. Debt has gone up, bad debt. Just the number of families reporting that they are having a hard time paying their mortgage or their rent has grown amazingly, enormously since 2000. So I think there’s a lot of things on the horizon besides homelessness that do suggest that there is quite a lot of hardship as experienced on the ground level.

And I hear you on the political ramifications of this debate. There’s this text and the subtext, and a lot of folks say, well, look, if you don’t believe that poverty has declined, aren’t you also saying that government spending doesn’t work? Because government spending on anti-poverty programs has actually increased over the last 40 years, so what’s going on?

And I think that it’s a complicated story, but it’s one we have to embrace. There’s a paradox here that’s incredibly important. On the political liability side — there’s liability on both sides. So Reagan famously said, we fought the war on poverty, and poverty won. There’s nothing we can do to address poverty in America.

And then you fast forward to the Trump administration, and in 2018, the Trump Council of Economic Advisors issued this report enthusiastically embracing work requirements for some welfare programs based on this claim that poverty has gone down so much we can stop fighting it.

So it’s kind of like, Reagan’s like, we fought the war on poverty. Poverty won. And Trump was like, we fought the war on poverty, and we won. But they both had the same conclusion. So I think there’s political landmines on both sides of the thing.

I think what’s happening is that we’re spending more to stay in the same place because some of the fundamentals of American society, the job market and the housing market, are not doing their job basically to help reduce poverty in this country.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to hold on that for a second because I think that’s very profound. You talk a lot in the book and we’re going to talk broadly about this question of exploitation, and one thing reading the book got me thinking about is, to take the housing market as one example, the connection between exploitation and broken markets.

Now, I don’t want to say that you can only exploit people in a high housing market because clearly that’s not true, but the more you shift power in a market to, say, landlords because maybe you have way too few housing units the more they can discriminate, the more room they have to push really, really high prices on people.

And so there’s this kind of consistent problem, I think, for progressives where we’ll put a lot of money into something — maybe it’ll be housing, or health care, or whatever — but we won’t open up supply of that thing. In some cases, we’ll even constrict supply of that thing like we do in San Francisco with housing.

And then when you do that, you can give people all the money you want. You can give people all the Section 8 vouchers in San Francisco you want. You’re not going to house all that many people because there aren’t enough houses.

And so there is this way, I think, in which, on the one hand, I’m very big on the view that you can solve poverty with money. You could choose not to have poor people by simply doing something like a negative income tax that gave people the amount of money they need to be over the line.

But if you don’t open up the markets of things they need, then that money is just going to get pocketed by people who can charge them more and more for goods they can afford but can’t yet access.

MATTHEW DESMOND: That’s absolutely the case. And I think that is a real recipe for spending more to stay in the same place. And if you look at federal housing assistance, look at the budget from 2001 to 2019, federal housing assistance increased by 16 percent in real terms, so like a deeper investment, a bigger investment.

So does that mean that the number of families served by that program increased by that amount? No, it doesn’t. In fact, it hasn’t increased at all over that time. That number served by federal housing assistance has hovered around $4.5 million families, $4.5 million in 2001, $4.5 million in 2019.

So why? What’s going on? And it’s for the reason you suggest, because some of our biggest affordable housing programs are relationships with markets. We’re going to give you a housing voucher. You’re going to live on the private market, and we’re going to reduce your rent. Or we’re going to subsidize private development.

And, adjusting for inflation, median rent has increased by 15 percent over that same time period, so this is one way we can make deeper investments and kind of stay in the same place. It’s kind of like, if you’re a doctor and your patient is stable, then you can dose that patient a little bit and bring them to health and let them leave.

But if that patient starts to decline, you have to dose more and more and more just to get them into this stable place, and I think that’s a story of what’s happened to poverty in the last 50 years in our country.

EZRA KLEIN: This gets it something, too, that I think is kind of poisonous in the way we talk about poverty policy, which is that not all government programs are equal. They’re not the same. They don’t work, even, similarly.

And while we were preparing for this interview with you, my team talked to Luke Shaefer, who’s a great poverty scholar who you draw on in some of your own work. And he made this point that — so we were talking earlier about how it really matters what you’re looking at to see if we’ve made progress on poverty, and one remarkable thing is we made a lot of progress on poverty during the pandemic, a point you make in your book as well.

And Shaefer’s point was that you should think about the pre-covid welfare state, the sort of welfare state we erected over the 25 years before, and then what we did in government programs in 2020 and 2021 as truly distinct errors of policy-making, that it’s not just all government programs, more or less.

And in that break, we saw something pretty important about what works and what doesn’t. So I’m curious — because you look at the story, too, how you tell the story of what was different, and what we did during Covid, and why it worked versus what we’ve done before to see less profound effects.

MATTHEW DESMOND: I think the dose was different. The dose was different. And the level of investment was so much deeper during Covid. The expanded Child Tax Credit was a much deeper investment, and then in my world, in housing affordability land, the rental housing assistance that came after the Eviction Moratorium — that was like the deepest investment the federal government has made in the lives of renting families since the invention of public housing, basically.

The government spent $46 billion, which is basically a doubling of HUD’s budget. It kept evictions lowest that they’ve ever been on record months, and months, and months, and months after the Eviction Moratorium lifted.

There’s this study by Thomas Blanchet, Emmanuel Saez, and Gabriel Zucman, and they estimate that after the Great Recession in 2008, families in the bottom half of the income distribution had to wait 10 years — 10 years — for their incomes to return to pre-recession levels. And after this recession, those families waited just a year and a half. It was just night and day difference between these two hard moments.

EZRA KLEIN: One thing we did do — and the Child Tax Credit, I think, was a good example of this — was we made these programs easy, at times even automatic, to get. And something you talk about in the book is there’s this widespread narrative of government dependency, that the poor are all lining up at the local welfare office for a handout.

And you say, I wish people were more dependent on these programs than they are, because take-up rates are incredibly low. I think this is a pretty poorly-known fact about a lot of this policy work, so could you talk a bit about what some of the numbers are in terms of program usage among people who, in theory, would benefit from it and should get it and why you think that is?

MATTHEW DESMOND: So in the pandemic, we heard so much about welfare dependency. We heard this story over and again that people were staying home because we are paying them to stay home. But the evidence really didn’t bear that out.

When states got rid of some of the extra benefits, like the extra unemployment insurance, and other states didn’t, the states that removed the benefits didn’t suddenly see their job numbers jump up. It was basically a tie between the states that kept the benefits and the states that got rid of them.

And if you look in the data, the much bigger problem is welfare avoidance, the fact that there’s families across the country that are leaving like real serious money on the table with respect to — A, that they do not take advantage of. And so one in five of poorly-paid workers who qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit, this kind of one-year bump that lifts millions of folks out of poverty every year — one in five do not take it. They leave $17 billion on the table every year.

Most elderly Americans who qualify for food stamps do not sign up for them, and on and on it goes. And if you add up the money left on the table in those kind of programs and folks that pass on government health insurance, and unemployment insurance, and Supplemental Security Income, for example, you realize every year over $140,000,000,000 — like billion with a B — is left on the table by families not getting connected to programs that they need and deserve.

So why? What’s going on? So we used to think it was stigma, that folks were too proud to apply for some of these programs, and there is something to that. If anyone has ever spent a day in a welfare office where you’ve got to spend like half a day for a 10-minute appointment, there is a degradation ritual that still is very much alive and well today.

But there’s a lot of evidence that suggests stigma isn’t really the main story. The take-up rates for food stamps, for example, vary widely across state lines. Almost everyone in Oregon who qualifies for food stamps receives them, but in California, is only about 63 percent. So it’s not that food stamps are more stigmatized in California than Oregon. Something else is going on.

And the thing that’s going on is we’ve made these programs difficult to apply for. We’ve made it painful. We kick people off the rolls every year if they don’t apply right. So that’s the thing that’s really driving it.

We haven’t put enough effort into making these programs accessible and easy to apply for, and to me, this is outrageous because if we know how to do one thing in America, it’s to market things to people and to get things to those people. And I just wish dedicated as much time and effort that we do getting us to buy potato chips and car tires than we do getting folks connected to these important resources.

EZRA KLEIN: But I think there’s an important causal question there. So my wife, Annie Lowrey, is a writer at The Atlantic, and she does a lot of coverage of poverty and social policy. And she’s done a lot of work particularly on what she calls the Time Tax, which is something we’re describing here, this way in which we make it incredibly hard to sign up for things, to qualify for things, to figure out what you’re actually owed or eligible for.

But one of the big questions is, is that an accident? Did we simply forget how to market things, as you’re suggesting? We know how to get you to buy toothpaste. In theory, we should be able to get you to take free money.

Or is this a policy choice? And there are different versions of it potentially being a policy choice. One version is, we use complexity because we don’t want people to have things, either because we don’t think they deserve them, or we think they should be humiliated in order to get them, or we think that it’ll be better to keep the budget low by keeping them from it.

Or sometimes you see, I think, in blue states worries about fraud and defensibility, so you put a lot of energy into fraud-testing and means-testing because you’re worried about getting attacked on the right. But however you slice that, there’s this — I think a pretty profound question is about whether or not this is a policy mistake or, in the terms of the people who created it this way, a policy success, it’s doing exactly what it is intended to do.

MATTHEW DESMOND: I think it’s hard not to see this as intentional, as by design. And when you look at what happens to other welfare programs where states have a lot of leeway about how they spend their money, they spend it in a lot of ways that don’t have much to do with helping poor folks.

So if you look at welfare spending, the spending on TANF, we call it, the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, cash welfare — so states get that money through a block grant, which is just a wonky way of saying, hey, states, here’s some money, spend it as you wish. And man, states have developed a lot of creative ways to get that money out.

Maine spends welfare dollars on Christian summer camps. There are states that spend it on abstinence-only education, marriage counseling. For every dollar budgeted in cash welfare, only $0.22 ends up in the pockets of a family.

I think that’s by design. That’s a very intentional move. Some states are just not spending the money at all. Tennessee, last time I checked, was sitting on over $700 million in unspent cash welfare funds. Hawaii was sitting on so much that they could give every poor kid in their state $10,000.

So you’re right. It’s not a red or blue state issue, but it is evidence of just our lack of moral urgency and commitment to connecting families with aid that eases their hunger and gives them some breath.

EZRA KLEIN: There’s also a particular way that complexity, and long lines, and time, and hoops to jump through interact with poverty in a very specific way. Can you talk about what gets called the Bandwidth Tax?

MATTHEW DESMOND: So the Bandwidth Tax is an idea that comes from a book called “Scarcity,” which is by Senhil Mullainathan and Eldar Shafir. It’s a wonderful book, highly recommended. And they do all these experiments, compile all this behavioral, economic, and social-psychological evidence showing how poverty taxes your mind.

And the Bandwidth Tax is an idea that a lot of us have experienced ourselves. So if we’ve ever been incredibly late for a meeting and are rushing through traffic or we’ve had an emergency — our kid ends up in a hospital and that’s the only thing we can think about — what they suggest is this mirrors poverty. This is what poverty is like, when you are just thinking, how am I going to pay the light bill? I just lost my job. I have the eviction notice.

That just captures your mind, captures your intelligence, really. And that Bandwidth Tax can often result in bad decisions that we wouldn’t have made if we had a bit more space and slack in our lives.

EZRA KLEIN: I had Sendhil Mullainathan on the show back when I was at Vox, and first, I really think this is such an underreported-on issue. The way in which the thing you need to get out of poverty is time and intentionality and the kind of genius — it’s much harder to move up than to simply stay stable, and the way in which poverty saps exactly that from you.

But there’s a statistic here that you use, too, that always sticks in my mind, which is the effect of being poor on cognitive testing is roughly the same as going without a night of sleep, that the kind of distraction and exhaustion of it — and we can measure this — is roughly the same as going without a night of sleep.

Something I noticed in myself is that the more tired I am, the more likely I am to make mistakes that are small and mistakes that can be quite big. I was tired not too long ago, and I bashed up a rental car. It was not great. And if I was in worse shape, the cost of that would have been a huge, huge, huge setback for me.

You tell a story in the book that I think goes pretty far in getting at this connection between poverty and exhaustion, and I’d like you to tell it but also talk a little bit about that more fundamental link.

MATTHEW DESMOND: Yeah, I think you’re talking about Julio Payes, who was a gentleman I met a few years ago in the Bay Area. And he was here on a work visa from Guatemala, and he was working two jobs full-time.

He would work the midnight shift, the night shift at McDonald’s from — I think it was 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. And then he’d have a couple hours to shower and rest, and then he would go to a temp agency called Aerotech and go anywhere they sent him from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. And then he would get home, sleep as much as he could, and then back to McDonald’s. Each job paid minimum wage.

And he just didn’t have a life. He was either working or sleeping. He told me, I feel like a zombie. And one day, his younger brother, who was eight at the time, went to Julio is like, how much for an hour of your time? I want to buy an hour of your time so you can play with me.

And when he heard his brother say that, he just wept, and not long after that, he collapsed from exhaustion in the grocery aisle of a supermarket. He was 24 years old.

And I think that looking really hard at a life like Julio’s requires looking just at the sheer brutality of the labor market for so many Americans today and how he basically had to be superhuman just to scrape by in the Bay Area.

And I think that we should want work to be rewarded in this country, but we shouldn’t have to be superhuman to avoid poverty, especially in a country with this much abundance.

EZRA KLEIN: This opens into the broader argument your book is making, I think, which is that if you take the position that poverty is a choice, that we could, with roughly, you calculate, $177 billion a year, end it — in a lot of places you could find that money — you got to also ask then, why don’t we? And given that we don’t, who benefits? Who benefits from poverty?

And so maybe take the example of Julio. Somebody is benefiting from that work. Somebody is doing well-off of that. Whom?

MATTHEW DESMOND: So the way we like to answer this question is usually to point to the guy that’s just a little richer than we are, the guy just above us. But I think that the honest answer is a lot of us. A lot of us are benefiting from poverty in America.

Some lives are made small, like Julio’s, so that others may grow. Many of us consume the cheap goods and services the working poor produce. Many of us are invested in the stock market, indirectly, directly.

Don’t we benefit when we see our savings go up and up, even if those gains are often at the expense of someone like Julio? Many of us like lavish tax breaks that we get, tax breaks like the mortgage interest deduction, 529 savings, employment, health insurance savings, wealth transfer savings.

And we protect those investments. The country does so much more to subsidize affluence than to alleviate poverty. We starve anti-poverty spending because we clutch on to those benefits.

And then many of us continue to be segregationists. We live in segregated communities. We build walls around our communities in the form of laws, zoning restrictions, and we hoard affluence behind those walls. And our concentration of affluence has a side effect. It concentrates poverty outside of our walls.

So I think that, for me, there’s so much poverty in America not in spite of our wealth but because of it. Many of us are connected to the problem, which means we’re connected to the solution.

EZRA KLEIN: I was thinking about how this plays out, and it got me thinking about a piece I wrote back in 2021 called “What the Rich Don’t Want to Admit About the Poor,” and I think it gets it’s something here about how this might work beyond a kind of mustache-twirling, like I love poverty and want people to suffer, which is, that was a moment where you had in the pandemic and for reasons both policy-oriented and epidemiological this very weird labor market.

You had a huge amount of government support for people. You had a lot of people not wanting to go to work either because their work was dangerous or because, with the enhanced unemployment benefits, it was a little bit more possible not to do a job that they hated or didn’t pay them very well.

And one thing you saw right then was, putting aside how people feel about poverty or how they feel abstractly about wages, that when you begin to see the economic effects of a sharp increase on worker power at the lower end of the scale, there’s a lot of sensitivity to those problems.

So the news filled up with reports of businesses and the small business owners saying, people are just lazy, they won’t come take my jobs, nobody will take a job for $10, $12 an hour anymore. You get a lot of worry about inflation. And of course inflation can be a real problem, but we’re very sensitive to it.

I remember reading a lot about how Ubers were too expensive now and Lyfts were too expensive now. And so it’s not even that you have to ever think about poverty to think about it. It’s that when costs start going up, labor costs, or good costs, or service costs for people of more means, we get really upset and then, suddenly, programs they might be building shut off.

We talked about the Child Tax Credit, which was expanded during the pandemic, but it was only expanded for roughly a year. And in part, I think, due to inflation and due to a bunch of these other concerns, there was never political will to extend it. And so this very powerful anti-poverty program died.

And I don’t think people say it died because we love poverty, but there was a sense — it was part of the political milieu at that point — that something’s going wrong in the labor market. And you don’t want to be adding a bunch more government support to it at a time when prices were rising and people weren’t taking jobs. And so there’s this way in which you never have to talk about poverty to end up talking about the conditions that keep people under its boot.

MATTHEW DESMOND: The loss of the Child Tax Credit, the loss of Emergency Rental Assistance — this is so sad to me. It’s so outrageous. Congress should have been terrified to take those programs away, but there wasn’t an outcry. There wasn’t a strong rally saying, this is the new normal that we want, let’s keep this, this is the America that I want.

And it was so crestfallen, and you’re right. Part of the reason was because we fell into these well-worn trails about how we talk about these things in abstract ways that really crush down on poor kids, poor moms and dads today.

If we just look at the inflation rhetoric, did we overheat the economy? Is that the lesson from Covid? We reduce poverty, but is this the side effect that we have to learn from? And so if you look at the data, wages don’t seem to be the thing driving inflation. What seems to be the thing driving inflation is corporate markups, corporate profits.

A recent study out of the Kansas City Fed estimated that profit markups account for more than half of the inflation that took place in 2021, and that kind of price-gouging is just not normal, actually. If you look at the 40 years before Covid, labor costs were really the things that were driving price increases. Labor costs accounted for about 60 percent of price increases and corporate profits about 11 percent.

But then, since 2020, that trend reversed itself, where labor costs now account for only 8 percent of the inflationary pressure, and corporate profits are accounting for about 54 percent. So for me, the lesson isn’t, OK, the next time around, let’s not do so much to help the American people, or we can’t make these deep investments without driving inflation. And the lesson for me is certainly not to clamp down on inflation. We have to ask middle, and ***working-class***, and poor families to take the hard medicine.

I think the lesson is that if we want to get a handle on this problem, we have to get a handle on exploitation. So I like calls for increasing taxes on excess corporate profits. The government can even take a page out of its playbook from the 1940s and consider price controls. They have other tools in their toolbox, but the only thing we seem to be talking about is inflationary rates.

EZRA KLEIN: So I want to note that there’s definitely a lot of disagreement on whether or not corporate profits are to blame for inflation, and without trying to parse it here, one thing that I think is kind of obviously true is that — let’s say you just believe — and I think this is broadly believed at this point — that inflation is a demand problem. Most of the supply-side kinks have come out of the economy, and at this point, you have demand issues.

You can address demand issues in a lot of different ways. Something I’ve talked about before is you could put down what gets called a Progressive Consumption Tax. It isn’t in any way complex to make it costly for richer people to spend more. That would be a tax increase but so, in a very direct way, is removing the child tax credit, a huge tax increase, effectively, on the poor, and the ***working class***, and the middle class.

And it’s always interesting to me that things like that — they never even get suggested. Economists are worried, and I think they are worried for legitimate reasons that you get a lot of weird effects from things like price controls or corporate profit taxes. But OK, if you want to do something broad-based, we know how to do progressive taxation. You can slow spending among people who have more money as opposed to slowing it among people who have less money.

But again, and again, and again, the things we choose to do are more among the people who have less money and hit them hardest as opposed to trying to concentrate the pain more. One of the things I always think is telling is that there’s always this question of what kind of problem a society will and will not live with. What kinds of problems are you willing to allow to persist?

And something I definitely see — and I think it’s reasonable to be worried about inflation, but something I definitely see is, we are not willing to have high prices. We are willing to have high poverty. And I don’t think those two things are a direct tradeoff. But there is just the alarm with which people not wanting to take low-wage, crappy jobs is treated versus how accustomed the system is to poverty and is willing to live with it year after year, including child poverty.

It’s really telling. The rubber hits the road on what you worry about when it happens or when it’s ongoing, and we don’t like prices rising for everybody. We’re much more willing to take deprivation among some.

MATTHEW DESMOND: That’s right. And there’s a part of me that feels, is this just who we are? Are we stuck with this? And there’s a part of me that feels there is a shift going on in the American public where many of us don’t want this deal anymore.

The recent polling on why poverty exists in America I think is very encouraging. It suggests that most Democrats and most Republicans now see poverty as a result of a structural problem, not a personal moral failing. And it’s like that old Gramsci line where the old is dying but the new hasn’t been born yet, and I think that one of the costs we pay, though, for all this poverty in our midst is emotional.

It feels icky. All this poverty and this profiting from other folks pain diminishes all of us, and I do sense that we, as a country, want to move to a different place. But part of that work just means recognizing how deeply implicated we are in this problem and stop kicking the can down the road right and just saying, well, poverty is the result of structural forces that kind of no one is responsible for. It’s this Congress’s fault. It’s the super-rich’s fault, or even, cruelly, it’s the poor’s fault.

EZRA KLEIN: But then you get to this question of why the Child Tax Credit wasn’t sustained. So you talk to the Biden administration about this. And now they realize they misjudged, but what they thought would happen is if you put this giant tax credit that — by the way, it was a pretty universalist program. It didn’t go to everybody, but it went to a lot of people.

You call in the book for programs that are designed to yoke people together as opposed to increasing resentment between classes, and they did design it that way. And they thought, no way is Congress going to let this kind of broad-based credit expire because people are going to be too pissed. It would be a disaster in the midterms if they did that. And they did, and the things we saw were, one, the Child Tax Credit wasn’t that popular. When you polled it, it was not one of the most popular parts of their agenda.

And two, there weren’t people out in the streets on it. There wasn’t an effective mobilization on it, not even for the people who needed it the most. Why? What needs to be learned from that? What do you make of it?

MATTHEW DESMOND: Actually, there are two lessons, I think. First is a kind of spiritual poverty among progressives, I think. I quote the theologian Walter Brueggemann in my book, and he says, liberals are really fluent in the language of critique and bumbling and the language of repair or celebration.

When I read that, I thought, man, he’s on to something there. I think that there is kind of a chic nihilism or a criticality that many progressives or liberals just in general are much more comfortable with than saying, this thing — this is working. This is something we should celebrate. This is something that we should be out on the streets for.

With the Emergency Rental Assistance, you remember how frustrating it was when that program was getting off the ground, and there were all these distribution channels that had to be created from scratch. And when they were going on, when that program was having trouble, everyone was talking about it, everyone was tweeting about it. Major news stories are writing about it, and for good reason.

But once that program started working, and once eviction rates started plummeting, we were quiet. We were pretty quiet. And I think that there is something that we need to be reflexive about just in general on the progressive side of America about that.

And the second take-home I feel is the poverty movement has to grow. There is an active, nimble, exciting anti-poverty movement that’s on the ground today. You can find it in the labor movement, the new housing movement, the Poor People’s Campaign. But that tent has to get a lot bigger for it to have enough political power to say to Congress, no, no, no, you are not going to take away this benefit that is completely transformative to so many kids around the country.

EZRA KLEIN: But I want to push you on this because why wasn’t it enough then? Your book is very much about exploitation, and it’s very much about the ways in which the rich take advantage of the poor, people lack power, they lack power to do anything.

But this was a case where there weren’t huge protests. There was more that could have been done, and it was — I know people who worked on trying to mobilize here, and it wasn’t that easy. The great long-standing conservative fear about democracy is that the obvious thing that will happen is that the have-nots, who are numerous, will unite against the haves, which depending on how you define, are smaller. You can see this in a modern form even in Mitt Romney’s 47 percent comments.

But it goes all the way back. It’s all there with the founders. The people are going to band together and vote to give themselves what everybody else has. And it doesn’t happen anywhere near the degree to which clean theory I think would predict. In fact, oftentimes the opposite happens.

So why? What do the people who fear democracy’s tendency to devolve into populism — what do they miss about what makes that kind of populism so difficult to sustain?

MATTHEW DESMOND: That’s a deep question. I think one challenge that we have in America has to do with how stigmatized poverty is. There’s no flag for poor rights. There’s no identity politics, really, around ending poverty. There’s no button. There’s no sticker. There’s no sign you can put in your lawn.

And the stigmatization of poverty really forces movements often to organize around families, around tenants, around workers, but not around ending poverty. That poses a real political vulnerability where we haven’t developed the language yet in this country around ending poverty, including from the Democratic Party, who are much more comfortable in the language of the middle class than in the language of really addressing the problem of poverty.

But as Michael Tubbs, the former Mayor of Stockton, once put it to me, you can’t solve a problem that we don’t name, and I just don’t think we’re naming this problem as much, and owning it, and embracing it as a country to give it the political power it needs and deserve.

So one of the calls in the book is for all of us, no matter our station in life, to become poverty abolitionists, to commit ourselves to ending poverty in this country once and for all.

EZRA KLEIN: How do you think about the relationship here between work and poverty? You mentioned a minute ago the Democratic Party is more comfortable with the idea of the middle class. I think that’s true. But when you’re talking about poverty, what they’re really comfortable with is the idea of the ***working class***, and what they have found — the reason they talk like this is it does poll better. It polls better to means test programs. Work requirements are oftentimes pretty popular.

We were talking about poverty data earlier, and one theory some people have of why you see some measures of deprivation like people with no cash income going up even as I think some of the stronger poverty measures do suggest we’ve made some progress is because the way we make progress has been focusing more of our attention on the more sympathetic working poor.

I remember that Bernie Sanders used to have a banner that would show up on his campaign website. This is something like, nobody should work 40 hours a week and be poor in this country. And so then we’ll pass policies that are pretty good if you’re working 40 hours a week.

But if you’re not — and a lot of the poor either can’t, or for some reason don’t, or they’re elderly, or they’re children — very hard for children to work 40 hours a week — can get into issues with extreme poverty that require very different kinds of solutions we’re not that comfortable with.

So how do you think a bit about this question of our approach to poverty as a spur to work and our frustration at people we think should be working who aren’t?

MATTHEW DESMOND: So on the one hand, the welfare state in America has really shifted to being a welfare state that does a lot more to support workers than to support folks that aren’t working for whatever reason. So the work by Robert Moffitt, an economist at Johns Hopkins has shown this really incredible upward shift where much more money in government spending is going to families right around the poverty level, and much less is going to families in this deep poverty situation. And

So I do think that we have designed a welfare state to supplement and encourage work, but we haven’t done this other thing, which is to give workers power, to make sure worker wages are increasing, and to give them a seat at the table. And this, I think, is key.

So the way that we’ve subsidized work in this country is mainly through a program called the Earned Income Tax Credit. It’s a benefit for workers that are poorly paid, often families, and it’s a big program. It’s about $61 billion a year. It helps a lot. It lifts a lot of folks out of poverty.

But it doesn’t confront the underlying issue, the fact that so many worker wages today are low and they’re falling. And this is really key. This is an answer to the puzzle of how we could spend more and stay in the same place.

When the Great Society and the war on poverty were launched in the 1960s, wages were climbing. Unions were strong. But as unions lost power, wages started to fall. American jobs got a lot worse, and for non-college-educated men, real wages today are lower now than they were 50 years ago.

So I would like to see us address not just the symptoms but treat the disease, really go after exploitation in the labor market, which means not only subsidies like the E.I.T.C., which kind of help now, short-from subsidies, but also getting deeper, making sure workers have power, improving collective bargaining strategies, these kinds of things so we can make sure wages increase as spending increases. And that’s the way to really bring folks out of poverty.

EZRA KLEIN: In that section of the book, you bring up one of my favorite policy ideas, which is — particularly for labor, which is sectoral bargaining. You talk a bit about how we’ve fractured workplaces, you have all these contractors, it’s much harder to organize things like gig workers.

But there are other countries that do bargaining very differently than we do, so can you talk a bit about the way the economy has changed in ways that disadvantage unions and advantage exploitation or make exploitation easier? And you talked about what sectoral bargaining is, where it’s used, how it works, and what we’ve seen from it.

MATTHEW DESMOND: Sure. So it’s incredibly hard to organize a workplace these days. Not only have unions lost their traditional labor base because we’ve moved from an industrial to a post-industrial economy, but unions also shot themselves in the foot when they were at their full power.

Many unions were a white man’s refuge, and they completely blocked Black and Latinx workers from their ranks. Self-defeating racism really helped contribute to the weakening of union power. And then they were attacked. There was just massive political adversaries against unions that drove worker power down.

So today, if you want to organize a Starbucks, you’ve got to organize that Starbucks, and it’s incredibly hard. The National Labor Board shows that in about 40 percent of cases corporations actually violate union rules, saying they will close up shop if you vote yes or firing people that try to organize.

And even if you’re successful, you organize that Starbucks, there’s thousands of other Starbucks that you’ve got to go around and organize. And so the idea of sectorial bargaining is it says, look, let’s not go shop the shop. Let’s organize entire economic sectors instead.

And this has been successful in Europe, especially, and this is how it works. If enough workers in a certain sector, like food and hospitality, voted for the measure, it would activate the Secretary of Labor, and the Secretary of Labor would organize a collective bargaining panel made up of worker representatives and corporate representatives.

And they would negotiate terms, and the end result of that would be a collective bargaining agreement that would cover the entire sector, all the food and hospitality workers in the country. And this is a way to organize all those Starbucks in one go.

I should say this isn’t an idea without controversy, including from some unions. Some unions think like, wait a minute, is that going to wipe out gains that we’ve made on the ground? And I think those concerns are valid. But I do think the larger concern is that most workers in the private sector want a union and aren’t in one, and so this is one way to speed up that process.

EZRA KLEIN: There’s also this view, looking at places like Germany, where people feel this kind of policy leads to more cooperative, less antagonistic relationships between labor and business because when you’re dealing with the entire sector, there’s a little bit more alignment of interest.

And it gets to something I think that you’re describing a bit throughout the book, which is that if you could end some of the ways that people benefit from poverty, that they benefit from worker weakness, then you would have a lot of knock-on benefits.

Some of them are spiritual about what it’s like to be in a place. I think that some of the very weird reactionary politics of San Francisco have, in addition to dealing with real problems we have here, have to do with very rich people seeing very poor people and feeling very uncomfortable about it constantly. I’m not just talking about homelessness here. I think that there’s a kind of political sickness that emerges in places this unequal because people know something is unstable in it.

But also, you have a lot less antagonism. You have reasons people can cooperate as opposed to their interest being so misaligned. You talked about ending poverty as a way of making people in poverty and out of poverty free. Tell me a bit about that idea of freedom and the related ideas of community that you develop.

MATTHEW DESMOND: Well, for folks below the poverty line, for folks scraping, and cutting coupons, and struggling, the end of poverty is a whole new life. It’s breath. It’s freedom. It’s a chance to realize your dreams.

I’m really bowled over by this Raj Chetty study that just shows how many inventors poverty kind of steals from us, and it’s just true just how many diplomats, and nurses, and scientists that poverty denied us.

So for folks that are below the line, folks in poverty, it’s just another life. But for all of us, I think the end of poverty brings a better nation. I think it brings us safer nation. I think it brings a happier nation, a freer nation. It brings a nation where we don’t feel this complicity and connection to all this deprivation around us.

San Francisco is kind of a microcosm for this larger problem of private opulence amongst public poverty where we let the public sector diminish even as, sometimes, our personal fortunes grow, and that actually pulls us all down in a way.

So I do think a nation without poverty is something that will require some sacrifice from those of us, but I think that what we’re going to get in the end is something much better, more enticing.

My wife sent me this quote, and I’m going to butcher it. But it’s something like, if you want folks to build a ship, you don’t assemble a team on the shore, and you don’t gather the wood. You make them long for the end of the sea. And I think that something that I’m trying to do in the book is to convince all of us that this is a country that I think we’d be happier in.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to talk through a couple of the other ideas, and the big one that I wouldn’t say you fully develop as a policy but as a thought experiment — you write, in 2020, the gap separating everyone in America below the poverty line and the poverty line itself amounted to $177 billion, and you say that’s a little bit of a rough calculation. It’s also a lot of money, but it’s also not that much money. And you could get it from a lot of different places.

So before we talk about “where you could get it?” question, I want to talk about “what would you do with it?” question. One reason I don’t like using the Official Poverty Measure is that if you got $200 billion a year and you send it out in checks, my understanding of the way the Poverty Measure is calculated is it wouldn’t change poverty at all.

But in theory, it really would, and you could do it. Is that what you’re suggesting, we should basically have what gets called some kind of a basic income or a negative income tax? We should just give people the money so they’re no longer poor?

MATTHEW DESMOND: I think that’s an amazing first step. Like if you were to ask me, if there was a single thing we can do, just one thing you could do that Congress could implement today, I would suggest this kind of investment, this kind of guaranteed basic investment in families in America.

I think we could reinstate the Child Tax Credit that did so much to reduce child poverty in Covid, and I think we could also invest in stable, affordable housing. I think those are my two big issues that I would use that money for.

EZRA KLEIN: Tell me a bit about the stable, affordable housing. Something that you discuss in the book that I think will be a bit of a surprise is you make an argument for much more public housing, and the reputation of public housing is pretty bad. And I think it’s widely considered an example of what government has tried to do and cannot do, and you suggest maybe that has changed over the years. Tell me a bit about the more modern versions of that policy.

MATTHEW DESMOND: So most families that qualify for any kind of affordable housing program don’t get it. Only about one in four families who qualify get it. So I’ve got two young kids. If I applied for public housing today like in Washington, D.C., I would be a grandfather, probably, by the time my application came up for review.

That’s kind of our state. That’s our state of investment in affordable housing, and that means that most poor renting families today live unassisted in the private market and give at least half of their income to their landlord and utility company. That’s the state of America today.

So how should we change that? How should we address this? And one thing that I think we can do is build out our public housing infrastructure to build permanent, stable, affordable housing.

And you’re right. Public housing has such a stigma and kind of a bad rap, if you will. And it’s because the way we did public housing, building these giant Soviet-style complexes in Chicago and Atlanta and St. Louis in an incredible segregated way was not only cruel we did that, and then we defunded it.

Reagan cut HUD’S budget by 70 percent almost, seven-zero percent. And pretty soon, those buildings fell into complete disrepair. The elevators stopped working. Trash didn’t get picked up. And then it got so bad we dynamited them on public television, and that sounded like a kindness.

But we’ve learned from our sins, I think, and if you look at the modern public housing that are in cities all over the country today, this is not your father’s public housing. This is public housing that blends into the community, that looks pretty, that is not segregated, and often you’ll drive by and not even notice that it’s public housing.

And I think building out that infrastructure is one way to develop an approach to housing exploitation to basically give low-income families more choice about where they live so they don’t have to accept this one bad option because it’s the only option available.

EZRA KLEIN: So somebody might hear this and say, yeah, $177 billion a year more on top of that for Child Tax Credits, and public housing, and the rest of the agenda. We don’t have that kind of money. Money is scarce. There are a lot of needs.

We don’t live in this world where anybody gets a pony. You don’t have a lot of patience for that in the book. Tell me why.

MATTHEW DESMOND: A study published a few years ago showed that if the top 1 percent Americans just paid the taxes they owed, just stopped evading taxes, not got taxed at a higher rate, that we as a country could raise an additional $175 billion a year for the public purse.

So we could just about fill the poverty gap if the top 1 percent of us paid what they owed, and that’s just one step in that direction. And so for me, it drives me crazy when our elected officials look at the price tag of a policy idea that would cut child poverty or ensure that everybody in the country affords a doctor, and they look at the bottom of the policy, and they say, whew, boy, how can we afford it? How can we afford it?

For me, that question is so dishonest, really, and even sinful. We could afford it if the richest among us took less from the government. We could afford it if we funded the IRS to do their jobs. We could afford it if we did so much more to fight poverty than to guard our fortunes.

EZRA KLEIN: You write that the fundamental lesson that emerges from this debate is if we want to abolish poverty, we need to embrace policies that foster goodwill and be suspicious of those that kindle resentment.

And that’s a big sentence, I think, in this because when you think about the $177 billion, for instance, and you think about telling somebody making $75,000 a year outside of Austin with three kids that they’re not going to get anything, they’re not poor, but their cousin — and you do often hear this if you do poverty reporting — their cousin, who’s a layabout, and hasn’t worked as hard as them, and hasn’t made the good choices they’ve made, he’s, all of a sudden, or she’s, all of a sudden, going to get this check that somehow or another is maybe on this person’s back or at least could have gone to them and things they need. And that pisses me off.

So then you get into things like universal basic income. That’s much more expensive. Then the math does get harder. So tell me a bit about that question of how you do this without kindling resentment.

MATTHEW DESMOND: I’ve really liked this idea of what might be called bigger-tent targeting. It’s kind of like a sweet spot between targeted programs like food stamps, which are cost-efficient — but you’re right. If you make a $1 over the limit, you’re cut out. And it’s a sweet spot between targeted programs like that and universal programs which reach everyone but are very expensive sometimes.

And a bigger-tent targeting kind of recognizes that the poverty line is too low, that there are quite a lot of Americans like that family making 75k in Austin who are struggling, too, and so how to kind of expand these programs not only to reach families that are desperate for them at the bottom but also families that belong to the ***working class*** and even middle-income families.

And the Child Tax Credit in Covid I think was a good example of this. It was a big program, and it reached a lot of folks. And I don’t think it was a divisive program because of that. So I think to do this, though, we really have to reject the scarcity mindset, this idea that the country is a country of scarce resources and we really have to ration.

And I would have a lot more patience for that kind of argument if we did a much better job collecting taxes from the top 20 percent and if our welfare state wasn’t so imbalanced, where we had so many tax breaks accruing to families that have plenty already. So I think we have to push against scarcity, and we have to design these programs that are bigger-tent.

EZRA KLEIN: Something you’re pretty straightforward about in the book is that the idea that everything benefits everybody is wrong. You talk about this in terms of rhetoric from Biden and others that there’s this tendency to try to make everything into a positive-sum action and that if this stuff were so great for the rich, they would already do it.

But that goes on down the income ladders, too, and you talk about the way people show up at neighborhood meetings to try to keep affordable housing from being built in their neighborhood. And that’s not only really rich people.

And you talk a bit about how there are a huge number of these tax breaks all throughout the system, the mortgage interest deduction, and the 529 program, and on, and on, and on, and on that middle-class people like, upper-middle-class people like, and these aren’t people you think of as really rich.

But there’s a lot of money in them, and any attempt to touch those sets off a political firestorm. So I’d be curious to hear you talk a bit about this question of, if not sacrifice, then at least the question of loss and change and not just in terms of taxation but in terms of, who’s in our communities?

Who has what kind of political power? What maybe we can pay or get cheaply, going back to this question of cheap goods, and cheap Uber rides, and cheap stuff imported from China? How do you think about this question of having sacrifice without resentment?

MATTHEW DESMOND: I think this is really where this call for poverty abolitionism comes in. This is a political project, but it’s a personal one, too. It’s me committing to this belief that poverty is an abomination and committing to this kind of commitment to unwind myself from poverty in my everyday life.

And so that does mean viewing things like tax breaks or zoning laws. It’s not just like abstract principles that are out there but things that I can actively try to shift the common sense on. So tax season is upon us, and so what if, instead of complaining about taxes, which is something that everyone does, left, right, and center — what if the next time someone in your office or over your fence line says, oh my God, these taxes, you say, look, in 2020, we spent $190 billion on homeowner tax subsidies and only $53 billion on direct housing assistance to the needy.

And I feel that’s kind of crazy because most of the benefit, those homeowner tax subsidies, went to families with six-figure incomes. That just seems wrong when we have an eviction crisis. And I get that thing. I get the mortgage interest deduction. That’s crazy. I think I’m going to write my congressperson and wind it down.

And what if we did that by the hundreds, and by the thousands, and by the tens of thousands? I think that’s a way to shift the kind of aperture in the conversation about what’s considered normal. And I do think that will take some sacrifice, but I do think the end product ultimately is a country that is something that we all want to see come about, a country that actually puts the money where its mouth is when it comes to expanding economic opportunity.

And with segregation and zoning, this is also very personal. You’re right. The folks that are going down on a Tuesday night in the zoning board meetings, and yelling at the aldermen, and gumming up the process, and forming petitions, and suing cities — they’re active. They’re active defenders of the wall.

And I think those of us that are seeking a more open, inclusive community — we’ve got to put in that work, too. We’ve got to go down to that Tuesday night zoning board meeting, and stand up, and be like, look, I refuse to deny other kids benefits my kids have had living here. Let’s build this thing.

And that’s going to be awkward, and that’s going to be challenging. But I think that’s what this requires. And all of us have a role to play in this, I think, whether we come from abundance or we’re struggling today.

EZRA KLEIN: There’s a connection you’re drawing at the end of the book that is clearly there and is also a little fuzzy, and I want to get you to try to explain more of what you’re saying here because you talk about this question of poverty and community. And you write about your family moving from a place in Wisconsin to East Arlington, a suburb of Boston, and noticing that this new community you’re living in, which is richer, houses are bigger — but something is also missing.

You talk about far fewer issues and far less joy in your new community. You talk about the snow falling and neighbors clearing only their own walks, not each other. And I think there’s one way to read this, which is a bit of a cliche. There’s not much money down there, but everybody’s together.

But I take you as saying something about a connection between the sort of values and almost spiritual way of being in the world that comes from trying to protect what is yours and what’s possible when you open up, that there’s some kind of ineffable community that is possible from a quality that isn’t possible amidst inequality.

And I was hoping before we wrap up that you could talk about what you’re saying there, what you’re predicting there, what you’re suggesting about this possible world we could live in and gain that isn’t monetary in value but that even the rich don’t necessarily know what they’re missing.

MATTHEW DESMOND: Yeah. I think that there is a spiritual poverty that’s gripping a lot of communities in America. And look, I’ve lived in some very poor neighborhoods, and I’m not romantic about that. But I haven’t experienced the kind of generosity and just sheer neighborliness that I did in those neighborhoods in affluent neighborhoods that I’ve lived in.

And I’m thinking about that group in Minneapolis that we talked about earlier, and I remember speaking to a woman named Chloe Jackson who, when she started getting involved in that tenants’ rights movement, she was working at a store in the airport, making $15.69 an hour. She wasn’t politicized. She was just — she was a single mom just trying to make it.

And she more and more got involved in the movement, and the movement meant going to eviction court when one person did. Everyone would show up. Bring tamales. Bring pizza. And she told me, look, before, we were just neighbors. But now we’re a family.

And I think there’s something to that. I think there’s some spiritual violence we do to our lives when we live apart from each other, when we’re segregated from each other, and when we kind of clutch on to money is our only security in America that we have kind of — like a stingy, frightened affluence, I think, today.

So I do think that there is — this is a part of the book that’s fuzzy because I feel challenged writing about things beyond the data in a way. It really pushes me. It gets me out of my comfort zone.

But at least in my experience, there’s real happiness, there’s real joy in binding your lives to folks that are quite different from you, yeah, and I wanted to try to get that across in the book a little bit.

EZRA KLEIN: I think that’s a good place to end. It’s always our final question, what are three books you’d recommend to the audience?

MATTHEW DESMOND: I recommend “What Then Must We Do?” by Leo Tolstoy. He wrote it in 1886. It’s a weird book, but I kind of love it because the great writer is really wrestling with the same question this book is wrestling with. Why is there so much poverty around me?

And you see him go through the motions. Is it work? No, the poor are working all the time. What is it? What is it? And he finally ends on this answer that I kind of end on. It’s me, he says, Tolstoy says. And so he kind of cuts through the abstractions and the excuses, and I think there’s just a beautiful spiritual clarity about that book.

I really love “Race For Profit” by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor. This is a historical work, and it’s looking at what happens when we kind of do policy halfway. And it looks at how the real estate business incorporated and marketed itself to Black families after 1968 and shows how this government program led to all this exploitation and all these foreclosures for these families. And she comes up with this powerful phrase about “predatory inclusion,” which I think is very applicable to so many other policy realms today.

And my third book is “Random Family,” the classic investigative journalism by Adrian Nicole LeBlanc. She spent over 10 years living, and working, and reporting alongside poor families in the South Bronx. So we see kids grow up.

This is a book where I remember exactly where I was when I read it — I was in a garage in Minnesota — and how beautifully she wrote about people in their full complexity that were experiencing hardship, running from the law, and how gracefully she shows folks not reduced to their hardships.

EZRA KLEIN: Matt Desmond, thank you very much.

MATTHEW DESMOND: Thanks, Ezra.

[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: This episode of “The Ezra Klein Show” is produced by Rogé Karma with Emefa Agawu, Annie Galvin, Jeff Geld and Kristin Lin. Fact checking by Michelle Harris, Mary Marge Locker and Kate Sinclair. Mixing by Jeff Geld; original music by Isaac Jones; audience strategy by Shannon Busta.The executive producer of New York Times Opinion Audio is Annie-Rose Strasser, and special thanks to Pat McCusker and Kristina Samulewski.

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Trump or Biden?

About four years ago, without asking anybody, I changed my job description. It used to be “New York Times foreign affairs columnist.” Instead, I started calling myself the “New York Times humiliation and dignity columnist.” I even included it on my business card.

It had become so obvious to me that so much of what I’d been doing since I became a journalist in 1978 was reporting or opining about people, leaders, refugees, terrorists and nation-states acting out on their feelings of humiliation and questing for dignity — the two most powerful human emotions.

I raise this now because the success of Joe Biden’s campaign against Donald Trump may ride on his ability to speak to the sense of humiliation and quest for dignity of many Trump supporters, which Hillary Clinton failed to do.

It has been obvious ever since Trump first ran for president that many of his core supporters actually hate the people who hate Trump, more than they care about Trump or any particular action he takes, no matter how awful.

The media feed Trump’s supporters a daily diet of how outrageous this or that Trump action is — but none of it diminishes their support. Because many Trump supporters are not attracted to his policies. They’re attracted to his attitude — his willingness and evident delight in skewering the people they hate and who they feel look down on them.

Humiliation, in my view, is the most underestimated force in politics and international relations. The poverty of dignity explains so much more behavior than the poverty of money.

People will absorb hardship, hunger and pain. They will be grateful for jobs, cars and benefits. But if you make people feel humiliated, they will respond with a ferocity unlike any other emotion, or just refuse to lift a finger for you. As Nelson Mandela once observed, “There is nobody more dangerous than one who has been humiliated.”

By contrast, if you show people respect, if you affirm their dignity, it is amazing what they will let you say to them or ask of them. Sometimes it just takes listening to them, but deep listening — not just waiting for them to stop talking. Because listening is the ultimate sign of respect. What you say when you listen speaks more than any words.

I’ve seen firsthand the power of humiliation in foreign policy: Vladimir Putin’s macho act after Russia’s humiliation at losing the Cold War; Iraqi Sunnis who felt humiliated by a U.S. invasion force that pushed them out of Iraq’s army and government, stripping them of rank and status; Israeli Sephardic Jews who felt humiliated by Ashkenazi Jewish elites, something Bibi Netanyahu has long manipulated; Palestinians feeling humiliated at Israeli checkpoints; Muslim youth in Europe feeling humiliated by the Christian majority; and China questing to become the world’s dominant power, after what Chinese themselves call their “century of humiliation” at the hands of foreign powers.

When George Floyd was being held down by three policemen, one with a knee on his neck, as he pleaded for his mother and onlookers filmed on their phones, he was not just being restrained — he was being humiliated. Resistance to the daily humiliations of racism has fueled the Black civil rights movement from its inception to Black Lives Matter.

In a much talked-about new book, “[*The Tyranny of Merit*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374289980): What’s Become of the Common Good?” Harvard political philosopher Michael Sandel (disclosure: he is a close friend) says “the politics of humiliation” is also at the heart of Trump’s appeal.

“Trump was elected by tapping a wellspring of anxieties, frustrations and legitimate grievances to which the mainstream parties had no compelling answer,” Sandel notes. These grievances “are not only economic but also moral and cultural; they are not only about wages and jobs but also about social esteem.”

Unless Biden finds a way to speak to the sense of humiliation felt by many ***working-class*** voters, Sandel warns, even Trump’s failure to deal with the pandemic may not be enough to turn these voters against him. The reason? “Resentment borne of humiliation is the most potent political sentiment of all,” Sandel explains.

Sandel argues that the polarized politics of our time, and the resentments that fuel it, arise, paradoxically, from a seemingly attractive ideal — the meritocratic promise that if you work hard and go to college, you will rise. But this ideal sends a double message.

“It congratulates the winners but denigrates the losers,” he writes, because it creates the impression that a “college degree is a precondition for dignified work and social esteem” — while devaluing the contributions of those without a diploma. This has led many working people to feel that elites look down on them, creating the conditions for the “politics of humiliation” that Trump exploits.

“Elites have so valorized a college degree — both as an avenue for advancement and as the basis for social esteem — that they have difficulty understanding the hubris a meritocracy can generate, and the harsh judgment it imposes on those who have not gone to college,” Sandel says.

“One of the deepest political divides in American politics today is between those with and those without a college degree. In the 2016 election, Trump won two-thirds of white voters without a college degree.”

Trump, who himself had been looked down on by New York City elites, understood that the familiar fight between Democrats and Republicans over how to grow the pie and how to distribute the pie was ignoring a deeper sentiment among many white ***working-class*** Americans.

These traditional Democratic voters felt that liberal elites were looking down at them, new immigrants were superseding them and foreigners were laughing at them. And Trump became the fist in the face that his voters threw back at all of them.

“Biden is right that Trump botched the pandemic, violated constitutional norms and inflamed racial tensions — all good grounds for throwing him out of office,” argues Sandel. “But Biden could win this argument and still lose the election.” He must find a way to show that he understands those who feel disrespected and are drawn to Trump for that reason — even though most of his policies don’t help them.

How? Sandel and I put our heads together and thought, well, maybe Biden should go on a tour of Trump country, focusing on rural counties and towns in the Midwest, and just listen to Trump’s base, both to learn and as a sign of respect.

Then, at the first presidential debate, Biden should ignore Trump and his buffoonery and speak about what he had learned by talking to likely Trump voters.

Biden could talk about where he agrees with them and where he disagrees with them and why — the ultimate sign of respect. That is how Biden can get at least some Trump devotees to see that “***working-class*** Joe from Scranton” — not “Billionaire Don, born with a silver spoon in his mouth”— is the one who really hails from their side of the tracks and can be trusted (a very important word) to look out for them.

When it comes to politics, a lot of people don’t listen through their ears. They listen through their gut, and Biden, more than any other Democratic leader today, has the ability to connect there.

Trump’s goal in this campaign is to separate Biden from Biden voters by making it as difficult as possible for Biden voters to vote. Biden’s goal should be to separate Trump from Trump voters by showing that he respects them and their fears — even if he does not respect Trump.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374289980) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374289980). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374289980).

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PHOTO: Joe Biden at a community meeting in Kenosha, Wis., last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Kriston Jae Bethel for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 9, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Literary Destinations / Read Your Way Through Mexico City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66YJ-B771-JBG3-609B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 27, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 17

**Length:** 1701 words

**Byline:** By Juan Villoro

**Body**

Juan Villoro, who spent over two decades perfecting one book about Mexico City, recommends reading on the city he loves. ''Mexico is too complex,'' a visitor said. ''It needs to be read.''

This story is part of a series exploring the world through books. We've asked some of our favorite writers to recommend reading that helps you get to know their cities -- from Stockholm to Mexico City to Cairo and beyond. Explore the whole series here.

Álvaro Pombo, a Spanish author, came to Mexico City in 2004. He'd written a novel that took place during the religious revolts of early 20th century Mexico, and wanted to know what the country he'd studied in books was like, he said.

So he installed himself in a hotel in the city center and went for a walk. He saw the murals of the Palacio Nacional, the Aztec dancers outside the cathedral, the ruins of the Templo Mayor and the skulls alluding to human sacrifice. Later, he toured a street market filled with a baroque assortment of fruit, animals and Chinese goods. He bought a nail clipper that immediately fell apart in his hands, breathed air charged with chiles and spice, saw people who looked like they'd walked out of a Frida Kahlo painting, heard a trumpet blare and finally decided to return to his hotel.

Overwhelmed, he picked up the phone and called me.

''Mexico is too complex to understand with the naked eye,'' he said. ''It needs to be read.''

What classics help explain Mexico City?

Let's start with the 16th century. Already an old man, the former soldier Bernal Díaz del Castillo wrote ''The True History of the Conquest of New Spain'' in an attempt to reap with his pen the rewards that had eluded him with the sword. As a narrator, he lacks the necessary vocabulary to describe this unknown civilization, opting for a perspective of bewilderment. He shows that it's possible to describe with passion even what we don't fully understand.

In the 17th century, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was the pre-eminent author of the Spanish language. Her ''Selected Works'' reveal a poet with interests in astronomy, theology, gastronomy, dreams, urban life and gender inequality: ''Foolish men who accuse women without reason,'' she writes in one poem. Sor Juana entered the convent of the Hieronymite nuns because it was the only way she could exercise her intellectual vocation. Even so, she was censored and forced into silence in her later years. Describing a flood in the capital, she wrote that the water covering Mexico City's streets was, in reality, a baptism. Her poetry is a comparable deluge.

In the 20th century, our culture took up an extreme sport: defining what it means to be Mexican. A standout example is ''The Labyrinth of Solitude,'' by Octavio Paz. Published in 1950, Paz's essay endures for its imaginative associations and musical prose, though it is contentious: Some anthropologists and historians consider his definition of Mexicanness to be Manichaean and contrived. The same can be said of ''Where the Air Is Clear,'' Carlos Fuentes's 1958 novel that features Mexico City as its protagonist. When the book was written, the capital had around five million inhabitants and could still sit for a portrait as a whole. Today, you would need a conference of authors to fully capture the metropolitan area's 20 to 23 million residents -- our margin of error alone is the size of a European city. Although Fuentes's chorus of colloquial voices has aged, the book remains a foundational work on the Mexican capital.

What did authors who came to visit have to say?

Jack Kerouac once wrote a letter to his friend William S. Burroughs asking if it was dangerous to travel to Mexico. Burroughs, who was living in the country at the time, answered roundly, ''Don't worry: Mexicans only kill their friends.''

Many foreigners have benefited from Mexico City's peculiar hospitality, where hell is mixed with heaven. Close to the capital, in Cuernavaca, Malcolm Lowry encountered the delusions that allowed him to write his powerful saga of the mind, ''Under the Volcano.'' D.H. Lawrence bore witness to the moment that Aztec idols were disinterred like emissaries from a different time. Lawrence's Mexican novel, ''The Plumed Serpent,'' can't match his short stories or ''Lady Chatterley's Lover,'' but it nonetheless offers an impressive record of the ways in which an ancient past still influences the present.

In ''The Savage Detectives,'' the Chilean novelist Roberto Bolaño, who had deep roots in Mexico City, suggests that there is no more poetic act than that of life itself, but finding enlightenment requires you to live in a new way. Bolaño's poets are secret investigators of experience: savage detectives, indeed.

Describing Mexico to the rhythm of a highway has always been a literary temptation. When former President Donald J. Trump declared that Mexicans were a threat to the United States, the American writer Paul Theroux -- the dean of travel writing -- decided to meet his alleged enemy. Having spent a lifetime boarding trains around the globe, Theroux crisscrossed Mexico by car until he reached the Zapatistas in Chiapas. The result, ''On the Plain of Snakes,'' is a brilliant travelogue.

What books capture current Mexico?

Fernanda Melchor's ''Hurricane Season'' deals with the violence that has devastated Mexico, leaving us with a death toll akin to that of a civil war. According to Reporters Without Borders, Mexico is one of the most dangerous countries in the world in which to be a journalist. Melchor shows that the most terrible news can only be delivered in a novel.

Valeria Luiselli reconstructs the microcosm of a ***working-class*** neighborhood in ''The Story of My Teeth.'' Originally written to accompany an exhibit in an urban art gallery, the novel traces the map of a deteriorated suburb and reinvents it through its imaginary inhabitants.

In the second half of the 20th century, Carlos Monsiváis operated as a nonstop chronicler, a one-man press agency covering all the layers of reality. ''Mexican Postcards'' is a collection of his best work. One of his obsessions was trying to understand the irresistible magnetism of Mexico City; its pollution and danger do little to prevent people from being drawn to a place so full of energy. A Monsiváis aphorism sums up the passion of belonging to this urban labyrinth: ''The worst nightmare is the one that excludes us.''

It was in that spirit that I wrote ''Horizontal Vertigo: A City Called Mexico.'' The product of 25 years of writing, the book attempts to recreate a city that, despite its apparent dehumanization, remains a cherished place in which to live. On the last page I write, ''You belong to the place where you pick up the trash.'' It's easy to be proud of a city's palaces and glories: The true test of belonging is being willing to deal with its waste.

It is no accident that the truest face of a chilango -- an inhabitant of Mexico City -- appears in the wake of disaster. After the earthquakes of 1985 and 2017, Mexico City residents became a rescue team, proving that the rubble and ruins were ours. In ''Nothing, Nobody,'' Elena Poniatowska collects the testimonies of those who lived through the 1985 quake. She brings the same rigor to ''Massacre in Mexico,'' which features voices of survivors of the Oct. 2, 1968, tragedy, when police officers and the military opened fire on unarmed students in Tlatelolco Plaza. In both books, Poniatowska reaffirms that heroism in Mexico is a fact of daily life.

This city can feel like an extension of the body for those who live here. Are there books that reflect that?

In 1977, Fernando del Paso wrote an encyclopedic novel that takes place in the center of the capital, called ''Palinuro of Mexico,'' which follows a medical student during the student movement of 1968. As he learns anatomy, he also discovers connections with the other body that surrounds him: Mexico City itself.

This organic appropriation of the urban landscape was more recently explored in ''The Body Where I Was Born,'' by Guadalupe Nettel. Her protagonist lives in the Olympic Village, a housing complex built for athletes to use during the 1968 Olympics that was later transformed into a compound for exiled Chileans and Argentines. The narrator feels alienated from her own body, and identifies an unsettling correlation between her unstable identity and the neighborhood of misfits.

In ''The Mutations,'' Jorge Comensal adds humor to this literary trend. His main character is a lawyer who loses the power to speak because of tongue cancer. A parrot becomes his confidante, leaving the man who once litigated in court silenced by his body and reliant on another species to express himself.

What bookstores should I visit?

In the south of the city, the immense Librería Gandhi, which just celebrated a half-century since its opening, has served as a substitute university for multiple generations. In the city center, Donceles Street is full of old bookstores where luck and curiosity can lead to miraculous discoveries.

Translated by Benjamin Russell.

Juan Villoro's Mexico City Reading List

''The True History of the Conquest of New Spain,'' Bernal Díaz del Castillo

''Selected Works,'' Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

''The Labyrinth of Solitude,'' Octavio Paz

''Where the Air Is Clear,'' Carlos Fuentes

''Under the Volcano,'' Malcolm Lowry

''The Plumed Serpent,'' D.H. Lawrence

''The Savage Detectives,'' Roberto Bolaño

''On the Plain of Snakes,'' Paul Theroux

''Hurricane Season,'' Fernanda Melchor

''The Story of My Teeth,'' Valeria Luiselli

''Mexican Postcards,'' Carlos Monsiváis

''Horizontal Vertigo: A City Called Mexico,'' Juan Villoro

''Nothing, Nobody'' and ''Massacre in Mexico,'' Elena Poniatowska

''Palinuro of Mexico,'' Fernando del Paso

''The Body Where I Was Born,'' Guadalupe Nettel

''The Mutations,'' Jorge Comensal

Juan Villoro's award-winning writing crosses genres and includes ''The Reef,'' a dystopian novel about tourism that is being adapted for television, and ''The Wild Book,'' about a book that refuses to be read, which has been translated into more than 10 languages and is being adapted into a movie by the actor and director Gael García Bernal.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/31/books/mexico-city-books.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/31/books/mexico-city-books.html)

**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page BR17.

**Load-Date:** November 27, 2022

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[***Tillie Olsen and the Barriers to Creativity***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6299-2K51-JBG3-608G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 26, 2021 Friday 10:08 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 380 words

**Highlight:** A. O. Scott discusses Olsen’s work, and Wendy Lower talks about “The Ravine: A Family, a Photograph, a Holocaust Massacre Revealed.”

**Body**

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A.O. Scott, a critic at large and the co-chief film critic for The Times, returns to the Book Review’s podcast this week to discuss the work of [*Tillie Olsen*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-book-review/id120315179?mt=2), the latest subject in his essay series The Americans, about writers who give a sense of the country’s complex identity. Olsen, who died in 2007 at 94, was known best as the author of “Tell Me a Riddle,” a collection of three short stories and a novella published in 1961. She also wrote rigorous depictions of ***working-class*** families, conveying the costs of living for burdened mothers, wives and daughters.

“I think people should read her now for a few different reasons,” Scott says. “I was really drawn to this idea of the difficulty of writing, and the ways that our other responsibilities and the fatigue of living can make it hard to write. I think I related to this very much in this year. One of the themes in her stories is tiredness, is just the physical and mental fatigue of being alive and how hard that can make it to create anything.”

Wendy Lower visits the podcast to discuss [*“The Ravine: A Family, a Photograph, a Holocaust Massacre Revealed.”*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-book-review/id120315179?mt=2) In the book, Lower, a historian of the Holocaust, considers a photograph taken in October 1941 that shows several men shooting a woman who holds the hand of a small boy.

“Most people think that we know all there is to know about the Holocaust,” Lower says, “and this is an important example of how these records are just being declassified now from various countries that were involved in the Holocaust or occupied by the Nazis.”

Also on this week’s episode, Tina Jordan looks back at Book Review history during this year of its 125th anniversary; Alexandra Alter has news from the publishing world; and Parul Sehgal and Jennifer Szalai talk about books they’ve recently reviewed. Pamela Paul is the host.

Here are the books discussed by The Times’s critics this week:

* [*“100 Boyfriends”*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-book-review/id120315179?mt=2)by Brontez Purnell

1. [*“Until Justice Be Done”*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-book-review/id120315179?mt=2)by Kate Masur

We would love to hear your thoughts about this episode, and about the Book Review’s podcast in general. You can send them to [*books@nytimes.com*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-book-review/id120315179?mt=2).

PHOTO: Tillie Olsen with her daughter Laurie. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jill Krementz, all rights reserved FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 30, 2021

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[***On the Gulf Coast, a Quiet Hurricane Season (So Far!) Brings Little Relief***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:669V-2P71-JBG3-617X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 5, 2022 Monday 23:06 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1249 words

**Byline:** Rick Rojas

**Highlight:** The season has gotten off to an unusually calm start, but the absence of storms has only ratcheted up the anxiety.

**Body**

IOWA, La. — In a community still etched with the scars of past storms that charged in from the Gulf of Mexico, the congregants at St. Pius X begin each service this time of year by petitioning God with the same solemn appeal: Please, spare us.

“We live in the shadow of a danger over which we have no control,” they say, repeating the prayer at every Mass from the start of hurricane season in June through the end in November. “The Gulf, like a provoked and angry giant, can awaken from its seeming lethargy, overstep its conventional boundaries, invade our land, and spread chaos and disaster.”

But so far this year, there has been no invasion. Any chaos and disaster are the residuals of devastating hurricanes that pummeled this stretch of the Louisiana coast two years ago.

It has been a hurricane season without hurricanes. But the quiet, however appreciated, does not bring much comfort.

“Who knows what next week holds?” said the Rev. Jeffrey Starkovich, the pastor at St. Pius X, a Catholic parish in Ragley, La., an unincorporated community about 20 miles north of Lake Charles. “You can’t rest. You can’t be confident it’s going to stay quiet.”

Last month was the first August in 25 years without a named storm in the Atlantic Ocean. No hurricanes have made landfall this year in the United States. And though hurricane season spans six months, it is this time of year — from late-August through October — when the season typically packs its most powerful punch.

A weather system named Danielle strengthened last week into a Category 1 storm, becoming the first hurricane of the season; it weakened briefly to a tropical storm before regaining hurricane status. Entering the week, Danielle cut a meandering path over the Atlantic and posed little threat to land.

In a part of the world where so many routines and rituals are shaped by the rhythms of hurricane season, the relative calm has done anything but inspire complacency. Instead, it has offered communities often in the path of hurricanes yet another vivid illustration of how capricious nature can be.

“We really don’t have any sighs of relief until hurricane season is completely over,” said Nic Hunter, the mayor of Lake Charles, a ***working class*** city in southwestern Louisiana still staggering its way back from a powerful pair of storms in 2020. “With all we’ve been through, I don’t think anyone wants to test fate.”

The very existence of this article and others like it is a source of considerable unease. Asked about hurricane season while she and a friend were outside working on a lawn mower last week, Ricki Lonidier pressed her finger to her lips and glared.

“Don’t speak it into existence!” her friend Richelle Wiley said.

But she knew their luck would last only so long. “We know it’s coming,” she said. “It’s inevitable.”

That evening, the humid air was thick with mosquitoes. She took it as a sign of brewing trouble.

Scientists still expect an “above normal” hurricane season this year, with 14 to 20 named storms in the Atlantic and up to 10 of those strengthening into hurricanes. Last year, there were 21 named storms. The year before that set a record with 30.

On the Gulf Coast, hurricanes are more than just weather events. Their names — Audrey, Katrina, Rita, Ike, Laura — become chronological reference points for marking history. Chain-link fences are often referred to as hurricane fences, and for several years, a newspaper on the Texas coast called its weekly entertainment guide “cat5,” for a Category 5 hurricane, because, well, why not?

Like clockwork, around June, hurricane-themed public service announcements start filling commercial breaks on TV and radio and appearing on highway signs. It is time to start stockpiling water, canned goods and batteries. It is time to use up the food in the freezer so you will not have to toss out too much when a storm surely will knock out power.

Then, the anxiety sets in.

“It’s kind of like the proverbial sword of Damocles — it hangs over your head,” said Bishop Glen John Provost of the Diocese of Lake Charles, who leads worshipers through a “Mass to Avert the Storms” every year at the beginning of hurricane season. “The apprehension grows from the unknown.”

But in recent years, along this slice of the Louisiana coast, the tumult and torment of a hurricane have become far less abstract. A changing climate has intensified the threat, and powerful storms are likely to become more frequent.

In 2020, Hurricane Laura made landfall in Cameron Parish, south of Lake Charles, as a Category 4 storm with 150-mile-per-hour winds — one of the most powerful storms to strike Louisiana. Roughly six weeks later, Hurricane Delta hit, cutting a nearly identical path. “What wasn’t taken out by Laura was finished by Delta,” Curtis Prejean said last week as he sat on his back porch with his wife, Shirley.

In the communities in and around Lake Charles, the recovery had been long and uneven. Mr. Prejean has a brother who has been living in a camper for two years. Ms. Wiley’s home had been stripped down to its studs inside and the outside was still battered. She is in a constant fight to fend off black mold.

The next storm could take what little some have left.

“We were talking about the hurricanes yesterday,” Ms. Wiley said, “and reality is stopping me, because I have nowhere to go. I’m about to be homeless.”

During one recent storm, the Prejeans put down a mattress pad in the hallway of the modest home where they have lived for 33 years and rode it out with two dogs and a cat. The house vibrated, and the noise was terrifying. “I told my husband we’re never doing that again,” Ms. Prejean said.

“I’m going to stay for a Cat. 1,” Mr. Prejean said. “A Cat. 2 …” He shrugged. That’s where he was unsure.

No matter the category, Curtis Goodwin — or as everyone knows him, Warrior War Dog — vowed to stay put. Blue tarps covered parts of his roof, and his exterior walls were still damaged. But he had fortified part of his house with the expectation that his family and dogs would pile inside.

“I’m going to stay right here, and I’m going to ride it out,” he said.

He knew what his cousin and her family had gone through when they left town in anticipation of Hurricane Laura. A few frightening hours at home were better than the weeks of frustration and turbulence that come with evacuating, he reasoned.

Katina Jackson, his cousin, was gone for several months. First, she fled her home in Lake Charles for San Antonio. On the way, the axle on her car broke. If it were not for a mechanic giving her a deal, her family would have been stranded. They stayed in hotels in San Antonio and Fort Worth before going home.

The return of hurricane season dredged up all of that.

“It’s just going to be catastrophic again,” Ms. Jackson said outside her cousin’s house, helping her daughter take out her braids on a hot but otherwise pleasant evening. “I feel like it’s always quiet before the storm.”

A few minutes later, ominous clouds that had been lurking in the distance swarmed the neighborhood in darkness, and a surge of lightning ripped through the sky.

PHOTOS: Ricki Lonidier and Richelle Wiley at a neighbor’s house in Iowa, La. “It’s inevitable,” Ms. Wiley said of storms’ return.; Curtis Goodwin says he has fortified part of his house. “I’m going to stay right here, and I’m going to ride it out,” he said.; Susie Fawvor in her family home, which was built in 1915. It was damaged in Hurricane Laura and still needs repairs. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY EMILY KASK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 5, 2022

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[***Nonbinary Joan of Arc Causes a Stir***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:669T-P951-JBG3-60K9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 5, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1251 words

**Byline:** By Alex Marshall

**Body**

Even before the production debuted, it had inflamed a rancorous debate about sex and gender that plays out almost daily in Britain.

LONDON -- When the playwright Charlie Josephine watched the first performance of their play ''I, Joan'' at Shakespeare's Globe last week, they sat in the theater, wracked with nerves.

The play, based on the story of Joan of Arc, is Josephine's first on a major London stage. But that was not the only reason that the playwright, who identifies as transgender, queer and nonbinary, and uses the pronoun they, was anxious. Throughout last month, ''I, Joan'' had been at the center of a media furor in Britain because of Josephine's decision to depict Joan of Arc as nonbinary.

In the play, which runs at the Globe through Oct. 22, Joan of Arc comes to terms with their gender identity while inspiring French soldiers to repel English forces from their soil. ''I'm not a girl,'' Joan says at one point. ''I do not fit that word.''

When The Daily Mail, a tabloid newspaper, reported details of the Globe production in August, it led to a barrage of complaints on social media and in print. Allison Pearson, a columnist for The Daily Telegraph, a conservative newspaper, wrote that recasting Joan of Arc as nonbinary was ''an insult.'' Sophie Walker, a former leader of Britain's Women's Equality Party, wrote on Twitter that when she ''was a little girl, Joan of Arc presented thrilling possibilities about what one young girl could do against massed ranks of men. Rewriting her as not female and presenting it as progress is a massive disappointment.''

Before anyone had even seen it, the Globe's show touched a nerve in Britain, where a perceived conflict between the rights of women, and transgender and nonbinary people, has ignited a furious debate that plays out almost daily in the news media, in lawmakers' speeches and in the courts. Some feminists in Britain have long called for the maintenance of rights based on biological sex, rather than gender identity, which they say threatens women's-only spaces. Many transgender and nonbinary people say those campaigns discriminate against them and create a hostile environment.

The story of Joan of Arc -- a 15th-century teenage girl who is said to have heeded God's instructions to put on men's clothing and lead French soldiers in battle, only to be tried for heresy and burned at the stake -- has been the subject of plays for centuries. Daniel Hobbins, a historian at the University of Notre Dame, said many of those depictions played fast and loose with historical truth. Shakespeare, in ''Henry VI, Part 1,'' portrayed Joan of Arc as a witch, in keeping with British views at the time, Hobbins said. In the early 19th century, Friedrich Schiller, in ''The Maid of Orleans,'' showed Joan falling in love with an English knight. ''That didn't happen,'' Hobbins said. ''She has been reimagined forever to suit contemporary needs.''

Lucy Delap, a professor of gender history at the University of Cambridge, said Josephine's reinvention of Joan of Arc had fed into a debate in Britain that had become ''so heightened'' that there was little communication between the two sides. A play like ''I, Joan'' could have been a way to open a conversation that would cross that divide, she said, but it had instead become a ''useful dog whistle'' for people ''who were hot under the collar about trans issues.''

Heather Binning of the Women's Rights Network, a group that aims ''to defend the sex-based rights of women,'' said in an email that she objected to ''I, Joan'' because a nonbinary identity was ''a 21st-century idea.'' Joan of Arc ''existed in a time where her struggles were that of being a woman,'' she wrote. ''Being female, and the biological sex of her body, lies at the root of this story.''

Binning said she thought ''I, Joan'' was ''trying to attract attention by riding on the wave of gender identity ideology that is sweeping not just the U.K., but many other countries.''

Sitting on the roof terrace of the Globe's offices last week, Josephine, the playwright, said they had anticipated most of the complaints, and felt they were misguided. The play was not trying to erase women from history, Josephine said. It was meant to open up new ways of thinking about a historical figure. If anyone wanted to keep thinking of Joan as a young woman, they said, ''then, cool -- you still can.''

Josephine, 33, said the French martyr's story had meant little to them growing up in a ***working-class*** family in Hemel Hempstead, southern England. The Globe asked them to write the play last year; the playwright's main concern, at first, was nothing to do with gender, but how to talk about Joan's religious beliefs in a way that would resonate with a largely nonreligious theatergoing audience.

Josephine said the decision to make Joan nonbinary came after studying Joan's life and realizing that Joan of Arc had been willing to die at the stake rather than stop wearing men's clothing. This was ''not a casual fashion statement,'' Josephine said. ''It was a deep need for them.'' Josephine wanted to depict what it would have been like for ''a young person in a female body, who is questioning gender in a very different society than what we live in now,'' they said. ''My younger self really needed a protagonist like this,'' they added.

Michelle Terry, the Globe's artistic director, said the playhouse had a history of causing a stir by playing with gender onstage. In 2003, Mark Rylance, the company's artistic director at the time, upset some patrons with all-female productions of ''The Taming of the Shrew'' and ''Richard III.'' More recently, Terry said she received complaints for playing Hamlet there in 2018, and again this year, when the Globe toured a production of ''Julius Caesar'' in which the main male characters were played by women.

''Everyone's got an idea of how plays should be done and how historical figures should be treated,'' she said. All ''I, Joan'' was doing, Terry said, was asking, ''Who is Joan for now?''

For all the media fuss, the one place where few people seemed concerned about Joan of Arc's gender was in the auditorium of the Globe itself. At a recent performance of ''I, Joan,'' the audience of nearly 1,000 was made up of the theater's usual mix of British theater lovers, tourists and school groups. At 7:30 p.m., Isobel Thom, who plays Joan, walked onstage and began the show's opening speech: ''Trans people are sacred. We are the divine.'' The monologue was interrupted by cheers of support.

Robin van Asselt, 23, a transgender woman from Amsterdam in the audience, said she had cried watching the ''casual queerness'' onstage. Joan's ''aggressive push to be seen and respected'' as nonbinary ''was just so cathartic,'' van Asselt added.

In interviews with nearly 20 more audience members, no one said they had a problem with a nonbinary Joan of Arc. Wanda Forsythe, 72, a retired college administrator on vacation from Toronto, said she ''didn't feel offended as a woman -- just that it could have been done a bit better, and shorter.'' (The show runs almost three hours.)

Jackie Warren, 62, a retired government official, said she and her husband came to two plays at the Globe every year and had picked ''I, Joan'' at random. Portraying Joan as nonbinary was ''really clever,'' Warren said.

''I'm old, aren't I?'' she added, ''so I don't understand a lot of it. I just think we need to open our hearts to everybody, and I can't understand why we can't.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/01/theater/joan-of-arc-nonbinary-globe.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/01/theater/joan-of-arc-nonbinary-globe.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Isobel Thom, center, plays Joan of Arc as a teenager questioning their gender identity in ''I, Joan,'' at London's Globe Theater. (C1)

Right, a scene from ''I, Joan.'' Joan of Arc ''has been reimagined forever to suit contemporary needs,'' said the historian Daniel Hobbins. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HELEN MURRAY) (C4)

**Load-Date:** September 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Trump and Sanders Opened Doors. Inflation Is Closing Them.; Ross Douthat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65PB-DGN1-DXY4-X4M9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1053 words

**Byline:** Ross Douthat

**Highlight:** What a climate of fiscal constraint means for the populist right and the socialist left.

**Body**

There were many bad things about the period in American politics between Donald Trump’s escalator descent in summer 2015 and the arrival of the Covid pandemic: chaos, polarization, corruption, hysteria, the usual list.

But one notable good thing about that period was the return of intellectual ferment and policy ambition. Effectively, both Trump and Bernie Sanders demonstrated that more things were possible in American politics than had appeared the case in the dreary mid-Obama era, and populists and socialists rushed to fill the space they’d cleared — with ideas for right-wing industrial and family policy, with Medicare for All and the Green New Deal.

But you could argue that what really created this new sense of possibility, what helped Trump defeat the Republican establishment and lifted the Sanders campaigns in 2016 and (prepandemic) 2020, was the sense that America had more room to just spend money than the establishment in the Obama era had believed.

When deficits skyrocketed during the Great Recession, not just Tea Partyers but also lots of respectable centrists assumed that there were real inflation and debt-crisis risks on the horizon. In this landscape, Washington became obsessed with fiscal grand bargains, and any kind of policy innovation seemed to require brutal pay-fors: If you wanted new liberal social programs, you needed sweeping tax increases; if you wanted “reform-conservative” support for work and family, you needed sweeping entitlement reform.

Except that the inflation expectation was wrong, and the American economy chugged along below full capacity. As this became apparent, the green-eyeshade spirit gradually dissolved, and socialism and populism took over for the Simpson-Bowles commission and Paul Ryan’s budgets. The idea of pay-fors didn’t go away entirely: One obstacle to the major infrastructure bill that Trump promised and never delivered was congressional Republicans [*posturing*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2018/03/29/trump-promised-1-5-trillion-in-infrastructure-spending-hes-1-percent-of-the-way-there) as deficit hawks, and Sanders famously [*feuded*](https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/11/4/20946215/sanders-warren-medicare-payroll-tax) with Elizabeth Warren over how to pay for their overlapping Medicare proposals. But mostly Republicans returned to a deficits-don’t-matter insouciance, while the left had its own intellectual apparatus, modern monetary theory, to justify spending to the moon.

In certain ways the policy response to the pandemic was the apotheosis of this trend: bipartisan spending bills, extraordinary spending levels, negligible concern about the deficit. But today the Covid relief bills look like an endpoint as well as a peak. In effect, the temporary crisis spending filled in all the fiscal space that policy entrepreneurs had envisioned being filled by permanent commitments. We saved businesses and propped up (and then some) state and local governments; we didn’t institute Medicare for All or a permanent expansion of the child tax credit.

And then, at last, inflation made a comeback — and just like that, the era of free-lunch policymaking came to an end.

That end may not be permanent; we don’t know yet what the inflation rate or the economy will look like in 2024. But right now it feels as if both ambitious socialists and creative populists had a window of opportunity for unconstrained policymaking that opened in the mid-2010s, lasted through the Trump presidency and slammed closed under Joe Biden.

An atmosphere of constraint does not preclude all legislative creativity. There are certain things that Democrats can fund just by raising taxes on the rich, for instance, and perhaps some version of Build Back Better that balances new spending with upper-bracket tax hikes can still emerge from the long courtship of Joe Manchin. Among Republicans, Mitt Romney’s family-benefit [*proposal*](https://www.romney.senate.gov/romney-offers-path-provide-greater-financial-security-american-families/) pays for itself with reforms to the welfare state and the tax code; presumably other ideas from the populist right could do the same.

But given America’s existing fiscal commitments, the return of inflation deals a real blow to grand ambitions on the left, because there are few signs that the median voter (or the typical wealthy Democratic donor) is prepared to accept tax increases on the scale required to pay for the full Sanders or Ocasio-Cortezan agenda. It also creates substantial problems for politicians trying to hold together a downscale-upscale coalition on the right. Ron DeSantis, for instance, has flourished by attacking wokeness in schools while also [*raising*](https://www.news4jax.com/news/local/2022/03/21/gov-desantis-to-approve-800m-in-floridas-budget-for-teacher-raises) teacher salaries, but it’s hard to imagine his donors would be enthusiastic about a similar approach nationally if it required higher taxes on the rich.

This doesn’t mean that either populism or socialism is about to disappear. As Patrick Brown [*writes*](https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2022/06/14/trump-populists-compassionate-conservatism-00039136) in Politico, with the ebbing of libertarian and corporate influence on the party, Republicans seeking a ***working-class*** conservatism have a more “open ideological field” for their ambitions than in the past. And there’s a similar dynamic among Democrats, where the key inflation hawks in the Biden era have been gadflies like Manchin and Larry Summers, with the core of the party, relative to the Obama era, standing way off to the left.

But fiscal conditions, the inflation rate and donor pressure still matter, no matter which ideological faction has the upper hand. And there are a lot of ways for ideology to manifest itself, some of them requiring less fiscal space than others. What happened on the left after Sanders lost to Biden and the George Floyd protests took off in 2020, the [*dramatic shift*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/23/opinion/bernie-sanders-protesters-democrats.html) from economic to cultural revolution, offers a case study in how radical energy gets redirected into culture war when its economic ambitions seem blocked off.

The right has long experience with this kind of redirection, and ample enthusiasm for cultural conflict. So expect more of it, from both sides, under conditions of fiscal constraint. And expect a slow-dawning realization among the serious-minded socialists and populists that the best time to carry out their big ideas, the best moment for a radical policy departure, may have already come and gone.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY David Arky/Trunk Archive FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 15, 2022

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[***A New Star, Tire Marks and All, Arrives in Los Angeles***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:661P-TBC1-DXY4-X404-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 29, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1118 words

**Byline:** By Shawn Hubler and Soumya Karlamangla

**Body**

LOS ANGELES -- Less than three weeks ago, with fireworks, crowds and the civic joy that only a new Instagram backdrop can muster, America's second-largest city christened a stunning new $588 million landmark: a bridge that would create a ''ribbon of light'' between the downtown arts district and the historic bungalows of East Los Angeles.

With its 10 sets of white, lit arches, the glistening Sixth Street Viaduct -- as it is formally known -- replaced an 83-year-old Art Deco bridge over the concrete Los Angeles River that for generations had been a renowned Hollywood location for film noir car chases and dystopian hellscapes. Critics declared it an instant icon. Mayor Eric Garcetti, who narrated a tongue-in-cheek slow jam in the bridge's honor when construction started, called it ''a love letter'' to the city.

Now Los Angeles is loving it back.

There is so much love, in fact, that the city is considering installing speed bumps, a concrete median and climbing deterrents after Los Angeles police shut down the bridge last weekend for three nights in a row and closed it again on Tuesday night.

In the weeks since the bridge first opened, it has been besieged by Angelenos yearning to connect with it, use it and own it. First graffiti artists marked it. Then skateboarders and climbers took on the arches. Within a week, exhibitionist drivers were burning rubber, doing doughnuts, targeting the bridge for illegal street takeovers and crashing. In less than 10 days, the bridge's pristine lanes were covered with black skid marks.

''Look, unlike the Brooklyn Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge, this is the first major bridge to be built in the social media era,'' said Councilman Kevin de León, a veteran Los Angeles lawmaker and recent mayoral candidate whose district includes both the bridge and the communities that bookend it. ''Folks are trying to get their virtual fame and go viral.

''Of course, someone might ask: 'Didn't you anticipate what has happened?''' the councilman added, before answering his own question.

''No.''

Actually, the city did anticipate the taggers. The bridge's maintenance plan included daily graffiti removal, which Mr. de León said was needed within 24 hours of its opening, a buoyant celebration over the weekend of July 10 at which some 15,000 Angelenos watched fireworks, grooved to music and strolled its expanse.

Not all of the love hurt: A barber commandeered the median and gave haircuts one evening as traffic flowed by him. A tattoo artist inked a customer on the pedestrian walkway. Local street photographers caught a photo shoot for a pink-themed quinceañera with the blue sky above and the Los Angeles skyline glittering in the distance. There have been selfies galore.

Allen Rodriguez, a 25-year-old warehouse worker who grew up in Boyle Heights on the east side of the bridge, said he had imagined the project when he first heard about it and walked across with his parents when it opened. How did it compare?

''I think it's better,'' Mr. Rodriguez said. He was so impressed, in fact, that he returned the second day it was open and skated it end to end -- legally -- with his teenage brother. He pulled his phone out of his pocket to reveal a photograph of himself standing on the bridge walking path, with downtown Los Angeles behind him and, at his feet, his skateboard.

Architectural critics have compared the project to the transformative High Line of New York City. The bridge eventually will overlook a 12-acre riverbed park that will help anchor a long-term restoration of the famously concrete-covered Los Angeles River. Designed by the architect Michael Maltzan, the Sixth Street Viaduct replaces a landmark that, at 3,500 feet, was the longest bridge in California when it was built in 1932.

At one end, in those early days, was Los Angeles's city core; at the other was Boyle Heights, then a ***working class*** melting pot of Japanese, Eastern European, Russian and Mexican laborers. Underneath, the Los Angeles River was still a flood-prone body of water.

But over the generations, the old bridge became seismically unstable. Demolition began in 2016 with a three-year time frame. By then, the river was a storm channel scribbled over with graffiti, and the bridge spanned not only that hard expanse, but also freeways and railways. The downtown side had evolved from a warehouse district into an ''arts'' district so pricey that few artists could afford to live there, and Boyle Heights was struggling against gentrification to maintain its character as a majority Latino neighborhood.

The Los Angeles police chief, Michel Moore, told the city's police commission on Tuesday that most of the mischief-makers on the bridge had been from outside the communities that abut it. He compared the attraction to other Los Angeles icons, including the Hollywood sign and Venice Beach.

Still, he said, the space has quickly become known for ''outrageous antics''; as a result, the department shut down the bridge three times over the weekend, and by Tuesday had impounded six vehicles and issued more than 57 citations.

On Sunday night, he said, the city began installing speed bumps and looking into a temporary median barrier to deter spinouts and fencing to prevent people from scaling the arches.

Mr. de León said he was especially concerned about the scaling, adding, ''God forbid, someone slips.''

In the downtown loft district that has sprung up over three decades from a once drug-strewn warren of industrial warehouses and art workshops, Arthur Garcia, who works in TV and film lighting, sighed that the city had mismanaged the bridge ''in typical L.A. fashion.''

Waiting with his dog in the shade, Mr. Garcia said he worried that the bridge would draw more police to the area, which in turn would risk more clashes with its unhoused population. When civic problems erupt, he said, ''there's usually an overreaction, and the reaction is usually policing it and unfortunately that's just going to create more violence.''

In Boyle Heights, Michael Avilez, 16, said that the bridge's troubles had left him with a familiar feeling -- that this was why his community couldn't have nice things.

''We can't,'' he emphasized. ''I don't know why people do things like that.''

Manning the cash register of a Boyle Heights 7-Eleven, Darcy Gomez acknowledged that the area around her storefront was now regularly flooded with outsiders -- and, now, officers to police them. Still, she said, when she drove the bridge for the first time this month, she was stunned and even calmed by its sun-drenched beauty.

''If you put your windows down, it's really pretty and relaxing,'' Ms. Gomez said. ''I wish we took much more care of it.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/28/us/los-angeles-bridge-viaduct.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/28/us/los-angeles-bridge-viaduct.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Posing on the Sixth Street Viaduct, a new $588 million bridge in Los Angeles that may already be too popular for its own good. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** July 29, 2022

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[***Who Can Win America's Politics of Humiliation?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60T7-FM91-DXY4-X2SC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 9, 2020 Wednesday

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**Length:** 1311 words

**Byline:** By Thomas L. Friedman

**Body**

Trump or Biden?

About four years ago, without asking anybody, I changed my job description. It used to be ''New York Times foreign affairs columnist.'' Instead, I started calling myself the ''New York Times humiliation and dignity columnist.'' I even included it on my business card.

It had become so obvious to me that so much of what I'd been doing since I became a journalist in 1978 was reporting or opining about people, leaders, refugees, terrorists and nation-states acting out on their feelings of humiliation and questing for dignity -- the two most powerful human emotions.

I raise this now because the success of Joe Biden's campaign against Donald Trump may ride on his ability to speak to the sense of humiliation and quest for dignity of many Trump supporters, which Hillary Clinton failed to do.

It has been obvious ever since Trump first ran for president that many of his core supporters actually hate the people who hate Trump, more than they care about Trump or any particular action he takes, no matter how awful.

The media feed Trump's supporters a daily diet of how outrageous this or that Trump action is -- but none of it diminishes their support. Because many Trump supporters are not attracted to his policies. They're attracted to his attitude -- his willingness and evident delight in skewering the people they hate and who they feel look down on them.

Humiliation, in my view, is the most underestimated force in politics and international relations. The poverty of dignity explains so much more behavior than the poverty of money.

People will absorb hardship, hunger and pain. They will be grateful for jobs, cars and benefits. But if you make people feel humiliated, they will respond with a ferocity unlike any other emotion, or just refuse to lift a finger for you. As Nelson Mandela once observed, ''There is nobody more dangerous than one who has been humiliated.''

By contrast, if you show people respect, if you affirm their dignity, it is amazing what they will let you say to them or ask of them. Sometimes it just takes listening to them, but deep listening -- not just waiting for them to stop talking. Because listening is the ultimate sign of respect. What you say when you listen speaks more than any words.

I've seen firsthand the power of humiliation in foreign policy: Vladimir Putin's macho act after Russia's humiliation at losing the Cold War; Iraqi Sunnis who felt humiliated by a U.S. invasion force that pushed them out of Iraq's army and government, stripping them of rank and status; Israeli Sephardic Jews who felt humiliated by Ashkenazi Jewish elites, something Bibi Netanyahu has long manipulated; Palestinians feeling humiliated at Israeli checkpoints; Muslim youth in Europe feeling humiliated by the Christian majority; and China questing to become the world's dominant power, after what Chinese themselves call their ''century of humiliation'' at the hands of foreign powers.

When George Floyd was being held down by three policemen, one with a knee on his neck, as he pleaded for his mother and onlookers filmed on their phones, he was not just being restrained -- he was being humiliated. Resistance to the daily humiliations of racism has fueled the Black civil rights movement from its inception to Black Lives Matter.

In a much talked-about new book, ''The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good?'' Harvard political philosopher Michael Sandel (disclosure: he is a close friend) says ''the politics of humiliation'' is also at the heart of Trump's appeal.

''Trump was elected by tapping a wellspring of anxieties, frustrations and legitimate grievances to which the mainstream parties had no compelling answer,'' Sandel notes. These grievances ''are not only economic but also moral and cultural; they are not only about wages and jobs but also about social esteem.''

Unless Biden finds a way to speak to the sense of humiliation felt by many ***working-class*** voters, Sandel warns, even Trump's failure to deal with the pandemic may not be enough to turn these voters against him. The reason? ''Resentment borne of humiliation is the most potent political sentiment of all,'' Sandel explains.

Sandel argues that the polarized politics of our time, and the resentments that fuel it, arise, paradoxically, from a seemingly attractive ideal -- the meritocratic promise that if you work hard and go to college, you will rise. But this ideal sends a double message.

''It congratulates the winners but denigrates the losers,'' he writes, because it creates the impression that a ''college degree is a precondition for dignified work and social esteem'' -- while devaluing the contributions of those without a diploma. This has led many working people to feel that elites look down on them, creating the conditions for the ''politics of humiliation'' that Trump exploits.

''Elites have so valorized a college degree -- both as an avenue for advancement and as the basis for social esteem -- that they have difficulty understanding the hubris a meritocracy can generate, and the harsh judgment it imposes on those who have not gone to college,'' Sandel says.

''One of the deepest political divides in American politics today is between those with and those without a college degree. In the 2016 election, Trump won two-thirds of white voters without a college degree.''

Trump, who himself had been looked down on by New York City elites, understood that the familiar fight between Democrats and Republicans over how to grow the pie and how to distribute the pie was ignoring a deeper sentiment among many white ***working-class*** Americans.

These traditional Democratic voters felt that liberal elites were looking down at them, new immigrants were superseding them and foreigners were laughing at them. And Trump became the fist in the face that his voters threw back at all of them.

''Biden is right that Trump botched the pandemic, violated constitutional norms and inflamed racial tensions -- all good grounds for throwing him out of office,'' argues Sandel. ''But Biden could win this argument and still lose the election.'' He must find a way to show that he understands those who feel disrespected and are drawn to Trump for that reason -- even though most of his policies don't help them.

How? Sandel and I put our heads together and thought, well, maybe Biden should go on a tour of Trump country, focusing on rural counties and towns in the Midwest, and just listen to Trump's base, both to learn and as a sign of respect.

Then, at the first presidential debate, Biden should ignore Trump and his buffoonery and speak about what he had learned by talking to likely Trump voters.

Biden could talk about where he agrees with them and where he disagrees with them and why -- the ultimate sign of respect. That is how Biden can get at least some Trump devotees to see that ''***working-class*** Joe from Scranton'' -- not ''Billionaire Don, born with a silver spoon in his mouth''-- is the one who really hails from their side of the tracks and can be trusted (a very important word) to look out for them.

When it comes to politics, a lot of people don't listen through their ears. They listen through their gut, and Biden, more than any other Democratic leader today, has the ability to connect there.

Trump's goal in this campaign is to separate Biden from Biden voters by making it as difficult as possible for Biden voters to vote. Biden's goal should be to separate Trump from Trump voters by showing that he respects them and their fears -- even if he does not respect Trump.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: Joe Biden at a community meeting in Kenosha, Wis., last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Kriston Jae Bethel for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 10, 2020

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[***These People Could Swing the Senate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66S6-1121-JBG3-612B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 2, 2022 Wednesday

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Dining In, Dining Out / Style Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 1493 words

**Byline:** By Brett Anderson

**Body**

Hospitality workers enjoy unusual clout in Nevada, where the powerful Las Vegas culinary union is rallying members to tip close races.

LAS VEGAS -- Carlos Padilla walked to his pickup truck with a shoulder bag full of campaign literature and an agenda for shaping the future of the country. It was 20 days before the midterm elections, and Mr. Padilla, a pastry chef, was on his way out of the headquarters of the Culinary Workers Union 226.

The meeting he'd just attended was part business session, part political rally. There were energizing chants (''2-2-6!'' ''We vote, we win!'') and speeches from politicians pleading for the support of the 400 assembled servers, cooks, bussers and guest room attendants. Like Mr. Padilla, all would spend the rest of the day knocking on voters' doors in a city that has long been an electoral pivot in this swing state, and beyond.

Even in the world of organized labor, hospitality workers have never been much of a force. But campaign visits to the union hall by presidential candidates -- Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, Joe Biden -- over the years attest to this local's unusual brand: political power.

The source of that power is the union's 60,000 members, who work in the restaurants, bars, casinos and hotels that drive the economies of Las Vegas and Reno. Thanks to union-negotiated contracts, they enjoy job security and financial stability that are uncommon in hospitality businesses. Wages for members of the local average $26 per hour, according to union officials, and rise every year. The jobs come with health insurance, free training for career advancement and even help in making a down payment on a home.

Mr. Padilla, 53, is among the hundreds of members who take paid leaves of absence from their jobs (another contract provision) to campaign for candidates the union supports.

''I'm a 29-year union member,'' Mr. Padilla said. ''Anything they've ever asked me to do to help, I've done.''

The local -- often referred to by members simply as Culinary, or 226 -- hasn't always prevailed in this swing state's races. But its diverse membership includes constituencies that political professionals believe hold the keys to power. About 55 percent of members are women, and 45 percent are immigrants. The average member is a 44-year-old Latina.

Canvassing expertise is another big advantage. The union's army of hospitality workers has already knocked on more than 750,000 doors this campaign season, according to union leaders, who believe they can tip the election in favor of the largely Democratic slate they're currently supporting. Many candidates are fighting for their political lives, most notably Senator Catherine Cortez Masto, who is in a tight race against the Republican challenger Adam Laxalt that could determine which party controls the Senate.

Asked how they would counteract the union's ability to turn out voters, Mr. Laxalt's campaign responded with a statement blaming Democrats for inflation and high gasoline prices. ''I will fight for lower taxes,'' it read, ''and I will fight against government shutdowns and mandates that put workers out of a job.''

One exception to the union's Democratic tilt was its endorsement of Brian Sandoval, a Republican, in his 2014 re-election campaign for governor. Mr. Sandoval broke with his party on issues important to the union, like immigration reform and the Affordable Care Act.

No Republicans in the state legislature voted for two recent union-backed, pandemic-related bills -- one that provides workplace protections for hospitality workers, and one that guarantees their right to return to their old jobs.

Founded in 1935, the union established itself by recruiting workers from elsewhere to take jobs in this burgeoning desert city. Its ranks grew alongside Nevada's gambling industry, not always harmoniously. One strike, which began in 1991 at the Frontier casino-hotel, lasted more than six years.

Jim Manley, a political consultant who was an aide to former Senator Harry Reid, said the union became impossible to ignore in 2008, when it helped Mr. Obama beat John McCain by 12 percentage points in Nevada, even though Mr. McCain was from neighboring Arizona.

Today, the hospitality industry is Nevada's biggest private employer, and union members are entrenched in the state's power structure. Jacky Rosen, Nevada's junior senator, is a former union member and Caesar's Palace server.

Next week's elections will be the first since the death last December of Mr. Reid, a political brawler whose close relationship with the union was mutually beneficial. ''The question is whether the Reid machine is as effective as it was in the past,'' Mr. Manley said.

To win in a midterm election that seems to favor Republicans, Nevada Democrats need the union to drive up Democratic voter turnout in Clark County, which includes Las Vegas, said Jon Ralston, a veteran Nevada political journalist.

''It's that simple,'' he wrote in a text message, adding that the union ''has the bodies and experience to do it.''

Mr. Padilla started as a pastry chef at Treasure Island, a casino and hotel, nearly 30 years ago, after moving to Las Vegas from Flagstaff, Ariz. He became interested in union work when his brother-in-law, an iron worker, took him to a rally. ''Turned out it was Culinary that was holding this rally,'' he said. ''I was in awe.''

In the past two years, Mr. Padilla has spent more time canvassing than baking bread and pastries. In the run-up to the 2020 elections, when he was laid off from his job because of pandemic shutdowns, the union paid him to canvass door-to-door.

He then moved temporarily to Georgia, where he joined other hospitality workers helping Raphael Warnock win a tight runoff election that gave Democrats a one-vote Senate majority. (Union officials said canvassers would likely return to Georgia if the current Senate race goes to a runoff.)

''The people we elected are the people who helped us keep our health insurance and unemployment benefits during Covid,'' Mr. Padilla said. ''We help the people who help us.''

He brought a similar message to voters in October as he canvassed in a ***working-class*** neighborhood on the north side of town. It was in the district of Representative Steven Horsford, a former head of the Culinary Academy of Las Vegas, a school for hospitality workers run by the union.

One voter, Deborah Gallacher, told Mr. Padilla that she didn't know yet if she would vote this year, but that Mr. Horsford ''has knocked on my door. I voted for him every time he's been on the ticket.''

Mr. Padilla responded, ''It's time again.''

He worked alongside Rocio Leonardo, 30, a room cleaner at Aria Resort & Casino. Ms. Leonardo, who moved to Las Vegas from Guatemala as a child, also campaigned in 2020, although she is not a citizen and can't vote. ''I do this because it feels like something positive for my children,'' she said.

Ms. Rocio approached a house with Marine Corps and prisoner of war flags hanging from the garage. She knocked twice on the door, as dogs barked ominously. The woman who finally came to the door was on a phone call and looked upset -- until she saw Ms. Rocio's union T-shirt.

''I'm Culinary, too,'' she said. ''You've got my vote.''

Walking away, Ms. Leonardo marked the woman as ''not home'' in the voter database on her smartphone, so a campaign worker would return to make sure she voted.

Such persistence, while often tedious in practice, has delivered results.

Electing allies to public office strengthens the union's hand when negotiating on behalf of its members, said Ted Pappageorge, the union's secretary-treasurer. ''We don't do union stuff so we can win in politics,'' he said. ''We do politics so we can win in union contracts.''

The union is especially motivated this election cycle, Mr. Pappageorge said, because the five-year contracts with employers for the vast majority of its Las Vegas members will expire next year. ''We're going to have really difficult negotiations,'' he said. ''We think we may have strikes.''

The union is also pushing local politicians to support a program to combat the fast-rising cost of housing. Last year, Ms. Leonardo said landlords raised the monthly rent for the house she shares with her husband and four children to $1,400 a month, from $900.

''I thought it was a typo,'' she said.

Mr. Padilla, a father of three, brings up housing costs with as many voters as he can. When landlords raised his rent by $400 last year, he said they told him, ''There's no law in Nevada that says they can't raise the rent as much as they want.''

During a brief break from canvassing, he shook his head in dismay. ''I take this election seriously because of that,'' he said. ''There's always a fight.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/dining/las-vegas-workers-nevada-midterm-election.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/dining/las-vegas-workers-nevada-midterm-election.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, members of the Culinary Workers Union heard political speeches at the Las Vegas headquarters last month. Above, Representative Susie Lee, who is in a tight re-election battle, addressed members during a recent visit to the union hall. She was introduced by Senator Jacky Rosen (far right), a former union member and Caesar's Palace server. Left, Barack Obama spoke at the union hall before the Nevada Democratic presidential caucuses in 2008, during his first run for the White House. The union endorsed him. Bottom, Carlos Padilla canvassed with Rocio Leonardo. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAEED RAHBARAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

OZIER MUHAMMAD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page D2.

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Democrats Say Party Stumbles On Messaging***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66S6-1121-JBG3-610D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 2, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1554 words

**Byline:** By Lisa Lerer, Katie Glueck and Reid J. Epstein

**Body**

Leading lawmakers and strategists are openly doubting the party's kitchen-sink approach, saying Democrats have failed to unite around one central message.

Top Democratic officials, lawmakers and strategists are openly second-guessing their party's campaign pitch and tactics, reflecting a growing sense that Democrats have failed to coalesce around one effective message with enough time to stave off major losses in the House and possibly decisive defeats in the tightly contested Senate.

The criticisms by Democrats in the final days of the midterm elections signal mounting anxiety as Republicans hammer away with attacks over the economy and public safety. For weeks, Democrats have offered a scattershot case of their own, accusing their opponents of wanting to gut abortion rights, shred the social safety net and shake the foundations of American democracy.

Yet as the country struggles with high gas prices, record inflation and economic uncertainty, some Democrats now acknowledge that their kitchen-sink approach may be lacking.

Even among the kibitzing chorus, there's little agreement over exactly what could cost the party control of Congress. In areas where victory depends on high Black voter turnout, Democrats worry that they are not mobilizing that constituency. Others say there has been too much focus on abortion rights and too little attention on worries about crime or the cost of living. And across the country, Democrats point to an inadequate economic message and an inability to effectively herald their legislative accomplishments.

''The truth is, Democrats have done a poor job of communicating our approach to the economy,'' said Representative Elissa Slotkin, a Democrat from Michigan who is in one of this year's most competitive races. ''I have no idea if I'm going to win my election -- it's going to be a nail biter. But if you can't speak directly to people's pocketbook and talk about our vision for the economy, you're just having half a conversation.''

Ms. Slotkin is far from alone in her criticism.

Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont has sounded alarm bells that Democrats are struggling to motivate ***working-class*** voters. Former President Barack Obama, who is traveling the country to campaign in some of the tightest races for Senate and governor, urged Democrats not to be ''a buzz kill'' by making people feel as if they were ''walking on eggshells'' when it came to issues like race and gender.

And several prominent Democrats have worried that their party has not fully acknowledged the pain of rising prices -- or effectively pointed the finger at Republicans over the higher costs.

''If Republicans are going to attack on inflation, you should turn to them and say, 'What the hell have you done?' The answer is nothing,'' said Senator Bob Casey, Democrat of Pennsylvania. ''And I think Democrats should talk about that more.''

Asked last week whether it was too late to adopt such an approach, Mr. Casey added, ''We've got to hustle and do it quick.''

While many of the party's Senate candidates are outpacing President Biden's underwater approval rating, which is below his national average in several key swing states, strategists warn that there are limits to how much candidates can defy this year's political gravity -- no matter their message.

Some Democrats believe that time has simply run out for any significant shift in strategy that could change the fundamental dynamics of the race.

In Wisconsin, the focus of the campaigns for both Senate and governor have shifted to crime after tens of millions of dollars of Republican attacks.

Only in recent weeks have Democrats tried to fight back, promoting Gov. Tony Evers's efforts to direct funding to law enforcement agencies.

''It's late in the game,'' said David Bowen, a Democratic state assemblyman from Milwaukee. ''Especially as you get bogged down into what is the proper strategy to use in some of these races.''

In the final stretch of the race, top Democrats, including Mr. Biden and Mr. Obama, are emphasizing economic concerns, accusing Republicans of wanting to gut the social safety net. At the same time, they are issuing stark warnings about the threats some Republicans pose to the democratic process, with election deniers on the ballot in critical races around the country.

''If there was an asteroid headed toward Earth -- it's going to land in like two weeks -- if you went into the Republican caucus and said, 'What do you want to do?' They'd say, 'We need a tax break for the wealthy,''' Mr. Obama said over the weekend in Wisconsin as he criticized Senator Ron Johnson, a Republican. ''That's their only economic policy.''

As president, Mr. Obama saw his party suffer heavy midterm losses. But this year, he is regarded by many Democrats as their most powerful surrogate by far. The problem, some say, is that there is only one of him.

''If he were running in every state, we'd win every Senate race, but he's a once-of-a-generation talent,'' said Representative Ro Khanna, Democrat of California, adding that watching the former president's remarks should be required ''homework'' for the party. ''He shouldn't be the only one delivering the basic economic message. We should have 20, 30 people capable of doing that and doing that around the country.''

Mr. Khanna, who said that Mr. Biden also understood the urgency of those issues, questioned whether the ''consultant class'' had grasped the potency of that message in time, amid an intense focus on abortion rights and on protecting democracy. Both of those are important, Mr. Khanna said, but prioritizing them should not come at the expense of pocketbook matters.

''Consultants, they looked at it, said, 'Well, we're down on the economy, well, maybe we shouldn't talk about it,''' he said. ''That's a mistake! No, we need to press our case.''

Democrats have spent nearly $320 million on ads focused on abortion rights, more than 10 times as much as the $31 million they have spent on spots about inflation, according to data from AdImpact, a media tracking firm. They have spent nearly $140 million on crime ads.

Representative Troy A. Carter Sr. of Louisiana, who defeated a left-wing rival to win a special election last year, said he worried that the party's accomplishments weren't breaking through. He judges the message by his ''barbershop guys'' -- who, he said, have not heard much about the party's work lowering the cost of insulin, championing the child tax credit or providing assistance to historically Black colleges and universities.

''We have not done as good a job as we could or we should communicating with the American people,'' he said last week outside a campaign event in Atlanta for Senator Raphael Warnock of Georgia. ''I know that from my barbershop discussions.''

That concern was echoed by others, who worry that Black voters haven't been sufficiently motivated to vote.

''Only thing I'm worried about is African American turnout,'' said former Gov. Ed Rendell, Democrat of Pennsylvania. ''I'm worried that it won't be as strong as we need.''

Finger-pointing is typically reserved for the days and weeks after the election. The fact that it's coming with a week left to go underscores how Democratic hopes have fallen since the summer, when the party seemed to be outrunning political history. For two decades, the president's party has lost seats in the midterm elections, as voters have expressed their discontent with the party in power.

This year, Democrats have tried to frame the election not as a referendum on an unpopular Mr. Biden but as a choice between two very different visions for America, an argument the president made before a gathering of Pennsylvania Democrats last week.

That is not an easy case for Democrats to make. For months, Republicans have slammed their opponents with a far simpler message: The economy is bad, worries about crime and immigration are rising and the party in control is to blame.

Gov. Brian Kemp of Georgia, a Republican, described the midterms as ''a pocketbook election.''

''Democrats around the country, the last two weeks in the campaign, have now started talking about violent crime and going after street gangs,'' Mr. Kemp told supporters after a campaign stop in the Atlanta suburbs on Tuesday. ''I can't imagine what's woken them up.''

For weeks, much of the intraparty critique has centered on whether Democrats made a mistake by leaning too heavily in their messaging on the backlash to the Supreme Court's decision overturning Roe v. Wade. Since June, when that ruling arrived in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, some Democrats hoped they could overcome economic anxieties and the pull of history with promises of preserving abortion rights and castigating Republican extremism.

''I definitely think that we weren't wrong by focusing on Dobbs when it happened, because it was so earth-shattering,'' said Chuck Rocha, a Democratic strategist who focuses on Latino voters. ''The question should have been: Could we have done that and packaged together economic populism along with the Dobbs decision? I think we are closing with the best we can do.''

But, he said, there are ''so many headwinds.''

Maya King contributed reporting from Lawrenceville, Ga.Maya King contributed reporting from Lawrenceville, Ga.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/01/us/politics/midterm-elections-worrying-democrats-strategy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/01/us/politics/midterm-elections-worrying-democrats-strategy.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Abortion rights supporters prepared for an event last month in Madison, Wis., hosted by Gov. Tony Evers, a Democrat running for re-election. Many voters have changed their focus to the economy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HAIYUN JIANG/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Former President Barack Obama rallied with Democrats in Michigan on Saturday. He and President Biden have increasingly emphasized economic concerns, but critics say it may be too late. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EMILY ELCONIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18) This article appeared in print on page A1, A18.

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Questlove's Documentary 'Summer of Soul' Wins at Sundance***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61XK-0NY1-JBG3-63WD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 4, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 343 words

**Byline:** By Stephanie Goodman

**Body**

The documentary took home two prizes while ''Coda'' won several honors for its fictional tale of a hearing teenager in a deaf family.

A documentary about the 1969 Harlem Cultural Festival, often called the Black Woodstock, and a feature about a hearing daughter in a deaf family took top honors Tuesday night at the first virtual edition of the Sundance Film Festival.

In the nonfiction category, both the U.S. Grand Jury Prize and the Audience Award went to ''Summer of Soul,'' a potent mix of never-before-seen concert footage and history lesson by the first-time filmmaker Ahmir Thompson, better known as Questlove.

Among dramatic features, both the U.S. Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award went to ''Coda,'' an acronym for ''child of deaf adults.'' Sian Heder (''Tallulah'') wrote and directed the crowd-pleasing tale starring Emilia Jones as a teenager who serves as an interpreter for her ***working-class*** family in Gloucester, Mass. Additionally, Heder won the directing award for American features, and the film won a special honor for its acting ensemble.

In the world-cinema feature competition, ''Hive,'' which follows the wife of a soldier missing in the Kosovo war, won both the grand jury and audience prizes as well as the directing award for its filmmaker, Blerta Basholli. Among world-cinema documentaries, ''Flee,'' Jonas Poher Rasmussen's animated look at an Afghan refugee in Denmark, won the grand jury prize. The audience award went to ''Writing With Fire,'' from Rintu Thomas and Sushmit Ghosh, about India's only newspaper run by women of the Dalit, or ''untouchable'' caste.

Other directing winners included, for American documentaries, Natalia Almada, whose ''Users'' examines the human costs of technology, and in the world cinema documentary category, Hogir Hirori for ''Sabaya,'' about an effort to save Yazidi women and girls held captive by ISIS.

Because of the pandemic, this edition of the festival, which officially ends Wednesday, was pared back and conducted largely online. For a complete list of winners, see sundance.org.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/02/movies/sundance-winners-questlove.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/02/movies/sundance-winners-questlove.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mavis Staples, far left, and Mahalia Jackson in ''Summer of Soul,'' which won the U.S. Grand Jury Prize and the Audience Award at Sundance. The film is the directorial debut for Ahmir Thompson, better known as the musician Questlove. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MASS DISTRACTION MEDIA)

**Load-Date:** February 4, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Los Angeles Enjoys Its New Bridge a Little Too Much***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:661H-6HK1-JBG3-60JK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 28, 2022 Thursday 09:44 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1133 words

**Byline:** Shawn Hubler and Soumya Karlamangla

**Highlight:** The long-awaited Sixth Street Viaduct has proved to be irresistible to pedestrians and neighborhood residents — but also graffiti artists and exhibitionist drivers.

**Body**

LOS ANGELES — Less than three weeks ago, with fireworks, crowds and the civic joy that only a [*new Instagram backdrop*](https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/6thstreetbridge/?hl=en) can muster, America’s second-largest city christened a stunning new $588 million landmark: a bridge that would create a “ribbon of light” between the downtown arts district and the historic bungalows of East Los Angeles.

With its 10 sets of white, lit arches, the glistening Sixth Street Viaduct — as it is formally known — replaced an 83-year-old Art Deco bridge over the concrete Los Angeles River that for generations had been a [*renowned Hollywood location*](https://vimeo.com/153588729) for film noir car chases and dystopian hellscapes. Critics declared it an [*instant icon*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/story/2022-06-29/architect-michael-maltzan-6th-street-viaduct-la-river-bridge). Mayor Eric Garcetti, who narrated a tongue-in-cheek [*slow jam*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_3tTv4lPds) in the bridge’s honor when construction started, called it “a love letter” to the city.

Now Los Angeles is loving it back.

There is so much love, in fact, that the city is considering installing speed bumps, a concrete median and climbing deterrents after Los Angeles police shut down the bridge last weekend for three nights in a row and closed it again [*on Tuesday night*](https://twitter.com/LAPDHQ/status/1552142947725955073).

In the weeks since the bridge first opened, it has been besieged by Angelenos yearning to connect with it, use it and own it. First graffiti artists marked it. Then skateboarders and climbers [*took on the arches.*](https://twitter.com/awalkerinLA/status/1548051523229208578) Within a week, exhibitionist drivers were [*burning rubber*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nU1w_Ha1Bos), [*doing doughnuts*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjhS_dstEeY), targeting the bridge for illegal street takeovers and [*crashing*](https://www.lapdonline.org/newsroom/misdemeanor-hit-and-run-traffic-collision-on-6th-street-viaduct-driver-charged-nr22206ll/). In less than 10 days, the bridge’s pristine lanes were covered with [*black skid marks*](https://www.dailynews.com/2022/07/23/sixth-street-bridge-crash-followed-by-street-takeover-fireworks-and-vandalism-says-lapd/).

“Look, unlike the Brooklyn Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge, this is the first major bridge to be built in the social media era,” said Councilman Kevin de León, a veteran Los Angeles lawmaker and recent mayoral candidate whose district includes both the bridge and the communities that bookend it. “Folks are trying to get their virtual fame and go viral.

“Of course, someone might ask: ‘Didn’t you anticipate what has happened?’” the councilman added, before answering his own question.

“No.”

Actually, the city did anticipate the taggers. The bridge’s maintenance plan included daily graffiti removal, which Mr. de León said was needed within 24 hours of its opening, a buoyant celebration over the weekend of July 10 at which some 15,000 Angelenos watched fireworks, grooved to music and strolled its expanse.

Not all of the love hurt: [*A barber*](https://twitter.com/boyle_hts/status/1549966410457042944) commandeered the median and gave haircuts one evening as traffic flowed by him. A [*tattoo artist*](https://www.tiktok.com/@rockrollg/video/7123396919094758698?_t=8UHgALsdIzO&amp;_r=1) inked a customer on the pedestrian walkway. Local street photographers caught a photo shoot for a pink-themed [*quinceañera*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CgZ8ZyfvSnV/) with the blue sky above and the Los Angeles skyline glittering in the distance. There have been selfies galore.

Allen Rodriguez, a 25-year-old warehouse worker who grew up in Boyle Heights on the east side of the bridge, said he had imagined the project when he first heard about it and walked across with his parents when it opened. How did it compare?

“I think it’s better,” Mr. Rodriguez said. He was so impressed, in fact, that he returned the second day it was open and skated it end to end — legally — with his teenage brother. He pulled his phone out of his pocket to reveal a photograph of himself standing on the bridge walking path, with downtown Los Angeles behind him and, at his feet, his skateboard.

Architectural critics have [*compared*](https://www.architectmagazine.com/design/urbanism-planning/letter-from-los-angeles-reviving-the-river_o) the project to the transformative High Line of New York City. The bridge eventually will overlook a 12-acre riverbed park that will help anchor a long-term restoration of the famously concrete-covered Los Angeles River. Designed by the architect [*Michael Maltzan*](https://www.mmaltzan.com/projects/sixth-street-viaduct/), the Sixth Street Viaduct replaces a landmark that, at 3,500 feet, was the longest bridge in California when it was built in 1932.

At one end, in those early days, was Los Angeles’s city core; at the other was Boyle Heights, then a ***working class*** melting pot of Japanese, Eastern European, Russian and Mexican laborers. Underneath, the Los Angeles River was still a flood-prone body of water.

But over the generations, the old bridge became seismically unstable. Demolition began in 2016 with a three-year time frame. By then, the river was a storm channel scribbled over with graffiti, and the bridge spanned not only that hard expanse, but also freeways and railways. The downtown side had evolved from a warehouse district into an “arts” district so pricey that few artists could afford to live there, and Boyle Heights was struggling against gentrification to maintain its character as a majority Latino neighborhood.

The Los Angeles police chief, Michel Moore, [*told the city’s police commission*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCfw7NYTseQ&amp;list=PLLBukuSZNkDzDh4B9FvCGg63E9W05EVZr&amp;index=25) on Tuesday that most of the mischief-makers on the bridge had been from outside the communities that abut it. He compared the attraction to other Los Angeles icons, including the Hollywood sign and Venice Beach.

Still, he said, the space has quickly become known for “outrageous antics”; as a result, the department shut down the bridge three times over the weekend, and by Tuesday had impounded six vehicles and issued more than 57 citations.

On Sunday night, he said, the city began installing speed bumps and looking into a temporary median barrier to deter spinouts and fencing to prevent people from scaling the arches.

Mr. de León said he was especially concerned about the scaling, adding, “God forbid, someone slips.”

In the downtown loft district that has sprung up over three decades from a once drug-strewn warren of industrial warehouses and art workshops, Arthur Garcia, who works in TV and film lighting, sighed that the city had mismanaged the bridge “in typical L.A. fashion.”

Waiting with his dog in the shade, Mr. Garcia said he worried that the bridge would draw more police to the area, which in turn would risk more clashes with its unhoused population. When civic problems erupt, he said, “there’s usually an overreaction, and the reaction is usually policing it and unfortunately that’s just going to create more violence.”

In Boyle Heights, Michael Avilez, 16, said that the bridge’s troubles had left him with a familiar feeling — that this was why his community couldn’t have nice things.

“We can’t,” he emphasized. “I don’t know why people do things like that.”

Manning the cash register of a Boyle Heights 7-Eleven, Darcy Gomez acknowledged that the area around her storefront was now regularly flooded with outsiders — and, now, officers to police them. Still, she said, when she drove the bridge for the first time this month, she was stunned and even calmed by its sun-drenched beauty.

“If you put your windows down, it’s really pretty and relaxing,” Ms. Gomez said. “I wish we took much more care of it.”

PHOTO: Posing on the Sixth Street Viaduct, a new $588 million bridge in Los Angeles that may already be too popular for its own good. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** July 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Questlove’s ‘Summer of Soul’ Wins at Sundance***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61X9-VD51-DXY4-X0YD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 2, 2021 Tuesday 09:55 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 384 words

**Byline:** Stephanie Goodman

**Highlight:** The documentary took home two prizes while “Coda” won several honors for its fictional tale of a hearing teenager in a deaf family.

**Body**

The documentary took home two prizes while “Coda” won several honors for its fictional tale of a hearing teenager in a deaf family.

A documentary about the 1969 Harlem Cultural Festival, often called the Black Woodstock, and a feature about a hearing daughter in a deaf family took top honors Tuesday night at the first virtual edition of the Sundance Film Festival.

In the nonfiction category, both the U.S. Grand Jury Prize and the Audience Award went to “Summer of Soul,” a [*potent mix*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/29/movies/sundance-diary-2.html) of never-before-seen concert footage and history lesson by the first-time filmmaker Ahmir Thompson, better known as [*Questlove*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/magazine/questlove-summer-of-soul.html).

Among dramatic features, both the U.S. Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award went to “Coda,” an acronym for “child of deaf adults.” Sian Heder (“Tallulah”) wrote and directed the [*crowd-pleasing tale*](https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2021/01/coda-sundance-film-festival-review) starring Emilia Jones as a teenager who serves as an interpreter for her ***working-class*** family in Gloucester, Mass. Additionally, Heder won the directing award for American features, and the film won a special honor for its acting ensemble.

In the world-cinema feature competition, [*“Hive,”*](https://www.austinchronicle.com/daily/screens/2021-02-02/sundance-review-hive/) which follows the wife of a soldier missing in the Kosovo war, won both the grand jury and audience prizes as well as the directing award for its filmmaker, Blerta Basholli. Among world-cinema documentaries, “Flee,” Jonas Poher Rasmussen’s animated look at an Afghan refugee in Denmark, won the grand jury prize. The audience award went to “Writing With Fire,” from Rintu Thomas and Sushmit Ghosh, about India’s only newspaper run by women of the Dalit, or “untouchable” caste.

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PHOTO: Mavis Staples, far left, and Mahalia Jackson in “Summer of Soul,” which won the U.S. Grand Jury Prize and the Audience Award at Sundance. The film is the directorial debut for Ahmir Thompson, better known as the musician Questlove. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MASS DISTRACTION MEDIA)

**Load-Date:** October 12, 2021

**End of Document**



[***With Races Tightening, Both Parties Bring Out Star Power in New York***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66RS-2NN1-DXY4-X40X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 31, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1506 words

**Byline:** By Luis Ferré-Sadurní

**Body**

A high-profile display of Republican and Democratic efforts illustrates how many of the state's races have become unexpectedly close, including the governor's race.

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y. -- New York's status as a battleground state was cemented over the weekend as a star-studded lineup of the country's top Democrats and Republicans descended on the state.

Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida visited Long Island on Saturday night; hours earlier, former President Bill Clinton was the star attraction at a rally in Rockland County. And on the airwaves, former President Barack Obama lent his voice in support of Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat facing an unexpectedly stiff challenge from Representative Lee Zeldin, a Republican.

In a sign of how close the governor's race has gotten, the Democratic Governors Association filed paperwork in recent days to form a super PAC in New York that will prop up Ms. Hochul on TV and try to stave off losses further down the ballot. After watching from the sidelines for months, the group will now join prominent labor groups in rushing to start spending on behalf of Ms. Hochul in the race's final days, as concerned Democrats scramble to ensure that their base turns out to vote.

The high-profile display of Democratic force amounted to the type of last-minute intervention that traditionally plays out in swing states, not a liberal state like New York, underscoring just how vulnerable Democrats believe they have become in this election cycle.

Indeed, Ms. Hochul and Mr. Zeldin are each entering the final stretch with about $6 million in their war chests, the campaigns said on Friday, a surprisingly leveled playing field given that the governor significantly outpaced Mr. Zeldin in fund-raising during much of the race. Ms. Hochul, who has raised nearly $50 million since she entered the race, and spent much of it, said she raised $3.37 million in the last three-week filing period. Mr. Zeldin reported raising slightly more -- $3.6 million.

Mr. DeSantis's hastily organized appearance in Suffolk County -- the rally for Mr. Zeldin, which drew thousands of people, was planned one day in advance -- was a reflection of the party's renewed bullishness in a state that hasn't elected a Republican governor in 20 years.

''You need someone to just go and clean house in Albany,'' Mr. DeSantis, a presidential hopeful, told thousands of mostly white supporters at a raucous rally at a parking lot on Long Island that was one of the largest campaign events of the governor's race. He railed against Covid-19 mandates, crime, inflation and illegal immigration, before concluding that Mr. Zeldin's potential victory would amount to ''the 21st century version of the shot heard 'round the world.''

Earlier in the day, the Hochul campaign sought to show off its own firepower by unveiling Mr. Obama's radio ad, where he tells listeners that ''the stakes could not be higher'' in the governor's race, which polls suggest Ms. Hochul is leading, even as Mr. Zeldin has surged in recent weeks.

Mr. Clinton emerged in the Hudson Valley to deliver a nearly half-hour speech attacking the Republican Party while campaigning with Representative Sean Patrick Maloney, a top Democrat and longtime friend of Mr. Clinton's who is locked in an unexpectedly close contest to retain his House seat.

And on Sunday, Jill Biden, the first lady, was scheduled to speak at a fund-raiser for Mr. Maloney in Westchester, before traveling to Long Island for a phone banking event with Ms. Hochul.

The Democratic Governors Association had not initially planned to spend on the race, but as polls have tightened and the Republican Governors Association began dumping $2 million into a pro-Zeldin super PAC, the Democrats decided to act. A spokesman for the D.G.A., David Turner, did not say how much it planned to spend.

''Republican super PACs have spent a record amount of nearly $12 million to insert an election-denying, abortion-banning, MAGA Republican who would make New York less safe by rolling back laws to take illegal guns off the street,'' Mr. Turner said. ''The D.G.A. is taking nothing for granted, and won't sit idly by.''

Republicans are doubling down on the newfound enthusiasm around Mr. Zeldin: On Monday, he will campaign in Westchester alongside Gov. Glenn Youngkin of Virginia, a Republican who won in an upset victory last year.

As early voting kicked off on Saturday, Ms. Hochul has begun to significantly scale up her campaigning: She was expected to make at least 14 campaign appearances this weekend. She cast her ballot in Buffalo, her hometown, on Saturday morning before traveling to Rochester and Syracuse, all Democratic-leaning bastions in upstate.

On Sunday morning, she gave brief remarks at four Black churches in Nassau County on Long Island, an increasingly competitive battleground where polls suggest Mr. Zeldin has made significant inroads in recent weeks. Amid concerns that she may be struggling to animate Black voters, one of the most reliable Democratic constituencies, Ms. Hochul was joined by Hazel Dukes, the head of the New York State N.A.A.C.P., who introduced Ms. Hochul to churchgoers at the church stops on Sunday.

''She's comfortable with all of us,'' Ms. Dukes told Black congregants at Antioch Baptist Church, highlighting her ***working-class*** roots and record on public safety and investments in public education. ''In her soul and in her heart, she cares about the least of us.''

At Union Baptist Church, the Rev. Dr. Sedgwick Easley told churchgoers that it was ''important that in minority communities like ours, our people go out to the polls and vote.''

When it was her turn to talk, Ms. Hochul made no mention of her commitment to protecting the state's strict abortion rights, one of the pillars of her campaign. Instead, she emphasized her initiatives to strengthen gun laws and fight crime, including legislation she passed earlier this year to tighten the state's contentious bail laws, a constant target of Mr. Zeldin's attacks.

''Having guns is not the answer. We have to stand up to that radical idea that this should become the wild West,'' Ms. Hochul said. ''We're not going there. Donald Trump won't take us there. His surrogate running for governor won't take us there, because I am the firewall. You are the firewall.''

Later, Ms. Hochul joined an array of Democratic elected officials from Long Island for a rally with hundreds of union workers, before traveling to southeast Queens to campaign with Mayor Eric Adams for the first time in the general election.

Mr. Adams and the governor spoke to a crowd of several hundred people who gathered inside a shopping mall; some were union workers, but many of them were local residents who said they had received emails and fliers about the rally. Praising Ms. Hochul's response to the pandemic and warning of the consequences of not voting, Mr. Adams said: ''We cannot say on the Wednesday after Election Day, 'we wish we had voted.'''

Several attendees said they had already cast their ballot early for Ms. Hochul, including Robert Manigault, 70 a retired postal clerk who is Black and cited his experience during the civil rights era as one of the reasons for his vote.

''I feel that she's going to take us places,'' he said. ''I feel the Republicans are going to take us backward. I've been there and I don't like it.''

Later in the day, in an unannounced campaign stop, Mr. Zeldin visited Borough Park in Brooklyn, where he was greeted by hundreds of residents from the Orthodox and Hasidic community, a small but powerful voting contingent he has actively courted.

Mr. Zeldin received a far larger reception on Saturday night in his hometown, Suffolk County, a Republican stronghold he has represented in Congress since 2015. Standing in front of a red tour bus emblazoned with his campaign's slogan -- ''Save Our State'' -- he spoke to an audience that sported MAGA hats and appeared as familiar with Mr. Zeldin as they were curious about Mr. DeSantis visiting the small hamlet of Hauppauge.

Mr. Zeldin said that the state's conditions were leading New Yorkers to continue to move to Florida, ''seeing that their money will go further, they'll feel safer, they'll live life freer, and that's why New York leads the entire nation in population loss.''

''For the next 10 days, there is no way that Kathy Hochul will be able to replicate the energy and momentum that we have,'' Mr. Zeldin added.

In the crowd, Laura Ortiz, 52, said she supported Mr. Zeldin because of his focus on public safety, saying her house in Lindenhurst was one of 13 houses on her street that were recently robbed in a spree that also saw one residence set on fire.

''I know what it feels like to be violated,'' said Ms. Ortiz, who was wearing a headband with a pair of American flags that bounced on springs each time she moved. ''I don't want to see anyone get hurt.''

Nicholas Fandos, Christine Sampson and Ellen Yan contributed reporting.Nicholas Fandos, Christine Sampson and Ellen Yan contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/nyregion/governor-zeldin-hochul.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/nyregion/governor-zeldin-hochul.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat, has scaled up her campaigning: She was expected to make at least 14 appearances this weekend, including in Syracuse, N.Y., above, after she voted in Buffalo. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BENJAMIN CLEETON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, left, at a hastily organized rally on Long Island that drew thousands of people for Representative Lee Zeldin, right, the Republican challenger to Ms. Hochul. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHNNY MILANO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A10.

**Load-Date:** October 31, 2022

**End of Document**



[***More Equitable Justice***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66RS-R2B1-JBG3-64KC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 31, 2022 Monday 11:29 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1677 words

**Byline:** German Lopez

**Highlight:** Racial disparities in incarceration have fallen.

**Body**

Racial disparities in incarceration have fallen.

Republican lawmakers up for re-election in Pennsylvania [*filed articles of impeachment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/26/us/larry-krasner-philadelphia-impeachment.html) last week against Philadelphia’s progressive district attorney, saying that he was responsible for an increase in crime. In the state’s Senate race, the Republican nominee, Mehmet Oz, [*has attacked*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/27/us/politics/fetterman-oz-crime-justice.html) his opponent, John Fetterman, for encouraging state officials to release more prisoners.

The Republicans’ approach in Pennsylvania reflects their party’s embrace of crime as a top issue in many midterm elections. Republicans have demanded solutions to [*crime increases*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/23/briefing/crime-rates-murder-robberies-us.html), and they have criticized Democrats for supporting major changes to criminal justice policy in recent years, claiming that they fueled swelling crime rates.

As is typical in political campaigns, nuance is getting lost. Critics of the reform efforts have distorted the picture; no statistical link exists between, for example, [*progressive prosecutors and crime*](https://munkschool.utoronto.ca/research/violent-crime-and-public-prosecution). Yet many Democrats, wary of being labeled weak on the issue, have remained quiet or criticized even successful changes to the legal system.

And there have been achievements. Understanding them can give you a fuller grasp of crime in the U.S. right now than you might hear in debates or television ads in the run-up to next week’s elections.

I want to explain one such shift that has gotten little attention: Slowly, the American criminal justice system has become more equitable. The racial gap among inmates in state prisons has fallen 40 percent since 2000, fueled by a large decrease in Black imprisonment rates, according to a [*new report*](https://counciloncj.foleon.com/reports/racial-disparities/national-trends) by the Council on Criminal Justice, a think tank.

Finding the right balance between public safety and human dignity animated many of the criminal justice policies enacted in the U.S. over the past couple of decades. The decline in racial disparities is a remarkable reversal of policies now widely seen as unfairly punishing Black people. “It’s a tremendous drop,” said Thaddeus Johnson, one of the report’s authors.

A closing gap

Why did inequities in prison rates shrink? The decrease was the result of a decades-long effort to reduce what critics call mass incarceration.

That is their term for the harsher sentencing laws passed in response to a crime increase that began in the 1960s, which made the U.S. one of the world’s biggest incarcerators. Black communities were disproportionately affected and in some cases targeted by law enforcement, as the Justice Department has found in Ferguson, Mo., in Baltimore and elsewhere. By 2000, Black adults were locked up in state prisons at 8.2 times the rate of white Americans, after accounting for population.

Eventually, the high costs of incarceration and the racial disparities prompted activists from across the political spectrum to push for a rollback of the toughest punishments. Bit by bit, lawmakers obliged, reducing penalties mainly for nonviolent crimes.

As those changes took effect, incarceration rates dropped. Since Black Americans were more likely to be imprisoned, they benefited the most. Rates of arrest and imprisonment for Black Americans fell sharply, the Council on Criminal Justice analysis found. White arrests also fell, but by less. And the rate of white offenders being sent to prison actually increased.

Limits to reform

Racial gaps remain in the justice system. Black adults are imprisoned at 4.9 times the rate of white adults. Black people, on average, spend more time in prison — an imbalance that is growing.

The trends expose the limits of sentencing policy changes so far. State facilities hold around 90 percent of U.S. prisoners, and most of those inmates are in for violent offenses. So a majority of American prisoners see little, if any, benefit from leniency focused on nonviolent crime.

The remaining racial gaps in imprisonment are not solely driven by racial bias in enforcement, but also by higher crime rates in Black communities, the Council on Criminal Justice concluded. “It’s not that Black communities are broken or that Black people are more inherently violent,” Johnson said. But long-term neglect of Black communities has led to social and economic imbalances. And violent offending, Johnson argued, “is the nexus where all the other disparities, all the other gaps” [*meet*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/08/briefing/gun-violence-america-chicago.html).

Those problems go beyond the scope of the changes to the criminal justice system so far. But the midterm campaigns suggest there may not be an appetite for doing more, despite the strides toward equity.

THE LATEST NEWS

* Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil’s divisive far-right leader, [*lost his re-election bid*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/world/americas/lula-election-results-brazil-bolsonaro.html). Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a leftist former president, will replace him, capping a stunning political revival.

1. Da Silva, known as Lula, promised to stabilize the economy and [*protect the Amazon rainforest*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/10/30/world/brazil-presidential-election/lulas-victory-likely-means-big-changes-for-brazil-though-his-specific-plans-are-vague?smid=url-share), but congressional opposition will probably limit his agenda.
2. After years of undermining Brazil’s democracy, will Bolsonaro [*accept the results*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/world/americas/bolsonaro-election-results.html)

* Gov. Brian Kemp and Stacey Abrams, his Democratic opponent, clashed over abortion and public health in [*Georgia’s final debate for governor*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/10/30/us/georgia-debate-governor-abrams-kemp).

1. The Supreme Court will hear arguments today on admissions policies at Harvard and at the University of North Carolina, cases that could [*determine the future of affirmative action*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/us/supreme-court-affirmative-action-brown-board-education.html).
2. Republicans had spent more than a decade making Speaker Nancy Pelosi [*a top target for threats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/us/politics/pelosi-attack-republican-threats.html) before her husband, Paul, was attacked last week.
3. Democrats are fighting [*to win over*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/us/politics/blue-collar-voters-pennsylvania.html) ***working-class*** white voters in northeastern Pennsylvania.
4. Some voters in battleground states want Republicans to take back the Senate but prefer Democratic nominees, [*according to a Times/Siena poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/us/politics/democrats-republicans-senate-election-polls.html).
5. Hasidic Jews in New York reliably vote Democratic, but increased oversight of the group’s schools is [*testing its political commitments*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/nyregion/hasidic-political-power-new-york.html).

* Explosions echoed across Kyiv this morning, as Russian missiles again [*targeted Ukraine’s energy infrastructure*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/10/31/world/russia-ukraine-war-news/multiple-explosions-are-heard-in-kyiv-as-officials-say-russia-launched-cruise-missiles?smid=url-share).

1. The Kremlin is [*funding its war*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/10/30/business/economy/russia-trade-ukraine-war.html) through global trade, despite Western sanctions meant to punish Russia’s economy.

* A [*recently renovated bridge collapsed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/world/asia/india-bridge-collapse.html) in India, killing at least 140 people.

1. A bottleneck, cries of “push, push” and a big shove: How the crowd surge in Seoul [*turned deadly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/world/asia/south-korea-itaewon-crowd-crush-victims.html).
2. New York City will pay $26 million to two men who each spent more than 20 years in prison after being [*wrongly convicted of killing Malcolm X*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/nyregion/malcom-x-muhammad-aziz-khalil-islam-settlement.html#:~:text=New%20York%20City%20has%20agreed,city%20and%20federal%20court%20records.).
3. Cholera [*is spreading rapidly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/health/cholera-outbreaks-vaccine.html) after wars and natural disasters around the world, straining the global vaccine supply and putting millions at risk.

Brazilians may have voted to oust Jair Bolsonaro, but [*Bolsonarismo is far from over*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/opinion/brazil-election-lula-bolsonaro.html), Vanessa Barbara argues.

The “dark academia” cultural aesthetic [*has become all too real*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/opinion/dark-academia-halloween.html), Pamela Paul says.

The people in Baldwin Lee’s photographs [*insisted on their profound dignity*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/opinion/baldwin-lee-photography-black-america.html), even amid brutal Southern poverty, Margaret Renkl writes.

Gail Collins and Bret Stephens discuss the costs of holding elected office in an [*era of political violence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/opinion/fetterman-oz-pelosi-kanye-west.html).

MORNING READS

Photography: Boris Mikhailov is Ukraine’s greatest artist, [*our critic writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/28/arts/design/boris-mikhailov.html).

King Tut: Is there a hidden chamber [*inside his tomb*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/science/tutankhamen-nefertiti-archaeology.html)

A Times classic: The [*secret to marriage*](http://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/06/style/modern-love-the-secret-to-marriage.html) is never getting married.

Metropolitan Diary: A friendly museum guard [*clears a path*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/30/nyregion/metropolitan-diary.html).

Quiz time: Take our latest news quiz [*and share your score*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/10/28/briefing/28news-quiz-world-series.html) (the average was 8.5).

Advice from Wirecutter: Try this [*peel-and-stick removable wallpaper*](https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-removable-wallpapers/).

Lives Lived: Gerald Stern was a wistful poet who won a National Book Award. He [*died at 97*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/29/books/gerald-stern-dead.html).

SPORTS NEWS FROM THE ATHLETIC

Packers lose four straight: The Bills are 6-1 after [*an imposing 27-17 win*](https://theathletic.com/3746568/2022/10/30/bills-packers-sunday-night-football/) over the Packers last night, extending Green Bay’s losing streak to the team’s longest since 2016.

Bronny James: He is a four-star prospect with a five-star name: LeBron James’s son has the attention of top colleges, but some coaches [*question whether recruiting him*](https://theathletic.com/3740911/2022/10/31/bronny-james-recruitment-lebron-james) is worth the inevitable hoopla.

World Series travels east: The third game is set for tonight in Philadelphia, which hasn’t hosted a World Series matchup since 2009. The Phillies have a chance to clinch at home if they win the next three games, [*but need better pitching*](https://theathletic.com/3743734/2022/10/30/phillies-zack-wheeler-aaron-nola-world-series/) if they want to claim the title.

ARTS AND IDEAS

The popularity of Skelly

If you go trick-or-treating tonight for Halloween, odds are you’ll come across a 12-foot skeleton. Don’t be afraid: [*It’s probably just Skelly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/28/style/home-depot-12-foot-skeleton.html). The towering Halloween decoration became a hit in 2020 — on TikTok, videos tagged #12ftskeleton have more than 70 million views — and two years later, shoppers are still racing from store to store trying to find one.

Starri Taddeo, a New Jersey resident, spent two years looking for a Skelly before she bought one that she put up in her front yard. But looking through the decorations has become a seasonal activity for her family: “It’s free entertainment.”

Related: The Saudi Arabian authorities once banned Halloween. This year, the government [*sponsored a “horror weekend.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/29/world/middleeast/halloween-saudi-arabia.html)

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

These [*monster cookies are studded with colored candies*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/319-monster-cookies).

What to Watch

Ina Garten [*made risotto with one of her famous fans,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/25/t-magazine/ina-garten-risotto-recipe.html) the fashion designer Daniel Roseberry.

Theater

In an [*A.I. opera*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/28/arts/music/artificial-intelligence-opera.html) at the Lincoln Center, audience brain waves were part of the show.

What to Do

This dad has ideas for[*scaring kids*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/01/parenting/halloween-kids.html) on Halloween.

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was blithely. Here is [*today’s puzzle*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Halloween symbol (three letters).

And here’s [*today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html). After, [*use our bot*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/upshot/wordle-bot.html) to get better.

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — German

P.S. [*An 1892 Times article*](https://www.nytimes.com/1892/10/30/archives/customs-of-halloween-an-observance-that-has-come-from-pagan-times.html) called Halloween “the high carnival season for witches, fairies and the immaterial principle in humanity.”

Here’s [*today’s front page*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/2022/10/31/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about Xi Jinping.

Matthew Cullen, Lauren Hard, Lauren Jackson, 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: District Attorney Larry Krasner in July, when the homicide rate in Philadelphia had reached a rate of 300. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Michelle Gustafson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 31, 2022

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[***At Shakespeare’s Globe, a Nonbinary Joan of Arc Causes a Stir***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6691-C821-JBG3-61FN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 1, 2022 Thursday 10:55 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1282 words

**Highlight:** Even before the production debuted, it had inflamed a rancorous debate about sex and gender that plays out almost daily in Britain.

**Body**

Even before the production debuted, it had inflamed a rancorous debate about sex and gender that plays out almost daily in Britain.

LONDON — When the playwright Charlie Josephine watched the first performance of their play “[*I, Joan*](https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/whats-on/joan-2022/)” at Shakespeare’s Globe last week, they sat in the theater, wracked with nerves.

The play, based on the story of Joan of Arc, is Josephine’s first on a major London stage. But that was not the only reason that the playwright, who identifies as transgender, queer and nonbinary, and uses the pronoun they, was anxious. Throughout last month, “I, Joan” had been at the center of a media furor in Britain because of Josephine’s decision to depict Joan of Arc as nonbinary.

In the play, which runs at the Globe through Oct. 22, Joan of Arc comes to terms with their gender identity while inspiring French soldiers to repel English forces from their soil. “I’m not a girl,” Joan says at one point. “I do not fit that word.”

When The Daily Mail, a tabloid newspaper, [*reported details of the Globe production in August*](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11101639/Globe-Theatre-portrays-Joan-Arc-non-binary-pronouns-new-play.html), it led to a barrage of complaints on social media and in print. Allison Pearson, a columnist for The Daily Telegraph, a conservative newspaper, wrote that recasting Joan of Arc as nonbinary [*was “an insult.”*](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/columnists/2022/08/17/joan-arc-non-binary-what-hope-do-daughters-have/) Sophie Walker, a former leader of Britain’s Women’s Equality Party, [*wrote on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/SophieRunning/status/1557963969247285249) that when she “was a little girl, Joan of Arc presented thrilling possibilities about what one young girl could do against massed ranks of men. Rewriting her as not female and presenting it as progress is a massive disappointment.”

Before anyone had even seen it, the Globe’s show touched a nerve in Britain, where a perceived conflict between the rights of women, and transgender and nonbinary people, has ignited a furious debate that plays out almost daily in the news media, [*in lawmakers’ speeches*](https://www.politico.eu/article/tory-leadership-hopeful-liz-truss-rebuff-seeking-lgbt-endorsement/) and [*in the courts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/28/health/transgender-youth-uk-tavistock.html). Some feminists in Britain have long called for the maintenance of rights based on biological sex, rather than gender identity, which they say threatens women’s-only spaces. Many transgender and nonbinary people say those campaigns discriminate against them and [*create a hostile environment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/arts/transgender-comedy-uk.html%20/).

The [*story of Joan of Arc*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/05/books/review/joan-of-arc-a-history-by-helen-castor.html) — a 15th-century teenage girl who is said to have heeded God’s instructions to put on men’s clothing and lead French soldiers in battle, only to be tried for heresy and burned at the stake — has been the subject of plays for centuries. Daniel Hobbins, a historian at the University of Notre Dame, said many of those depictions played fast and loose with historical truth. Shakespeare, in “Henry VI, Part 1,” portrayed Joan of Arc as a witch, in keeping with British views at the time, Hobbins said. In the early 19th century, Friedrich Schiller, in “The Maid of Orleans,” showed Joan falling in love with an English knight. “That didn’t happen,” Hobbins said. “She has been reimagined forever to suit contemporary needs.”

Lucy Delap, a professor of gender history at the University of Cambridge, said Josephine’s reinvention of Joan of Arc had fed into a debate in Britain that had become “so heightened” that there was little communication between the two sides. A play like “I, Joan” could have been a way to open a conversation that would cross that divide, she said, but it had instead become a “useful dog whistle” for people “who were hot under the collar about trans issues.”

Heather Binning of the Women’s Rights Network, a group that aims “to defend the sex-based rights of women,” said in an email that she objected to “I, Joan” because a nonbinary identity was “a 21st-century idea.” Joan of Arc “existed in a time where her struggles were that of being a woman,” she wrote. “Being female, and the biological sex of her body, lies at the root of this story.”

Binning said she thought “I, Joan” was “trying to attract attention by riding on the wave of gender identity ideology that is sweeping not just the U.K., but many other countries.”

Sitting on the roof terrace of the Globe’s offices last week, Josephine, the playwright, said they had anticipated most of the complaints, and felt they were misguided. The play was not trying to erase women from history, Josephine said. It was meant to open up new ways of thinking about a historical figure. If anyone wanted to keep thinking of Joan as a young woman, they said, “then, cool — you still can.”

Josephine, 33, said the French martyr’s story had meant little to them growing up in a ***working-class*** family in Hemel Hempstead, southern England. The Globe asked them to write the play last year; the playwright’s main concern, at first, was nothing to do with gender, but how to talk about Joan’s religious beliefs in a way that would resonate with a largely nonreligious theatergoing audience.

Josephine said the decision to make Joan nonbinary came after studying Joan’s life and realizing that Joan of Arc had been willing to die at the stake rather than stop wearing men’s clothing. This was “not a casual fashion statement,” Josephine said. “It was a deep need for them.” Josephine wanted to depict what it would have been like for “a young person in a female body, who is questioning gender in a very different society than what we live in now,” they said. “My younger self really needed a protagonist like this,” they added.

Michelle Terry, the Globe’s artistic director, said the playhouse had a history of causing a stir by playing with gender onstage. In 2003, Mark Rylance, the company’s artistic director at the time, upset some patrons with [*all-female productions*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2003/may/07/theatre.artsfeatures) of “The Taming of the Shrew” and “Richard III.” More recently, Terry said she received complaints for [*playing Hamlet there*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2018/may/18/hamlet-as-you-like-it-review-michelle-terry-globe-shakespeare) in 2018, and again this year, when the Globe toured a production of “Julius Caesar” in which the main male characters were played by women.

“Everyone’s got an idea of how plays should be done and how historical figures should be treated,” she said. All “I, Joan” was doing, Terry said, was asking, “Who is Joan for now?”

For all the media fuss, the one place where few people seemed concerned about Joan of Arc’s gender was in the auditorium of the Globe itself. At a recent performance of “I, Joan,” the audience of nearly 1,000 was made up of the theater’s usual mix of British theater lovers, tourists and school groups. At 7:30 p.m., Isobel Thom, who plays Joan, walked onstage and began the show’s opening speech: “Trans people are sacred. We are the divine.” The monologue was interrupted by cheers of support.

Robin van Asselt, 23, a transgender woman from Amsterdam in the audience, said she had cried watching the “casual queerness” onstage. Joan’s “aggressive push to be seen and respected” as nonbinary “was just so cathartic,” van Asselt added.

In interviews with nearly 20 more audience members, no one said they had a problem with a nonbinary Joan of Arc. Wanda Forsythe, 72, a retired college administrator on vacation from Toronto, said she “didn’t feel offended as a woman — just that it could have been done a bit better, and shorter.” (The show runs almost three hours.)

Jackie Warren, 62, a retired government official, said she and her husband came to two plays at the Globe every year and had picked “I, Joan” at random. Portraying Joan as nonbinary was “really clever,” Warren said.

“I’m old, aren’t I?” she added, “so I don’t understand a lot of it. I just think we need to open our hearts to everybody, and I can’t understand why we can’t.”

PHOTOS: Isobel Thom, center, plays Joan of Arc as a teenager questioning their gender identity in “I, Joan,” at London’s Globe Theater. (C1); Right, a scene from “I, Joan.” Joan of Arc “has been reimagined forever to suit contemporary needs,” said the historian Daniel Hobbins. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HELEN MURRAY) (C4)

**Load-Date:** February 2, 2024

**End of Document**



[***Stark Choice for Brazil In Presidential Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66RK-0KT1-JBG3-632N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 30, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 9

**Length:** 1478 words

**Byline:** By Jack Nicas

**Body**

Brazilians head to the polls on Sunday in an election between two political heavyweights that could have global repercussions.

RIO DE JANEIRO -- Brazil on Sunday faces a crossroads.

After months of pitches to voters, the nation will decide one of Latin America's most important elections in decades, picking between the two biggest names in modern Brazilian politics and their polar visions for the country.

The choice for Brazilians is whether to give President Jair Bolsonaro a second term, emboldening and empowering him to carry out a far-right mandate for the nation, or whether to bring back former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and return Brazil to a leftist track.

Yet the stakes are far higher than simply a contest between the left and the right.

The election carries major consequences for the Amazon rainforest, which is crucial to the health of the planet. Mr. Bolsonaro has gutted the agencies tasked with protecting the forest, leading to soaring deforestation, while Mr. da Silva has promised to eradicate illegal logging and mining.

Brazil's economy, once the world's sixth largest, has flatlined over the past decade. Mr. Bolsonaro pledges to pursue deregulation and privatization to try to jump-start activity, while Mr. da Silva has made his central pitch about feeding and housing the poor, whose numbers have climbed during the pandemic.

The vote is a test of the enduring strength of the right-wing populism that swept across many countries in recent years. Mr. Bolsonaro is one of the biggest remaining faces of that movement, but he is trying to withstand a recent clear shift to the left across Latin America.

And then there is the concern for the health of one of the world's biggest democracies. Mr. Bolsonaro has spent years attacking Brazil's democratic institutions, including a sustained effort to undermine its voting system, leading millions of Brazilians to lose faith in the integrity of their nation's elections.

Now, much of the country is wondering: If the president loses the election, will he accept it?

After Mr. da Silva led in the first round of voting earlier this month, many polls suggest the race has narrowed. The two men have split this country of 217 million people nearly down the middle, with many voters on each side viewing the choice as an existential one for the nation.

''We have a population completely divided between two worlds,'' said Malu Gaspar, a political columnist for O Globo, one of Brazil's biggest newspapers. ''So I have a lot of anticipated frustration that this is the most important election of our time, and yet we will come out of it with a lot of more problems than when we went in.''

The close race, high stakes and deep polarization have led to an ugly campaign. Misinformation has soared in recent weeks, with supporters of Mr. da Silva accusing Mr. Bolsonaro of being a cannibal and a pedophile, while Mr. Bolsonaro's supporters have called Mr. da Silva a gang leader, a communist and a Satanist who wants to close the nation's churches.

Election officials have tried to intervene, ordering posts and videos off the internet that they say are false. Those efforts have slowed the deluge of misleading information, but they have also become their own controversy, drawing a swell of complaints of unfair refereeing, particularly from Mr. Bolsonaro and his allies.

The debates between the two candidates devolved into name calling and disputes over their past versus their plans for the future. And there has been a spate of political violence, with countless beatings and at least two killings connected to the election.

This week, the violence and claims of censorship from the right collided when the authorities tried to arrest a right-wing congressman whom the Supreme Court had ordered not to speak publicly because, it said, he had attacked Brazil's democratic institutions. He responded by shooting at the police and throwing a grenade, injuring two officers. He is now in jail.

With a victory on Sunday, Mr. da Silva would complete a stunning political revival. The former shoeshine boy and metalworker with a fifth-grade education rose to become Brazil's president in 2003. He then used a commodity boom and the discovery of offshore oil to reshape the country, lifting 20 million Brazilians out of extreme poverty. By the time he left office in 2010, he had an 80 percent approval rating.

But things quickly turned south for him, his leftist Workers Party and Brazil. His handpicked successor's interventions into the economy helped plunge Brazil into a recession from which it has never fully recovered, and then a corruption investigation revealed a sprawling kickback scheme that had festered deep inside the Brazilian government under his party's control.

Nearly 300 people were eventually arrested in the scheme, including Mr. da Silva. He was sentenced to 22 years in prison on charges that he accepted a condo and home improvements from companies bidding on government contracts. But after 17 months, he was released and his convictions were later nullified after the Supreme Court ruled that the judge in his cases was biased. While Mr. da Silva was not cleared of wrongdoing, the decision allowed him to run for president again.

Mr. Bolsonaro is a former Army captain who served three decades in Congress as a fringe far-right lawmaker known for extreme statements. In 2018, in the wake of Mr. da Silva's prison sentence, Mr. Bolsonaro rode the global wave of right-wing populism to the presidency, promising to root out what he called the corruption of Brazil's leftists.

His four years since have been tumultuous. He has attacked judges, journalists, political rivals and environmentalists, while also publicly doubting the science behind Covid-19. He pushed unproven drugs during the pandemic and delayed in buying vaccines. The coronavirus killed nearly 700,000 people in Brazil, the second-highest official toll, after the United States.

Yet despite the turmoil, Mr. Bolsonaro's support has endured. He far outperformed polls' expectations in the first round of voting on Oct. 2, and while recent polls have shown Mr. da Silva still in the lead, Mr. Bolsonaro was within striking distance.

The president's base is a bloc known as ''beef, bibles and bullets,'' representing people connected to the agribusiness industry, evangelical movement, and law enforcement and the military. Under a slogan of ''God, homeland, family and freedom,'' he has focused his pitch on warnings about the left trying to change what he calls Brazilians' traditional way of life.

In his closing pitch to voters in the first presidential debate this month, Mr. Bolsonaro did not mention the economy, and instead accused the left of wanting to legalize drugs and abortion, abolish private property and force children to learn about ''gender ideology'' and use unisex bathrooms. ''We don't want a country of retrogression, corruption, thievery and disrespect for our religion,'' he said.

Mr. da Silva has built a broad coalition in recent months, from the center-right to the far left, with people concerned about what might happen under a second Bolsonaro term. But he has maintained Brazil's ***working class*** as his base and built his platform around taxing the rich and expanding services for the poor. His stump speech has highlighted a promise that all Brazilians deserve a top cut of meat and a cold beer.

''Let's get back to fixing this country, and let's get back to eating and drinking a beer at weekend barbecues,'' he said. Mr. Bolsonaro ''goes crazy because he thinks only he can, but we want to eat at the barbecues, too.''

The campaign, however, has also had a more worrisome element. For more than a year, Mr. Bolsonaro has warned that he may not accept a loss. He has claimed, without credible evidence, that Brazil's electronic voting system is rife with fraud and that the left is set on rigging the vote. As a result, three out of four of his supporters say they trust the voting system only a little or not at all.

Over the past week, Mr. Bolsonaro has also begun to claim other kinds of fraud. His campaign has accused radio stations of playing far more ads from Mr. da Silva, which would violate election laws, but the evidence the campaign produced was incomplete and quickly shown to be flawed. Brazil's election chief, whom Mr. Bolsonaro has called biased, dismissed the accusations.

Yet Mr. Bolsonaro's son, a congressman, suggested this week that the vote should be delayed because of the alleged fraud, and Mr. Bolsonaro himself is complaining that it is more proof of an unfair election.

''It's fraud. It interferes with the results of the election,'' Mr. Bolsonaro told reporters on Wednesday. ''I am a victim once again.''

André Spigariol contributed reporting from Brasília.André Spigariol contributed reporting from Brasília.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/29/world/americas/brazil-bolsonaro-lula-presidential-election.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/29/world/americas/brazil-bolsonaro-lula-presidential-election.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the leftist candidate, earlier this month on the eve of the first round of voting. In Sunday's runoff election, he faces President Jair Bolsonaro, who is seeking a second term for his far-right agenda. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY VICTOR MORIYAMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

DADO GALDIERI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A9.

**Load-Date:** October 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Cruise Ships and Tourists Give a Lift to 'Little Venice'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:668Y-TJS1-JBG3-655Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 1, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 7

**Length:** 1329 words

**Byline:** By Anna Momigliano

**Body**

With a ban on large cruise ships in the waters surrounding Venice, nearby Chioggia is one of the new go-to ports. While many welcome the new visitors, some worry that the tourism boom could turn sour.

On Aug. 4, the Viking Sea, a 930-passenger cruise ship, docked in Italy's Venetian Lagoon. At first sight, the scene looked familiar: a towering white vessel, loaded with tourists, most of them from North America, making its way past centuries-old buildings and narrow canals. But this time the destination wasn't Venice, but Chioggia, a smaller, lesser-known city built on a separate cluster of islands about 15 miles away, in the same lagoon.

Following a series of protests from environmental groups last year, the Italian government recently started enforcing a ban on large cruise ships weighing more than 40,000 tons from the San Marco basin, the portion of the lagoon surrounding Venice's historic center. The ban, originally approved in 2012, was conditional: In order for it to be enforced, alternative ports for cruise lines that promote Venice on their itineraries must be close enough that tourists can actually make an excursion to Venice.

''If you take Venice away, that will kill the entire Adriatic route,'' said Francesco Galietti, the national director for the Cruise Lines International Association. It took Italian authorities nine years to allocate the 157 million euros (about $159.7 million) needed to upgrade other nearby ports so they could host the cruises, which, finally, were rerouted beginning this summer.

Most of them went to Trieste, a city in northeastern Italy outside the Venetian Lagoon, about 72 miles away, while others went to Marghera, the commercial port on Venice's mainland. About a dozen were rerouted to Chioggia, and twice as many are expected next year, the city's mayor, Mauro Armelao, said, with a hint of pride.

For Chioggia, anything taken away from Venice has the taste of an underdog's redemption.

For centuries the town, often called Little Venice -- a name that infuriates the locals, who insist that it's Venice that should be described as a bigger Chioggia -- has lived in the shadows of its more famous neighbor. When Venice was a maritime power, from the 10th to the 17th century, Chioggia fell under its domination, and that legacy led to a power imbalance that can still be felt today. A ***working-class*** town traditionally relying on fishing and agriculture, famous both for its radicchio and beets, it has long provided workers for wealthier Venice, where, even today, many of the vaporetto conductors and hotel staff commute from Chioggia.

Looking down on the locals is part of Venice's folklore. The Venetian playwright Carlo Goldoni famously depicted them as quarrelsome, if good-hearted simpletons, getting into brawls for trivial reasons.

Authentic and a bit rough

But Chioggiotti take great pride in being ''veraci'' -- authentic and a bit rough -- in contrast to Venetians' sophistication. Each year, in early August, a local theater company presents Goldoni's play ''Baruffe Chiozzotte'' in the streets, and tickets get sold out quickly. Venetians mock Chioggia, by calling the city symbol -- a lion, the same as Venice's symbol -- ''el gato,'' the cat. Chioggia has recently acquired a majestic, full-scale bronze lion statue, from the sculptor Davide Rivalta, partly to ''make sure people finally get it's not a cat,'' the mayor said.

And unlike Venice, which is plagued by overtourism, Chioggia enjoys the extra visitors. ''We're so proud that many people are coming. You hear people speaking English in the streets, we weren't used to that,'' said Alessia Boscolo Nata, a teacher in the local high school. ''We used to be the lagoon's children of a lesser god and now we're not,'' jokes Teresa Bellemo, a Chioggia native who works in the publishing industry in Milan, but returns every summer.

It's not just pride. The arrival of cruises fits into the overall growth of tourism that Chioggia has experienced in the past five years -- a trend that seems to have found the right balance, even helping revitalize the city's historical center.

Chioggia is hardly new to tourism. But it used to be confined to two satellite towns, Isola Verde and Sottomarina, which relied on turismo balneare, family beach vacations. The city's main island, with its fish market, its 17th-century cathedral and the medieval clock tower, was overlooked by tourists.

But in the past few years, a new kind of tourist started showing up: ''They weren't just interested in the beach, they saw Chioggia as a città d'arte,'' an art city, said Giuliano Boscolo Cegion, the head of the local hotel association. That had a positive effect, driving an urban renewal that has become popular with millennial and Gen Z Chioggiotti.

''Just five years ago, everything was so run down and boring, there was nothing for young-ish people to do,'' said Ms. Bellemo, 39. ''Now it's full of life, a great place to hang out.''

This renaissance is best embodied by the flourishing of bacari, or cicchetterie, the typical bars that serve wine and fish-based finger food on the Riva Vena, the central canal. Mattia Perini, who runs one of them, the Bacaro Altrove, said that half of its clients are tourists and half of them habitués: ''It's the best mix. I have the critical mass to keep this place going and can keep a community alive.''

Diego Ardizzon, who runs the Cicchetteria da Nino Fisolo, one of the oldest bacari, said it took years of hard work to make the canal livelier and finally it's paying off.

Bed-and-breakfasts are springing up in the old center. And, for the moment at least, they seem to have a positive effect. ''Many of the old buildings were empty, because young people prefer to live in new houses with elevators and other amenities,'' said Mr. Perini.

Sounding a note of caution

But many in Chioggia realize that they're walking a fine line, that the same tourism boom that is helping to revitalize the city, if uncontrolled, could turn sour.

Mr. Armelao, the mayor, said that if the number of vacation rentals grows too much, he might follow the example of Venice, which recently obtained permission from Italy's central government to put a cap on rentals, which were making it harder for locals to find a home.

A dozen bed-and-breakfast managers have founded a group, Vacanza in Calle, aimed at self-regulating for an ethical tourism: ''We put a lot of effort in meeting visitors in person, talking to them, explaining how to live in Chioggia as the locals do, not as intruders,'' said one manager, Giorgia Santaterra.

Cruises are also a delicate issue. The environmental group that organized the anti-cruise protests in Venice, the No Big Ships Committee, wants cruises out of the Venetian Lagoon altogether, to protect its frail ecosystem, and thus opposes the rerouting of ships to Marghera and Chioggia, both of which are inside the lagoon. The grassroots group has recently organized new protests in Marghera, which is part of Venice, but not in Chioggia, because it is outside of its jurisdiction.

In Chioggia there's no visible opposition to cruises, partly because the city enjoys the economic benefit, and partly because the ships that come here are on the smaller end of the spectrum, raising less concern about their environmental impact: The average cruise ship has around 3,000 passengers, while all the ships that are scheduled in Chioggia have less than 1,000.

But some of its residents are cautious. ''Let's see how this evolves,'' said Ms. Bellemo. ''For the time being, we've found a good balance, but if people start chasing too much of the easy money, it won't stay this way.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/29/travel/venice-chioggia-italy-cruise-ships.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/29/travel/venice-chioggia-italy-cruise-ships.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: With the enforcement of a ban on large cruise ships near Venice's historic center, nearby Chioggia has become an alternative destination for tourists. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SUSAN WRIGHT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Billie Jean King: The First Female Athlete-Activist; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63D0-C5F1-DXY4-X02V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 17, 2021 Tuesday 01:37 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1280 words

**Byline:** Caitlin Thompson

**Highlight:** In her new memoir, “All In,” King is as concerned with political and social issues as she is with tennis.

**Body**

ALL IN

An Autobiography

By Billie Jean King with Johnette Howard and Maryanne Vollers

Billie Jean King isn’t interested in being a legend — she’s interested in succession. Her latest memoir follows two previous efforts to sum up her extraordinary career — one spent as a former No. 1-ranked tennis player, a 12-time Grand Slam champion, a founder of the Women’s Tennis Association and, of course, winner of the Battle of the Sexes versus Bobby Riggs in 1973. She’s up to something more overtly political now with “All In,” and the urgency with which she writes — here with Johnette Howard and Maryanne Vollers — about her life’s work as an activist gives one the sense that it’s essential to her that the mantle is passed to the next generations (and that they’re fired up about it!).

The book is concerned with King’s work to make tennis a more equal and inclusive sport — work she knows to be perennial and prone to setbacks — and it reads as a playbook of sorts, a life narrative peppered throughout with instructions for how to win the game. Yes, there are ready-made aphorisms everywhere: “Champions adjust,” “Pressure is a privilege” and the widely applicable “Every decision should be for a tactical advantage, period.”

Like many professional tennis players, King is in constant motion, not given to dwelling on highs and lows, as there’s always another battle that awaits. But she’s also an ardent student of history and a compelling narrator. She walks us through her remarkable life, which includes some of recent history’s most remarkable events.

There’s a clear through-line from King conferring with Gloria Steinem in the offices of Ms. magazine, to embracing the fight for racial equity in South Africa as [*Arthur Ashe*](https://www.nytimes.com/1993/02/08/obituaries/arthur-ashe-tennis-star-is-dead-at-49.html) also grappled with apartheid, to playing on a high school court in Honolulu while a young Barack Obama looked on. King’s instincts to shape seismic events in culture have set the table for (and in some cases, created) conversations about race, gender identity, sexuality and equity that are especially resonant now, and it’s hard not to read this book as a call to arms.

But it’s also plenty personal: “All In” traces King’s ***working-class*** beginnings as a Long Beach public courts kid, with a firmly traditional family and a Southern California cultural context more ’50s Bob’s Big Boy than ’60s Laurel Canyon. While she exhibited precocious talent as a junior player and translated her skills into collegiate and international success, no structure existed to provide women with a viable professional tennis career until she made one in the early ’70s.

She and her fellow amateur female athletes asked again and again for “prize money commensurate with that of men, equal exposure in center court matches and better treatment by the news media, which subordinates women’s tennis to the men’s game,” and were continually denied. It was only after lengthy battles with the tennis establishment — led by the promoter Jack Kramer, who worked diligently with male superstars of the era, including Ashe and Stan Smith, to ensure that women remained diminished — that she decided to act, spearheading the organization of a group now known as the Original 9 to create the Virginia Slims tour.

From there King went on a tear on the court — racking up her career Grand Slam and completing a triple crown at Wimbledon (the singles, doubles and mixed-doubles championships). Upon winning the Battle of the Sexes against Riggs, the self-proclaimed male chauvinist pig, she developed a growing understanding that she’d have to be the first female athlete-activist.

“‘This is the culmination of 19 years of work,’ I told the press that night. ‘Since the time they wouldn’t let me be in the picture because I didn’t have on a tennis skirt, I’ve wanted to change the game around. Now it’s here.’”

In 1972, her testimony in front of Congress all but guaranteed the passage of Title IX, which ended discrimination based on sex and is hailed as the single most important moment in women’s sports history. That 94 percent of women in American C-suites say they played sports as girls, and that collegiate athletes like me had their education paid for because of Title IX, is evidence of its generational impact.

In the ’80s King’s career slowed down, featuring fewer titles and some business calamities, and her life was upturned by a palimony suit filed by a former female lover. King’s outing, along with costing her millions in sponsorships, set in motion a period of deep introspection and allowed her to finally deal with lifelong struggles with eating disorders and internalized homophobia, and it also seems to have clarified for her the need to battle the sport’s elitism in a more tactical and intentional way.

When she was a young girl, her dust-ups with the tennis establishment at the stuffy and exclusionary Los Angeles Tennis Club — over everything from sexist dress codes to racist door policies — had irritated the ***working-class*** kid, and while she might not have had a road map, exactly, for what shape her future activism would take, she definitely saw the road. “There was this gap between what I thought I was capable of and the world as it was,” King writes. “I saw that gulf clearly. I was less sure how to breach it.”

Her continuous fight to be included — and her instinct to include others in the fight — made her a force in real time. But it’s from these years in the wilderness when she took stock — particularly following the deaths of ultimately close friends like Ashe and Riggs — that King began to put a contemporary activist framework around her trailblazing.

Her efforts in the decades since, from advising the ’99ers — the U.S. women’s national soccer team, which turned their victory in the 1999 World Cup into a viable professional league — to defending L.G.B.T.Q. rights, work that was recognized by Obama with a Presidential Medal of Freedom, have been defined so much by her activism that it’s easy to take her for granted, and easy to assume that someone is ready to take her place.

“I’ve told people if I die right now I’d be really ticked off because I’m not finished,” she writes, scanning the horizon. “Time is running out for real, and I’ve always had a sense of urgency.”

Despite a resurgence in recreational popularity and huge money at the top of the ecosystem, tennis is at a crossroads: Equity, parity and inclusion are still not always the priority. The absence of a clear new leader means that King must view her work as imperiled. With the sport currently in turmoil over player unions, the lack of a viable domestic violence policy, a vociferous battle over press obligations and rumors of venture capital at the gates, ready (for better or worse) to buy it all up, King’s book arrives with the same exquisite timing that has defined her style of play as well as her life.

It’s easy work to be a former champion, easier still to be a legend — after all, the job requirements are nothing beyond showing up. But it’s not easy to be an activist, and it’s certainly not easy to commit your life to pushing the world closer to how you want it to be. “All In” reads as a manifesto, like “Letters to a Young Poet” with a heavy dash of bell hooks. Billie Jean King is not done yet, but as she says here, “If you’re in the business of change, you have to be prepared to play the long game.” Her book is a powerful rallying cry, in a life full of them, for how she hopes we play the game after she’s gone.

Caitlin Thompson is the publisher of Racquet. ALL IN An Autobiography By Billie Jean King with Johnette Howard and Maryanne Vollers Illustrated. 482 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $30.

PHOTO: Billie Jean King in 1974. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** August 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Sinema’s Defection Gives Democrats More Heartburn Over the 2024 Senate Map***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6733-NVY1-JBG3-61VS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1799 words

**Byline:** Blake Hounshell

**Highlight:** A potential mess in Arizona was an unwelcome surprise for Democrats while they were still savoring their victories in 2022.

**Body**

A potential mess in Arizona was an unwelcome surprise for Democrats while they were still savoring their victories in 2022.

When Senator Kyrsten Sinema [*left the Democratic Party*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/09/us/politics/kyrsten-sinema-democrats.html) last week, she didn’t just momentarily drive up antacid sales on Capitol Hill. She also raised the pressure on three especially vulnerable Democratic senators who are up for re-election in 2024, and are defending seats in states that have turned a shade of deep crimson since they were first elected to Congress.

The 2024 map is daunting for Senate Democrats, and it will take all the political dexterity and luck they can muster to keep their 51-ish-seat majority — and then some. Twenty-three of the 33 seats up for grabs are held by Democrats or left-leaning independents. That list includes Montana, Ohio and West Virginia, where Donald Trump won in 2020 by 16, 8 and 29 percentage points.

But daunting is not the same thing as impossible. Faced with steep odds in the past, Democrats have managed to find local causes to champion — remember [*Senator Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin’s crusade against almond milk*](https://www.politico.com/story/2017/06/10/senate-democrats-rural-comeback-2018-239367)? — as they looked for ways to differentiate themselves from the national party. And their incumbents have proved doubters wrong in the past.

“From 30,000 feet, it looks brutal, but as you get closer to the ground, I feel more optimistic about it,” said Jim Kessler, vice president for policy at Third Way, a center-left think tank. “If it’s mainstream versus extreme, we have a great shot.”

For now, Democratic strategists are still poring over the results of the recent midterm elections, trying to gain a deeper understanding of what moved voters.

One consensus viewpoint so far, at least among those I’ve spoken with: Democratic candidates earned just enough credit for trying to address inflation through moves like capping insulin prices to dull Republicans’ advantage on the economy. And they say that while abortion may not matter quite as much in the next election, the issue is not going away in 2024.

Another lesson is crystal clear: Trump has become even more toxic to swing voters during his two years in exile. The latest evidence? [*A USA Today/Suffolk University poll*](https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2022/12/13/trump-support-gop-2024-presidential-race-poll/10882346002/) shows Trump losing a hypothetical matchup with President Biden by nearly eight points.

On the other hand, there are no signs that any of these three states have grown less difficult for Democrats over the last six years. It’s easy to forget that Barack Obama won Ohio twice, or that Montana had a Democratic governor as recently as 2021. Today, that feels like ancient history.

Once Democrats turn to 2024 in earnest, their first and most important task will be ensuring that their incumbents run again. As for Republicans, they are still debating what went wrong this year, with much of the discussion centering on the mechanics of campaigns, like mail voting and ballot harvesting — rather than thornier issues, like abortion. At the same time, as G.O.P. candidates begin declaring their intentions, many are still treading cautiously when it comes to Trump.

“Some of the primary noise on their side suggests they haven’t learned too much yet,” said J.B. Poersch, the president of Senate Majority PAC, a group closely associated with Senator Chuck Schumer. “There’s plenty of things for them to be nervous about.”

The Democrats’ red-state defenders

So far, of the Democratic incumbents in those three states above, only Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio has definitively said he’s in. Brown has demonstrated a unique knack for winning ***working-class*** voters, even as cultural factors start to outweigh economics. He won his race by nearly seven points in 2018, while Representative Tim Ryan lost to J.D. Vance this year by roughly the same margin — far less than other statewide candidates in Ohio, but [*hardly encouraging for Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/20/us/politics/sherrod-brown-ohio-senate.html).

Republicans are lining up to take on Brown, notably State Senator Matt Dolan, who finished third in this year’s Senate primary behind Vance and Josh Mandel — both of whom aggressively courted Trump and his base.

Dolan, whose family owns the Cleveland Guardians, is [*already exploring the boundaries*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/elections/another-bruising-senate-race-brews-ohio-republicans-target-sherrod-bro-rcna57373) of what constitutes acceptable criticism of Trump. “What we witnessed nationally should convince us the country is ready for substantive candidates, not personalities and election deniers,” he wrote in a recent email to Republican county chairs in Ohio. But he said he would support Trump if he were the nominee.

Then there’s Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia, who sounds intrigued by Sinema’s decision to become an independent. “I don’t know how you get more independent than I am,” Manchin told reporters at the Capitol on Monday. “I look at all of these things, I’ve always looked at all of these things. But I have no intention of doing anything right now.”

Like most things Manchin, that answer was neither a yes nor a no. He added, “I’m not a Washington Democrat.”

Manchin already has an official Republican challenger: Representative Alex Mooney, who has telegraphed his line of attack in [*an anti-Manchin ad that ran four months ago*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGWvhI4fnsg). At least two others have shown interest: Attorney General Patrick Morrisey, who ran against Manchin in 2018, and Gov. Jim Justice, who is term-limited.

Montana is only slightly less intimidating terrain for Democrats. They lost both House races this year, while Republicans won a supermajority in the State Legislature.

Senator Jon Tester has said he will make a decision about running again after the holidays, though he has told reporters he feels [*“very positively about my chances.”*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/10/05/senate-dems-reelection-00060062) Tester, who heads home to his farm most weekends, is skilled at finding locally resonant issues to champion, such as federal support for rural hospitals or [*floodplain mapping*](https://www.tester.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/pr-6976/).

Tester allies point to an emerging dynamic on the Republican side that resembles what happened in many primaries in 2022: a race to the right.

One possible contender is Representative Matt Rosendale, whom Tester defeated in 2018 and who is staking out a position as one of the holdouts to Representative Kevin McCarthy’s bid to become House speaker. Another is Representative Ryan Zinke, who resigned as Trump’s interior secretary amid [*a flurry of investigations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/24/us/politics/ryan-zinke-casino-investigation.html) into his conduct. He will return to Congress early next year after winning by just three points against Monica Tranel, a political novice, despite outspending her by two to one.

The rest of the map

At the moment, Democrats appear to have just two pickup opportunities, and neither looks especially promising: Florida and Texas.

And even the seemingly more comfortable seats they hold, like Nevada and Pennsylvania, are not all that comfortable. Nevada was the closest of all the big Senate races this year, with Senator Catherine Cortez Masto [*winning by fewer than 8,000 votes*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/11/08/us/elections/results-nevada-us-senate.html).

In Pennsylvania, Republicans are hoping that David McCormick, who lost narrowly to Dr. Mehmet Oz in the primary this year, will challenge Senator Bob Casey in 2024. Democrats saw McCormick, a former hedge fund executive with deep pockets and roots in Pittsburgh, as the more formidable potential opponent, and subtly tried to help Oz. McCormick is planning to release a book in March, [*“Superpower in Peril: A Battle Plan to Renew America,”*](https://www.centerstreet.com/titles/david-mccormick/superpower-in-peril/9781546001959/) that appears aimed at positioning him more squarely as a China hawk, shoring up a point of vulnerability that hurt him this year.

“I’d be shocked at this point if he doesn’t run,” said Josh Novotney, a former aide to Senator Pat Toomey and a partner at SBL Strategies, a lobbying firm in Pennsylvania. But Novotney cautioned that if Trump were the nominee, it could doom Republicans’ chances of defeating Casey. In the 2022 Senate race, Oz was weighed down by Trump and by Doug Mastriano, the Republican nominee for governor, whose hard-line stances on abortion and embrace of election denialism repelled swing voters.

Democratic senators are also up for re-election in Michigan and Wisconsin, where their chances look brighter. In 2018, Baldwin crushed her Republican opponent, Leah Vukmir, by nearly 11 points, while in Michigan, Senator Debbie Stabenow cruised to victory over John James, who opted to run for a House seat rather than face Stabenow again. This year, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer [*won re-election easily*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/09/us/politics/michigan-governor-whitmer.html), while Democrats took full control of the State Legislature for the first time in 40 years.

Sinema’s defection undeniably makes Democrats’ path more complicated. She has not said she is running, though many political observers suspect her decision to switch parties had to do with worries she would lose a Democratic primary. Neither of the two most prominent Democrats weighing a run, Representatives Ruben Gallego and Greg Stanton, has officially entered the race, however.

Republicans in Arizona could nominate someone on the far right, such as Sheriff Mark Lamb, or a moderate like Karrin Taylor Robson, a lawyer who lost to Kari Lake in this year’s primary for governor. So although most analysts assume that a three-way race would help Republicans, there are too many variables to draw any firm conclusions — including whether there will even be a three-way race.

For now, Democrats are philosophical about the 2024 landscape. “Every election,” Poersch said, “you’re testing: Have the rules changed, or are we playing by the same old rules?”

What to read

* Despite modest improvements for Republicans in 2022, Democrats largely held onto their gains among suburban voters, particularly in battleground states, [*Trip Gabriel reports*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/13/us/politics/suburbs-midterms.html).

1. Donald Trump’s family business lost a criminal contempt trial that was held in secret last fall, according to a newly unsealed court document and several people with knowledge of the matter. [*Jonah Bromwich, William Rashbaum and Ben Protess explain*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/13/nyregion/trump-organization-contempt-secret-trial.html).
2. President Biden signed a bill mandating federal recognition for same-sex marriages and capped his evolution toward embracing gay rights over a four-decade political career. [*Michael D. Shear has the details*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/13/us/politics/biden-same-sex-marriage-bill.html).
3. Inflation slowed more sharply than expected in November, [*Jeanna Smialek reports*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/13/business/economy/inflation-cpi-november.html). It was an encouraging sign for both Federal Reserve officials and consumers and raised hopes for a “soft landing,” or one in which the economy slows gradually and without a painful recession.

Thank you for reading On Politics, and for being a subscriber to The New York Times. — Blake

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Have feedback? Ideas for coverage? We’d love to hear from you. Email us at [*onpolitics@nytimes.com*](mailto:onpolitics@nytimes.com).

PHOTO: Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia sounded intrigued by Senator Kyrsten Sinema’s decision to become an independent, though he said he had “no intention of doing anything right now.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY Stefani Reynolds for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The G.O.P. Is Still the Party Of Plutocrats***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6579-VXK1-JBG3-6136-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 15, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 19; PAUL KRUGMAN

**Length:** 907 words

**Byline:** By Paul Krugman

**Body**

I recently wrote about how international trade has made some Western nations -- Germany in particular -- unwilling to confront autocracy. Germany hasn't just been weak-kneed in its response to Vladimir Putin; it and other European nations have stood by and even continued to provide economic aid to Hungary while Viktor Orban dismantles democracy.

In response, I received mail from Europeans to the effect that American democracy is also under threat and that some of our right-wing politicians are every bit as bad as Orban. Agreed! But that wasn't the point of my argument. And while I'm quite willing to believe, for example, that Ron DeSantis would be Florida's Orban if he could, state governors don't have as much repressive power as rulers of sovereign nations.

Still, the comparison of European and U.S. ethnonationalists raises some interesting questions. In particular, as the G.O.P. has become a full-on antidemocratic party, why has it also remained the party of plutocrats and the enemy of any policy that might help its many ***working-class*** supporters?

To understand the puzzle, consider the policy positions of Marine Le Pen, who has a serious chance of becoming France's next president. Her party, National Rally -- previously called the National Front -- is often described as right-wing. And on social issues it is; in particular, the party is largely defined by its hostility to immigrants and the alleged threat they pose to France's national identity. On economic policy, however, Le Pen is if anything to the left of President Emmanuel Macron.

Now, it's important to understand the context. France provides social benefits on a scale beyond the wildest dreams of U.S. progressives: universal health care, huge family benefits and more. Macron isn't challenging the fundamentals of that system. He is, however, trying to trim some benefits, notably by raising the retirement age. Le Pen, by contrast, actually wants to reduce the retirement age for some workers.

I am not making a case for Le Pen. If she wins, the consequences for France, Europe and the world will be terrifying. But there is some genuine populism -- advocacy of policies that might actually help workers -- in her platform.

Compare that with the positions taken by prominent U.S. Republicans. I can't tell you what the official Republican economic program is, because the party doesn't have one -- in fact, it has made a point of not saying what it will do if it regains power.

We do, however, know what the party did when it was last in power: It gave huge tax cuts to the wealthy, while almost succeeding in repealing the Affordable Care Act, which would have caused tens of millions of Americans to lose health insurance. There's no reason to believe it won't once again pursue anti-worker, pro-plutocrat policies if it regains control.

At the state level, the debacle in Kansas has apparently done nothing to shake Republicans' faith in the magical power of tax cuts for the affluent. Mississippi -- America's poorest state, with the lowest life expectancy and facing a collapse of its rural hospitals -- is slashing income taxes.

And recently Senator Rick Scott of Florida, who heads the Republican senatorial campaign, released a ''Rescue America'' plan that called for tax increases on the half of Americans whose incomes are low enough that they don't pay income taxes (even though they pay payroll taxes, sales taxes and so on). He also warned, falsely, that Social Security and Medicare are headed for bankruptcy, without offering any suggestions about how to preserve them.

Senior Republicans have said that they don't support Scott's agenda, but haven't explained what their actual agenda is -- and have left Scott in his key campaign position, suggesting that his views have wide support within the party.

So everything suggests that the Republican Party is as pro-wealthy, anti-worker as ever. Unlike right-wing European parties, it hasn't made any gestures toward actual populism. Why?

The answer, presumably, is that the G.O.P. caters to plutocrats, even as it attacks ''elites,'' because it thinks it can. After all, being nice to plutocrats and crony capitalists can yield tangible rewards, not just in the form of campaign contributions but also in the form of personal enrichment.

And the Republican Party doesn't believe that it will pay any price for pursuing these rewards. It believes that its supporters will focus on denunciations of critical race theory and buy into conspiracy theories -- almost half of Republicans agree that top Democrats are involved in child sex-trafficking -- while not even being aware of what the party is doing for the very rich. After The Times revealed Jared Kushner's highly questionable $2 billion deal with the Saudis, Fox News simply ignored the report, while harping endlessly on Hunter Biden.

I wish I could say with any confidence that this cynicism will backfire. But I can't. In particular, Democrats who want to campaign on bread-and-butter issues are assuming that voters will understand who's actually buttering their bread. And that doesn't look at all like a safe assumption.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/14/opinion/republicans-populism-rich.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/14/opinion/republicans-populism-rich.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Bolsonaro vs. Lula: Brazil Faces a Stark Choice With Huge Stakes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66RB-GNN1-JBG3-622W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 29, 2022 Saturday 12:13 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1528 words

**Byline:** Jack Nicas

**Highlight:** Brazilians head to the polls on Sunday in an election between two political heavyweights that could have global repercussions.

**Body**

Brazilians head to the polls on Sunday in an election between two political heavyweights that could have global repercussions.

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazil on Sunday faces a crossroads.

After months of pitches to voters, the nation will decide [*one of Latin America’s most important elections in decades*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/28/podcasts/the-daily/brazil-election-bolsanaro-lula.html), picking between the two biggest names in modern Brazilian politics and their polar visions for the country.

The choice for Brazilians is whether to give President Jair Bolsonaro a second term, emboldening and empowering him to carry out a far-right mandate for the nation, or whether to bring back [*former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/29/world/americas/lula-bolsonaro-brazil-election.html) and return Brazil to a leftist track.

Yet the stakes are far higher than simply a contest between the left and the right.

The election carries major consequences for the Amazon rainforest, which is [*crucial to the health of the planet*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/07/climate/amazon-rainforest-climate-change-deforestation.html). Mr. Bolsonaro has [*gutted the agencies*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/08/02/world/america) tasked with protecting the forest, leading to [*soaring deforestation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/06/world/americas/amazon-deforestation-brazil.html), while Mr. da Silva has promised to eradicate illegal logging and mining.

Brazil’s economy, once the world’s sixth largest, has [*flatlined over the past decade*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/23/world/americas/covid-brazil-hunger.html). Mr. Bolsonaro pledges to pursue deregulation and privatization to try to jump-start activity, while Mr. da Silva has made his central pitch about [*feeding*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/23/world/americas/covid-brazil-hunger.html) and housing the poor, whose numbers have climbed during the pandemic.

The vote is a test of the enduring strength of the right-wing populism that swept across many countries in recent years. Mr. Bolsonaro is one of the biggest remaining faces of that movement, but he is trying to withstand a recent clear [*shift to the left across Latin America*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/31/world/americas/latin-america-leftist-leaders.html).

And then there is the concern for the health of one of the world’s biggest democracies. Mr. Bolsonaro has [*spent years attacking Brazil’s democratic institutions*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/10/25/world/americas/brazil-bolsonaro-misinformation.html), including a sustained effort to undermine its voting system, leading millions of Brazilians [*to lose faith in the integrity of their nation’s elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/28/world/americas/bolsonaro-supporters-election.html).

Now, much of the country is wondering: If the president loses the election, [*will he accept it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/22/world/americas/brazil-election-bolsonaro-coup.html)

After Mr. da Silva led in the first round of voting earlier this month, many polls suggest the race has narrowed. The two men have split this country of 217 million people nearly down the middle, with many voters on each side viewing the choice as an existential one for the nation.

“We have a population completely divided between two worlds,” said Malu Gaspar, a political columnist for O Globo, one of Brazil’s biggest newspapers. “So I have a lot of anticipated frustration that this is the most important election of our time, and yet we will come out of it with a lot of more problems than when we went in.”

The close race, high stakes and deep polarization have led to an ugly campaign. Misinformation has soared in recent weeks, with supporters of Mr. da Silva accusing Mr. Bolsonaro of being a cannibal and a pedophile, while Mr. Bolsonaro’s supporters have called Mr. da Silva a gang leader, a communist and a Satanist who wants to close the nation’s churches.

Election officials have tried to intervene, ordering posts and videos off the internet that they say are false. Those efforts have slowed the deluge of misleading information, but they have also become their own controversy, drawing a swell of complaints of unfair refereeing, particularly from Mr. Bolsonaro and his allies.

The debates between the two candidates devolved into name calling and disputes over their past versus their plans for the future. And there has been a spate of political violence, with countless beatings and at least two killings connected to the election.

This week, the violence and claims of censorship from the right collided when the authorities tried to arrest a right-wing congressman whom the Supreme Court had ordered not to speak publicly because, it said, he had attacked Brazil’s democratic institutions. He responded by shooting at the police and throwing a grenade, injuring two officers. He is now in jail.

With a victory on Sunday, Mr. da Silva would complete [*a stunning political revival*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/29/world/americas/lula-bolsonaro-brazil-election.html). The former shoeshine boy and metalworker with a fifth-grade education rose to become Brazil’s president in 2003. He then used a commodity boom and the discovery of offshore oil to reshape the country, lifting 20 million Brazilians out of extreme poverty. By the time he left office in 2010, he had an 80 percent approval rating.

But things quickly turned south for him, his leftist Workers Party and Brazil. His handpicked successor’s interventions into the economy helped plunge Brazil into a recession from which it has never fully recovered, and then a corruption investigation revealed a sprawling kickback scheme that had festered deep inside the Brazilian government under his party’s control.

Nearly 300 people were eventually arrested in the scheme, including Mr. da Silva. He was sentenced to 22 years in prison on charges that he accepted a condo and home improvements from companies bidding on government contracts. But after 17 months, he was released and his convictions were later nullified after the Supreme Court ruled that the judge in his cases was biased. While Mr. da Silva was not cleared of wrongdoing, the decision allowed him to run for president again.

Mr. Bolsonaro is a former Army captain who served three decades in Congress as a fringe far-right lawmaker known for extreme statements. In 2018, in the wake of Mr. da Silva’s prison sentence, Mr. Bolsonaro rode the global wave of right-wing populism to the presidency, promising to root out what he called the corruption of Brazil’s leftists.

His four years since have been tumultuous. He has attacked judges, journalists, political rivals and environmentalists, while also [*publicly doubting the science*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/31/world/americas/brazil-coronavirus-bolsonaro.html) behind Covid-19. He pushed unproven drugs during the pandemic and delayed in buying vaccines. The coronavirus killed nearly 700,000 people in Brazil, the second-highest official toll, after the United States.

Yet despite the turmoil, Mr. Bolsonaro’s support has endured. He far outperformed polls’ expectations in the first round of voting on Oct. 2, and while recent polls have shown Mr. da Silva still in the lead, Mr. Bolsonaro was within striking distance.

The president’s base is a bloc known as “beef, bibles and bullets,” representing people connected to the agribusiness industry, evangelical movement, and law enforcement and the military. Under a slogan of “God, homeland, family and freedom,” he has focused his pitch on warnings about the left trying to change what he calls Brazilians’ traditional way of life.

In his closing pitch to voters in the first presidential debate this month, Mr. Bolsonaro did not mention the economy, and instead accused the left of wanting to legalize drugs and abortion, abolish private property and force children to learn about “gender ideology” and use unisex bathrooms. “We don’t want a country of retrogression, corruption, thievery and disrespect for our religion,” he said.

Mr. da Silva has built a broad coalition in recent months, from the center-right to the far left, with people concerned about what might happen under a second Bolsonaro term. But he has maintained Brazil’s ***working class*** as his base and built his platform around taxing the rich and expanding services for the poor. His stump speech has highlighted a promise that all Brazilians deserve a top cut of meat and a cold beer.

“Let’s get back to fixing this country, and let’s get back to eating and drinking a beer at weekend barbecues,” he said. Mr. Bolsonaro “goes crazy because he thinks only he can, but we want to eat at the barbecues, too.”

The campaign, however, has also had a more worrisome element. For more than a year, Mr. Bolsonaro has warned that he may not accept a loss. He has claimed, without credible evidence, that Brazil’s electronic voting system is rife with fraud and that the left is set on rigging the vote. As a result, three out of four of his supporters say they trust the voting system only a little or not at all.

Over the past week, Mr. Bolsonaro has also begun to claim other kinds of fraud. His campaign has accused radio stations of playing far more ads from Mr. da Silva, which would violate election laws, but the evidence the campaign produced was incomplete and quickly shown to be flawed. Brazil’s election chief, whom Mr. Bolsonaro has called biased, dismissed the accusations.

Yet Mr. Bolsonaro’s son, a congressman, suggested this week that the vote should be delayed because of the alleged fraud, and Mr. Bolsonaro himself is complaining that it is more proof of an unfair election.

“It’s fraud. It interferes with the results of the election,” Mr. Bolsonaro told reporters on Wednesday. “I am a victim once again.”

André Spigariol contributed reporting from Brasília.

André Spigariol contributed reporting from Brasília.

PHOTOS: Above, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the leftist candidate, earlier this month on the eve of the first round of voting. In Sunday’s runoff election, he faces President Jair Bolsonaro, who is seeking a second term for his far-right agenda. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY VICTOR MORIYAMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DADO GALDIERI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A9.

**Load-Date:** October 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Resentment That Never Sleeps***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61GD-PHK1-DXY4-X0WY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3298 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** Rising anxiety over declining social status tells us a lot about how we got here and where we’re going.

**Body**

Rising anxiety over declining social status tells us a lot about how we got here and where we’re going.

More and more, politics determine which groups are favored and which are denigrated.

Roughly speaking, Trump and the Republican Party have fought to enhance the status of white Christians and white people without college degrees: the white working and middle class. Biden and the Democrats have fought to elevate the standing of previously marginalized groups: women, minorities, the L.G.B.T.Q. community and others.

The ferocity of this politicized status competition can be seen in the anger of white non-college voters over their [*disparagement by liberal elites*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class), the attempt to flip traditional hierarchies and the emergence of [*identity politics*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) on both sides of the chasm.

Just over a decade ago, in their paper “[*Hypotheses on Status Competition*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class),” [*William C. Wohlforth*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) and [*David C. Kang*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class), professors of government at Dartmouth and the University of Southern California, wrote that “social status is one of the most important motivators of human behavior” and yet “over the past 35 years, no more than half dozen articles have appeared in top U.S. political science journals building on the proposition that the quest for status will affect patterns of interstate behavior.”

Scholars are now rectifying that omission, with the recognition that in politics, status competition has become increasingly salient, prompting a collection of emotions including envy, jealousy and resentment that have spurred ever more intractable conflicts between left and right, Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives.

Hierarchal ranking, the status classification of different groups — the well-educated and the less-well educated, white people and Black people, the straight and L.G.B.T.Q. communities — has the effect of consolidating and seeming to legitimize existing inequalities in resources and power. Diminished status has become a source of rage on both the left and right, sharpened by divisions over economic security and insecurity, geography and, ultimately, values.

The stakes of status competition are real. [*Cecilia L. Ridgeway*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class), a professor at Stanford, described the costs and benefits in her [*2013 presidential address*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) at the American Sociological Association.

Understanding “the effects of status — inequality based on differences in esteem and respect” is crucial for those seeking to comprehend “the mechanisms behind obdurate, durable patterns of inequality in society,” Ridgeway argued:

Failing to understand the independent force of status processes has limited our ability to explain the persistence of such patterns of inequality in the face of remarkable socioeconomic change.

“As a basis for social inequality, status is a bit different from resources and power. It is based on cultural beliefs rather than directly on material arrangements,” Ridgeway said:

We need to appreciate that status, like resources and power, is a basic source of human motivation that powerfully shapes the struggle for precedence out of which inequality emerges.

Ridgeway elaborated on this argument in an essay, “[*Why Status Matters for Inequality*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class)”:

Status is as significant as money and power. At a macro level, status stabilizes resource and power inequality by transforming it into cultural status beliefs about group differences regarding who is “better” (esteemed and competent).

In an email, Ridgeway made the case that “status is definitely important in contemporary political dynamics here and in Europe,” adding that

Status has always been part of American politics, but right now a variety of social changes have threatened the status of ***working class*** and rural whites who used to feel they had a secure, middle status position in American society — not the glitzy top, but respectable, ‘Main Street’ core of America. The reduction of ***working-class*** wages and job security, growing demographic diversity, and increasing urbanization of the population have greatly undercut that sense and fueled political reaction.

The political consequences cut across classes.

[*Peter Hall*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class), a professor of government at Harvard, wrote by email that he and a colleague, [*Noam Gidron*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class), a professor of political science at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, have found that

across the developed democracies, the lower people feel their social status is, the more inclined they are to vote for anti-establishment parties or candidates on the radical right or radical left.

Those drawn to the left, Hall wrote in an email, come from the top and bottom of the social order:

People who start out near the bottom of the social ladder seem to gravitate toward the radical left, perhaps because its program offers them the most obvious economic redress; and people near the top of the social ladder often also embrace the radical left, perhaps because they share its values.

In contrast, Hall continued,

The people most often drawn to the appeals of right-wing populist politicians, such as Trump, tend to be those who sit several rungs up the socioeconomic ladder in terms of their income or occupation. My conjecture is that it is people in this kind of social position who are most susceptible to what [*Barbara Ehrenreich*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) called a “fear of falling” — namely, anxiety, in the face of an economic or cultural shock, that they might fall further down the social ladder,” a phenomenon often described as “last place aversion.

Gidron and Hall argue in their 2019 paper “[*Populism as a Problem of Social Integration*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class)” that

Much of the discontent fueling support for radical parties is rooted in feelings of social marginalization — namely, in the sense some people have that they have been pushed to the fringes of their national community and deprived of the roles and respect normally accorded full members of it.

In this context, what Gidron and Hall call “the subjective social status of citizens — defined as their beliefs about where they stand relative to others in society” serves as a tool to measure both levels of anomie in a given country, and the potential of radical politicians to find receptive publics because “the more marginal people feel they are to society, the more likely they are to feel alienated from its political system — providing a reservoir of support for radical parties.”

Gidron and Hall continue:

The populist rhetoric of politicians on both the radical right and left is often aimed directly at status concerns. They frequently adopt the plain-spoken language of the common man, self-consciously repudiating the politically correct or technocratic language of the political elites. Radical politicians on the left evoke the virtues of working people, whereas those on the right emphasize themes of national greatness, which have special appeal for people who rely on claims to national membership for a social status they otherwise lack. The “take back control” and “make America great again” slogans of the Brexit and Trump campaigns were perfectly pitched for such purposes.

[*Robert Ford,*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) a professor of political science at the University of Manchester in the U.K., argued in an email that three factors have heightened the salience of status concerns.

The first, he wrote, is the vacuum created by “the relative decline of class politics.” The second is the influx of immigrants, “not only because different ‘ways of life’ are perceived as threatening to ‘organically grown’ communities, but also because this threat is associated with the notion that elites are complicit in the dilution of such traditional identities.”

The third factor Ford describes as “an asymmetrical increase in the salience of status concerns due to the political repercussions of educational expansion and generational value change,” especially “because of the progressive monopolization of politics by high-status professionals,” creating a constituency of “cultural losers of modernization” who “found themselves without any mainstream political actors willing to represent and defend their ‘ways of life’ ” — a role Trump sought to fill.

In their book, “[*Cultural Backlash*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class),” [*Pippa Norris*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) and Ronald [*Inglehart*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class), political scientists at Harvard and the University of Michigan, describe the constituencies in play here — the “oldest (interwar) generation, non-college graduates, the ***working class***, white Europeans, the more religious, men, and residents of rural communities” that have moved to the right in part in response to threats to their status:

These groups are most likely to feel that they have become estranged from [*the silent revolution*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) in social and moral values, left behind by cultural changes that they deeply reject. The interwar generation of non-college educated white men — until recently the politically and socially dominant group in Western cultures — has passed a tipping point at which their hegemonic status, power, and privilege are fading.

The emergence of what political scientists call “[*affective polarization*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class),” in which partisans incorporate their values, their race, their religion — their belief system — into their identity as a Democrat or Republican, together with more traditional “[*ideological polarization*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class)” based on partisan differences in policy stands, has produced heightened levels of partisan animosity and hatred.

[*Lilliana Mason*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class), a political scientist at the University of Maryland, [*describes it*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) this way:

The alignment between partisan and other social identities has generated a rift between Democrats and Republicans that is deeper than any seen in recent American history. Without the crosscutting identities that have traditionally stabilized the American two-party system, partisans in the American electorate are now seeing each other through prejudiced and intolerant eyes.

If polarization has evolved into partisan hatred, status competition serves to calcify the animosity between Democrats and Republicans.

In their July 2020 paper, “[*Beyond Populism*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class): The Psychology of Status-Seeking and Extreme Political Discontent,” [*Michael Bang Petersen*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class), [*Mathias Osmundsen*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) and [*Alexander Bor*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class), political scientists at Aarhus University in Denmark, contend there are two basic methods of achieving status: the “prestige” approach requiring notable achievement in a field and “dominance” capitalizing on threats and bullying. “Modern democracies,” they write,

are currently experiencing destabilizing events including the emergence of demagogic leaders, the onset of street riots, circulation of misinformation and extremely hostile political engagements on social media.

They go on:

Building on psychological research on status-seeking, we argue that at the core of extreme political discontent are motivations to achieve status via dominance, i.e., through the use of fear and intimidation. Essentially, extreme political behavior reflects discontent with one’s own personal standing and a desire to actively rectify this through aggression.

This extreme political behavior often coincides with the rise of populism, especially right-wing populism, but Petersen, Osmundsen and Bor contend that the behavior is distinct from populism:

The psychology of dominance is likely to underlie current-day forms of extreme political discontent — and associated activism — for two reasons: First, radical discontent is characterized by verbal or physical aggression, thus directly capitalizing on the competences of people pursuing dominance-based strategies. Second, current-day radical activism seems linked to desires for recognition and feelings of ‘losing out’ in a world marked by, on the one hand, traditional gender and race-based hierarchies, which limit the mobility of minority groups and, on the other hand, globalized competition, which puts a premium on human capital.

Extreme discontent, they continue,

is a phenomenon among individuals for whom prestige-based pathways to status are, at least in their own perception, unlikely to be successful. Despite their political differences, this perception may be the psychological commonality of, on the one hand, race- or gender-based grievance movements and, on the other hand, white lower-middle class right-wing voters.

The authors emphasize that the distinction between populism and status-driven dominance is based on populism’s “orientation toward group conformity and equality,” which stands “in stark contrast to dominance motivations. In contrast to conformity, dominance leads to self-promotion. In contrast to equality, dominance leads to support for steep hierarchies.”

[*Thomas Kurer*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class), a political scientist at the University of Zurich, contends that status competition is a political tool deployed overwhelmingly by the right. By email, Kurer wrote:

It is almost exclusively political actors from the right and the radical right that actively campaign on the status issue. They emphasize implications of changing status hierarchies that might negatively affect the societal standing of their core constituencies and thereby aim to mobilize voters who fear, but have not yet experienced, societal regression. The observation that campaigning on potential status loss is much more widespread and, apparently, more politically worthwhile than campaigning on status gains and makes a lot of sense in light of the long-established finding in social psychology that citizens care much more about a relative loss compared to same-sized gains.

Kurer argued that it is the threat of lost prestige, rather than the actual loss, that is a key factor in status-based political mobilization:

Looking at the basic socio-demographic profile of a Brexiter or a typical supporter of a right-wing populist party in many advanced democracies suggests that we need to be careful with a simplified narrative of a ‘revolt of the left behind’. A good share of these voters can be found in what we might call the lower middle class, which means they might well have decent jobs and decent salaries — but they fear, often for good reasons, that they are not on the winning side of economic modernization.

Kurer noted that in his own April 2020 study, “[*The Declining Middle*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class): Occupational Change, Social Status, and the Populist Right,” he found

that it is voters who are and remain in jobs susceptible to automation and digitalization, so called routine jobs, who vote for the radical right and not those who actually lose their routine jobs. The latter are much more likely to abstain from politics altogether.

In a separate study of British voters who supported the leave side of Brexit, “[*The malaise of the squeezed middle*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class): Challenging the narrative of the ‘left behind’ Brexiter,” by [*Lorenza Antonucci*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) of the University of Birmingham, [*Laszlo Horvath*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) of the University of Exeter, Yordan Kutiyski of VU University Amsterdam and [*André Krouwel*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) of the Vrije University of Amsterdam, found that this segment of the electorate

is associated more with intermediate levels of education than with low or absent education, in particular in the presence of a perceived declining economic position. Secondly, we find that Brexiters hold distinct psychosocial features of malaise due to declining economic conditions, rather than anxiety or anger. Thirdly, our exploratory model finds voting Leave associated with self-identification as middle class, rather than with ***working class***. We also find that intermediate levels of income were not more likely to vote for remain than low-income groups.

In an intriguing analysis of the changing role of status in politics, [*Herbert Kitschelt*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class), a political scientist at Duke, emailed the following argument. In the recent past, he wrote:

One unique thing about ***working class*** movements — particularly when infused with Marxism — is that they could dissociate class from social status by constructing an alternative status hierarchy and social theory: Workers may be poor and deprived of skill, but in world-historic perspective they are designated to be the victorious agents of overcoming capitalism in favor of a more humane social order.

Since then, Kitschelt continued, “the downfall of the ***working class*** over the last thirty years is not just a question of its numerical shrinkage, its political disorganization and stagnating wages. It also signifies a loss of status.” The political consequences are evident and can be seen in the aftermath of the defeat of President Trump:

Those who cannot adopt or compete in the dominant status order — closely associated with the acquisition of knowledge and the mastery of complex cultural performances — make opposition to this order a badge of pride and recognition. The proliferation of conspiracy theories is an indicator of this process. People make themselves believe in them, because it induces them into an alternative world of status and rank.

On the left, Kitschelt wrote, the high value accorded to individuality, difference and autonomy creates

a fundamental tension between the demand for egalitarian economic redistribution — and the associated hope for status leveling — and the prerogative awarded to individualist or voluntary group distinction. This is the locus, where identity politics — and the specific form of [*intersectionality*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) as a mode of signaling multiple facets of distinctiveness — comes in.

In the contest of contemporary politics, status competition serves to exacerbate some of the worst aspects of polarization, Kitschelt wrote:

If polarization is understood as the progressive division of society into clusters of people with political preferences and ways of life that set them further and further apart from each other, status politics is clearly a reinforcement of polarization. This augmentation of social division becomes particularly virulent when it features no longer just a clash between high and low status groups in what is still commonly understood as a unified status order, but if each side produces its own status hierarchies with their own values.

These trends will only worsen as claims of separate “status hierarchies” are buttressed by declining economic opportunities and widespread alienation from the mainstream liberal culture.

Millions of voters, including the core group of Trump supporters — whites without college degrees — face bleak futures, pushed further down the ladder by meritocratic competition that rewards what they don’t have: higher education and [*high scores*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) on standardized tests. Jockeying for place in a merciless meritocracy feeds into the status wars that are presently poisoning the country, even as exacerbated levels of competition are, theoretically, an indispensable component of contemporary geopolitical and economic reality.

Voters in the bottom half of the income distribution face a level of hypercompetition that has, in turn, served to elevate politicized status anxiety in a world where social and economic mobility has, for many, [*ground to a halt*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class): 90 percent of the age cohort born in the 1940s looked forward to a better standard of living than their parents’, compared with 50 percent for those born since 1980. Even worse, those in the lower status ranks suffer the most lethal consequences of the current pandemic.

These forces in their totality suggest that Joe Biden faces the toughest challenge of his career in attempting to fulfill his [*pledge*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) to the electorate: “We can restore the defining American promise, that no matter where you start in life, there’s nothing you can’t achieve. And, in doing so, we can restore the soul of our nation.”

Trump has capitalized on the failures of this American promise. Now we have to hope that Biden can deliver.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-so-many-people-dont-get-about-the-u-s-working-class).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Joshua Roberts/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***At 76, Udo Kier Takes the Lead***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63CH-VG01-DXY4-X1R0-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Erik Piepenburg

**Body**

In 1966, a pouty-mouthed Udo Kier made his movie debut in a zippy short called ''Road to Saint Tropez,'' playing a gigolo who has a fling with an older woman. Their day at Baie des Anges is a romp, but by the time they get to the film's title beach town, he breaks her heart.

This summer, Kier is again in a movie that was shot by the water. But it's nowhere near the French Riviera, and he's no lady killer.

In ''Swan Song,'' a new movie from the writer-director Todd Stephens, Kier plays Mr. Pat, a flamboyant former hairdresser languishing in a grim nursing home outside Sandusky, Ohio, a ***working-class*** city on the Lake Erie shore. With the promise of money, he hitchhikes into town to fulfill the wish of his recently deceased ex-client Rita (Linda Evans): that he style her corpse's hair and makeup for her open-casket funeral.

While roaming Sandusky, Mr. Pat crosses paths with Dee Dee, a protégée turned rival (Jennifer Coolidge), and Dustin, Rita's gay grandson (Michael Urie). But here's the thing: Rita is a ''demanding Republican monster,'' as Mr. Pat sasses, and he's torn over whether to ''make a dead bitch look human.''

When it came to the role, Kier said he ''had no fear whatsoever,'' a tombstone-worthy way to describe his own career, which has been defined by unreserved performances as outré characters for renegade directors.

''I was looking forward to making the movie because I don't ever want to say: I can't do that,'' he said. ''I would go as far as to say it was like a dream project for me.''

''Swan Song,'' now in theaters and on demand starting Aug. 13, completes Stephens's indie Ohio Trilogy, which began with writing ''Edge of Seventeen'' (1998) and co-writing and directing ''Gypsy 83'' (2001), stories of Gen X gay boys itching to leave Sandusky for New York. With Mr. Pat, the trilogy shifts its spotlight to an older gay man who built a life in Ohio.

Stephens said he spent more than a year trying to cast the right actor to play a Stonewall-generation peacock who favors fancy fedoras and mint-green leisure suiting. Then a casting director brought up Kier.

''I hadn't thought of him because he's German,'' said Stephens, who based the character on Pat Pitsenbarger, a hairdresser and drag performer he encountered as a teenager exploring his own sexuality in Sandusky's gay circles in the '80s. ''I had always thought of him in villain roles. But on the other hand, he's so amazingly fabulous. Mr. Pat had big blue eyes like Udo. As soon as I met him, I knew he was Mr. Pat.''

Over five decades as an actor, Kier has put those ice-blue eyes to provocative use as a vampire for Paul Morrissey (''Blood for Dracula'' in 1974), a psychiatrist for Dario Argento (''Suspiria'' in 1977), a john for Gus Van Sant (''My Own Private Idaho'' in 1991), and a demon and a baby for Lars von Trier (''The Kingdom'' series in the '90s). He was Madonna's dungeon companion in her 1992 book ''Sex.''

Still to come for the prolific actor are the dark comedy ''My Neighbor, Adolf,'' in which he plays a man suspected of being Hitler, and a recurring role in the second season of the Amazon Prime series ''Hunters,'' about Nazi hunters.

With ''Swan Song,'' Kier scored a rarity for an actor at 76: a juicy leading role. Over the phone from his home in Palm Springs, Calif., Kier took the conversation in multitudes of directions. These are edited excerpts.

How does it feel to have a leading role?

In all the films I did, from ''Blade'' to ''Shadow of the Vampire,'' I always had -- I hate that word supporting -- I had smaller roles. This is the first time after ''Dracula'' and ''[Flesh for] Frankenstein'' that I played the lead. I've always wanted to play a villain in a James Bond film, but somehow that didn't happen.

Tell me about shooting with Linda Evans.

In Germany, they called ''Dallas'' and ''Dynasty'' street cleaners because when they were on television, nobody was in the street. [Laughs] I first met her in a restaurant the night before we were going to shoot, and she was so normal. I was surprised because she wanted to rehearse and rehearse and rehearse. I liked that.

When we were shooting, we were real. There was no acting. I learned over the years that the good actors are the nicest people. It's only the insecure who complain all the time. Linda is one of the nicest.

How much did Sandusky influence your making of the film?

Everything was wonderful, easy. The main street became for me like the studio at Paramount. I wanted to make the movie as chronologically as possible. Since we started in the retirement home, I slept there alone without a camera and got a feeling for the corridors and for the bathrooms. Then I had an apartment in Sandusky.

Was there a gay man from your past who inspired your performance?

There were many. There were still friends of the real Pat around, and they told me how he'd hold his cigarette. There were also little things over my life that I have seen in clubs or privately, how people, when they sit down, put one leg over the other just so. But I also wanted to go away from clichés. I did not want to say, ''Yes, girl.''

Do you identify anywhere under the L.G.B.T.Q. umbrella?

When I was a young man in Germany, if two men lived together and the neighbors could hear erotic noises, they would call the police and the people would be arrested. I think it's wonderful what has been achieved everywhere, especially in America.

You've worked with some true gay auteurs, including Fassbinder. What's your favorite memory of him?

I met Fassbinder when he was 15, and I was 16, in Cologne in a ***working-class*** bar with a mix of truck drivers and secretaries. I went to London to work and learn English. One day I bought a magazine with his face on it calling him a genius and an alcoholic, and I thought, that's Rainer from the bar.

When I went back to Germany, he offered me a role in ''The Stationmaster's Wife'' and that was our first work together. We made a lot of movies together. We also lived together. Somewhere it says that we had an affair, but that's a lie. He was the only director who captured how Germany was after the war.

Is there a film of yours people might not know about but you wish they'd discover?

I did ''House of Boys,'' a very important film for the gay community. It's set [in 1984] in a nightclub in Amsterdam, which my character runs. The boys are there doing stripping, and I come out like Marlene Dietrich. The film is important because AIDS was coming, and nobody knew what AIDS was. I think it's something people should see.

In ''Swan Song'' and in real life, there's a generational divide between older gay men who remember the worst years of AIDS and younger men who don't.

Cookie Mueller, my good friend, died of AIDS. I also lost many friends in Germany. In front of the camera, I had that in mind.

Have you thought about what you'd like to look like when you die?

[Laughs] I don't care. I guess if someone said that I had seven hours to live, I would have a party with wonderful drinks. After seven hours, I would jump in my pool and not move anymore. People would say, ''He's so good! Look at how long he can hold his breath!''

The problem would be if I was 85 and I had no more hair. I would find somebody to polish the top of my head.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/06/movies/udo-kier-swan-song.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/06/movies/udo-kier-swan-song.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From top: Udo Kier in Palm Springs, Calif.

in ''Swan Song''

and with Dalila Di Lazzaro in Andy Warhol's ''Frankenstein'' in 1973. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN PFLUGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

CHRIS STEPHENS/MAGNOLIA PICTURES

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[***The History of Divorce, Television Style***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:672R-0X91-JBG3-647P-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Alexis Soloski

**Body**

As norms around marriage and divorce have evolved over the decades, so have their depictions on television, mostly recently in series like ''George & Tammy,'' ''Better Things'' and ''The Split.''

On Jan. 26, 1992, Hillary Clinton gave an interview to ''60 Minutes.'' Gennifer Flowers, a cabaret singer, had recently told a tabloid about her longtime affair with Bill Clinton, then a candidate for president. Seated on a sofa next to her husband, Hillary, prim in a blazer and headband, asserted her independence.

''I'm not sitting here, some little woman standing by my man like Tammy Wynette,'' she said to the interviewer.

Wynette, by then a country music legend with a tinseled string of No. 1 songs, was, as she expressed it in an open letter, as angry as she could be. ''Mrs. Clinton, you have offended every woman and man who love that song,'' she wrote. ''I believe you have offended every true country music fan and every person who has 'made it on their own.'''

This was, of course, the great irony of the situation. Clinton, on that cream sofa, did stand by her man. She is still standing by. And despite what her oeuvre might suggest, Wynette, who came to Nashville as a single mother and later obtained two further divorces and one annulment, did not.

Wynette's history -- musical, marital -- is revived in ''George & Tammy,'' a limited series, airing on Showtime, which stars Jessica Chastain as Wynette and Michael Shannon as her third husband, the country star George Jones. In its nuanced depiction of marriage and divorce, ''George & Tammy'' is one of several recent shows -- the HBO remake of ''Scenes From a Marriage,'' ''Fleishman Is in Trouble,'' ''Better Things,'' ''The Split'' -- rethinking and complicating the representation of how a marriage ends and what might come after.

''Every time we change the shape of what family looks like, it is exciting,'' said Abi Morgan, speaking of her writing for ''The Split,'' a drama about a family of London divorce lawyers that ended a three-season run earlier this year. ''Because we then open up our ideals.''

The first divorced main character to appear on scripted television was most likely Vivian Vance's Vivian Bagley, in ''The Lucy Show,'' which debuted in 1962. The show's source material, Irene Kampen's novel ''Life Without George,'' centered on two divorced women, but despite that -- and despite Ball's real-life split from Desi Arnaz -- her character was rendered as a widow, a move thought to invite more sympathy. Carol Brady of ''The Brady Bunch'' was possibly divorced, but the show, which began in 1969, the same year that California adopted no-fault divorce, never directly addressed her status. Mary Richards, the lead character of ''The Mary Tyler Moore Show,'' was originally pitched as divorced, but the network insisted on a broken engagement instead.

Yet as the women's liberation movement expanded and the divorce rate rose, divorced women became more common onscreen as well as off, with creators eager to plumb both the narrative potential and the socioeconomic impact of divorce. ''Nineteen-seventies television was really interested in exploring social issues,'' said Annie Berke, the author of ''Their Own Best Creations: Women Writers in Postwar Television.'' ''And divorce was a social issue.''

Why were there so few divorced male protagonists, beyond the sad sacks of ''The Odd Couple''? Perhaps because divorce represented lower economic hurdles for male characters, who were presumably already in the work force and had long enjoyed lives outside the home. The potential for new experiences is minimized.

Besides, divorced men are often seen as less sympathetic. (Want sympathy? Write a widower.) If women are taught to desire marriage, the conventional wisdom goes, a wife must have had a good reason to want to end one. And if the marriage is ended for her, then she seems even more deserving of compassion. Men's liberation carries less social heft.

In the '70s and early '80s, divorced and divorcing women became the heroines of numerous situation comedies such as ''One Day at a Time,'' ''It's a Living,'' ''Alice,'' ''Maude'' and ''Rhoda,'' a ''Mary Tyler Moore'' spinoff. In these shows, which center on ***working-class*** and middle-class urban women, divorce often constitutes a financial and social injury that a heroine or sidekick weathers with heart and pluck.

In the early 2000s, a new kind of divorced woman emerged. From Charlotte of ''Sex and the City'' (which debuted in 1998) up through ''The Starter Wife'' (2007-8) and ''Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce'' (2014-18), portrayals of divorce became more glamorous, more privileged. In shows that included divorce as a major plot point, splits offered women a chance to reinvent themselves, though their emancipation was often narrowly focused on luxury lifestyle choices and their pursuit of new partners. These shows divorce women not only from their spouses but also from broader political concerns. (One fulcrum show: ''Designing Women,'' which ended in 1993, included one divorced character, Annie Potts's Mary Jo, who had an active investment in women's liberation, and another, Delta Burke's Suzanne, who did not.)

Suzanne Leonard, a professor of English at Simmons University and the author of ''Wife, Inc.: The Business of Marriage in the Twenty-First Century,'' sees such shows as exemplars of postfeminism or ''choice feminism,'' an ideology in which any choice a woman makes is seen as potentially empowering. ''There was a lot of discussion during the second-wave feminist movement about the financial consequences of divorce,'' she said. ''And those consequences become really glossed over.''

This focus on women's personal emancipation continued in shows like ''The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel,'' whose heroine becomes a comedian only after a split; ''Grace and Frankie,'' about frenemies whose lives are enlarged after they divorce their husbands; and ''The Good Wife,'' in which a politician's wife flowers professionally (and reveals her own questionable ethics) once her marriage ends.

But in the past half decade, more series have begun to explore both signatories of a divorce decree. (Men's liberation? Your time is now.) Sharon Horgan (''Catastrophe'') created ''Divorce,'' which ran on HBO from 2016 to 2019, before her own marriage ended. But even then she was determined to show both sides of the split. She was interested, she said in a recent phone interview, ''in exploring a sort of flip-flop in terms of who you were rooting for or who had it worse and which character wishes they could go back.''

''Divorce'' and its contemporaries -- ''Fleishman Is in Trouble,'' ''The Affair,'' ''Scenes From a Marriage'' -- suggest that divorce is not necessarily calamity or deliverance. (The comedy ''The New Adventures of Old Christine,'' whose heroine was presumably just as messy before her divorce as after, is an arguable forerunner.) Divorce, these shows argue, will solve some problems but not necessarily others, and it will rarely mean the definite end of a relationship, particularly if there are children involved.

''This is the secret that no one will say: Once you love a person, you don't stop loving them,'' Abe Sylvia, the creator of ''George & Tammy'' said. ''You may have a lot of rage and a lot of anger, but that's all coming from that kernel of connection that's actually locked in.''

''George & Tammy'' depicts divorce as necessary, a consequence of George's alcoholism. But the legal decree doesn't sever the connection between the two of them, who remain intermittently enmeshed, both personally and professionally. And divorce doesn't liberate Tammy. Her subsequent marriage, to the songwriter and producer George Richey (Steve Zahn), is represented as being much worse. The problems that afflict Tammy before her divorce -- a hard-charging work ethic that will eventually compromise her health, the fierceness of her attachments -- dog her after.

''This empowerment people find in a third act? I think it's a lie,'' Sylvia said. ''All of us are carrying along the baggage of all of our relationships at all times. George and Tammy were just honest about it.''

The divorce rate has fallen in recent years, partly because the marriage rate has as well. (According to the last census, there are 5.1 marriages per 1,000 Americans and 2.3 divorces.) At the same time, some corners of the culture seem to think traditional family structures need saving -- witness, for example, the TikTok videos valorizing housewife life or the Republican rhetoric decrying no-fault divorce. And yet, divorce can offer an opportunity to rethink those structures in healthy ways, as can its representations.

''There are many ways to be a family,'' Orna Guralnik, a psychoanalyst and the star of Showtime's unscripted series ''Couples Therapy,'' said in a recent phone interview. ''A husband and wife in a particular kind of marriage is just one option.''

Some older shows have suggested alternative family structures. In ''The Golden Girls,'' which began in 1985, Dorothy's divorce from Stan precipitates her new living arrangements. ''Kate & Allie,'' which began the year before, presents a beautiful fantasy in which two divorced women and their kids are able to share an entire West Village brownstone. More recently, in ''Better Things'' and ''The Split,'' divorced women create rich, meaningful lives without necessarily seeking new partnerships.

In ''Better Things,'' which wrapped up earlier this year, Pamela Adlon plays Sam, a single mother and working actress whose biography overlaps with Adlon's own. With three growing daughters, a vibrant group of friends and a mother who lives across the street, Sam's life is, if anything, too full.

''There's nothing missing,'' Adlon said in a recent phone interview.

Going into the show's third season, she remembered fielding press questions about whom Sam might pair with, which made Adlon more determined to have Sam stay single. ''That's when I realized how important it was to stay the course and mirror my life and the life of a lot of other women, who never do reconstitute a family,'' she said.

This is, of course, one of the great gifts of television, that it can reflect back to us our own lives while also opening the possibility of new ones. The finale of ''The Split,'' for example, emphasizes the relationships between Nicola Walker's Hannah and her family instead of pushing her toward a new partner.

Morgan shot two endings, one of which did suggest a romantic future for Hannah. ''But actually, I felt deflated when I watched it,'' she said. ''I thought of all my girlfriends who had gone through divorce, and somehow I was reiterating something by saying, 'You're only complete by having another relationship.'''

Morgan isn't against love, she clarified, or marriage. She has been with her husband, the writer Jacob Krichefski, for 22 years. But she believes in envisioning other forms of love, partnership and family.

''People always want happy endings,'' she said. ''We're just changing the idea of what a happy ending is.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/09/arts/television/george-and-tammy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/09/arts/television/george-and-tammy.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, ''George & Tammy,'' with Michael Shannon and Jessica Chastain, offers a nuanced depiction of marriage and divorce. Above from left, Thomas Haden Church and Sarah Jessica Parker played two sides of the central conflict in ''Divorce.'' Pamela Adlon did not want to pair off her alter ego in ''Better Things.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANA HAWLEY/SHOWTIME

CRAIG BLANKENHORN/HBO

SUZANNE TENNER/FX)

Mary Tyler Moore, foreground, and Valerie Harper in ''The Mary Tyler Moore Show.'' Moore's character was coming off a broken engagement at the start of the show. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CBS) This article appeared in print on page C6.

**Load-Date:** December 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Isolationists vs. Hawks: Republicans Are Split***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VF-HC41-JBG3-64W3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 23, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1795 words

**Byline:** By Blake Hounshell and Leah Askarinam

**Body**

In Ohio, two Republicans running for Senate have taken sharply different positions, offering a clear view of the party's rift over foreign policy.

You won't find a clearer distillation of the Republican Party's divide on foreign policy than the sparring that broke out this weekend in Ohio over Ukraine.

It's a skirmish that pits Trump-style, ''America First'' isolationists against more traditional hawkish Republicans. And while strategists in both parties say voters are much more concerned about pocketbook issues like inflation than they are about national security, the contrasting messages reflect a Republican Party that remains deeply torn between a base still loyal to Donald Trump and an elite seeking to move beyond him.

On one side of the split is J.D. Vance, who has sought to parlay his celebrity as the author of ''Hillbilly Elegy'' into a Senate seat.

On the other is Jane Timken, a former state party chair who represents the closest thing in the race to an establishment candidate.

Timken has run a campaign focused on inflation, immigration, ''parents' rights'' and crime. On Ukraine, she put out a statement Monday that was perfectly in tune with the Senate Republicans she hopes to join: supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and calling for sanctions on Russia, while condemning Biden for what she called ''weak and feckless leadership.''

But Vance, a Yale Law School graduate who served in the Marines in Iraq before becoming a venture capitalist, staked out a wildly different position.

''I don't really care what happens to Ukraine one way or another,'' Vance said in a podcast interview.

A retired Army general, Barry R. McCaffrey, blasted those comments on Twitter. ''JD Vance is a shameful person unsuitable for public office. His comments are those of a stooge for Russian aggression,'' said McCaffrey, who led an infantry division during the Persian Gulf war of 1991 and has since become a television news analyst, defense consultant and Trump critic.

To which Vance replied: ''Your entire time in military leadership we won zero wars. You drank fine wine at bullshit security conferences while thousands of ***working class*** kids died on the battlefield. Oh, by the way, how much do you stand to gain financially from a war with Russia, Barry?''

The exchange might as well have been ripped from Trump's playbook. Trump, of course, famously derided John McCain's war record during the 2016 presidential campaign.

At a candidate event in Iowa in July 2015, Trump dismissed the Arizona senator's service in Vietnam, saying, ''I like people who weren't captured.''

At the time, his statement was widely seen as a fatal blunder. What politician in their right mind would attack a decorated war hero, a man who withstood torture in a Vietnamese prison for 5 years? And in a Republican primary, no less?

Defining 'America First'

What many pundits didn't recognize at the time was how many Republican voters harbored a deep antipathy to foreign entanglements after years of overseas interventions that they saw as a failure.

''The G.O.P. base were the ones who saw their kids from red states die and get wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan,'' said Ryan James Girdusky, an adviser to a pro-Vance super PAC. ''How many Ukrainians would lay their life down to protect the U.S.?''

Debate over whether the G.O.P. should cater to that sentiment raged throughout Trump's presidency. Trump's frequent praise of President Vladimir Putin of Russia alarmed and appalled Republican senators, who often found themselves at odds with their own party leader on how best to deal with Moscow. The investigation of the Trump campaign's ties to Russia dominated his first year in office. And a phone call with the president of Ukraine caused his first impeachment.

Surveys in recent years have shown that Republican voters are much less likely than Democrats to support an active U.S. leadership role in world affairs, and Trump's pollsters have argued that the base is not interested in policing other countries. At the same time, establishment Republicans venerate the party's Cold War stance of ''peace through strength,'' a position best articulated by Ronald Reagan.

''I think Ohio Republicans are of the same two minds that national Republicans are when it comes to how aggressive they should be in defending Ukraine,'' said Mark R. Weaver, a Republican strategist based in Columbus.

Ohio has large and politically active Eastern European communities, including some 80,000 Americans of Ukrainian descent. But the state also has a history of supporting isolationism, dating back to the days of Robert Taft Jr., the senator who opposed U.S. involvement in World War II.

The question in Ohio's Senate primary is: Which faction is larger?

''Vance is clearly assuming he turns more voters on than he turns off with this America First isolationism,'' said Jeff Sadosky, a former adviser to Senator Rob Portman of Ohio. Sadosky is currently neutral in the race.

Portman, a Republican who is retiring this year, has made his bet: Last week, he endorsed Timken, and three other senators followed. Portman, who heads the Ukraine caucus in the Senate, remains popular in Ohio, and his imprimatur is likely to carry weight with Republican donors.

Vance has made a different calculation.

He's been peppering his Twitter feed with comments on Ukraine for several weeks now, hitting several themes at once. First, that the fate of Ukraine is none of America's concern. Second, that he's more concerned about illegal immigration. And third, that corrupt elites have conspired to embroil Americans in pointless wars.

''Worth repeating: our leaders care more about Ukraine's border than they do our own,'' Vance wrote on Twitter.

''Billions spent on the Kennedy school, grand strategies seminars, and the Georgetown school of foreign service has bought us an elite that's about to blunder us into a Ukraine war. Our country is broken, especially in how it trains its leaders,'' he wrote in another. Vance expanded on his comments in a statement on Tuesday that took aim at Timken for ''jumping on the America last bandwagon.''

Vance's message is remarkably similar to the comments of Tucker Carlson, the Fox News host. In his hugely popular nightly broadcasts, Carlson has argued that Ukraine is of no consequence to the United States, that its government is corrupt and unworthy of U.S. support, and that Russia is not America's enemy.

''He's running for the Republican voters who listen to Tucker Carlson and Donald Trump,'' Andrew Fedynsky, director of the Ukrainian Museum-Archives in Cleveland, said of Vance.

Russia divides, China unites

If Russia divides Republicans, two other issues bring them together.

There's opposition to President Biden, whose handling of foreign policy has polled poorly since the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Then there is China -- a country seen on the right as responsible for everything from the coronavirus pandemic to the collapse of ***working-class*** jobs in states like Ohio.

''For all the left's screaming about Russia, it's China that sends fentanyl into their communities, buys up their farms, ships their jobs overseas, steals our technology, and poses the greatest long-term threat to the U.S.,'' said Girdusky, the Vance super PAC adviser.

Trump has said little about the conflict in Ukraine, leaving many Republicans uncertain about what line to take. On Tuesday, he made remarks that suggested he was impressed by Putin's move to back the independence of two pro-Russian enclaves within Ukraine, calling it ''pretty savvy'' during a cameo on ''The Clay Travis & Buck Sexton Show.''

Fox News's coverage of his comments focused on the more unifying topic with Republican voters: the need to defend Taiwan from a hypothetical Chinese attack.

''China's going to be next,'' Trump said. ''Not with me, they wouldn't have.''

Timken seized the chance to agree with the former president -- at least in part.

''President Trump is 100% right,'' she wrote on Twitter. ''1. This never would have happened under his leadership. 2. China is watching Biden's weakness and licking its chops.''

What to read tonight

Follow our live coverage of the crisis in Ukraine and the Biden administration's handling of it.

Danny Hakim and Jo Becker reveal new details on the depths that Ginni Thomas, the wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, was willing to go to in supporting Trump's effort to overturn the 2020 election results.

The Biden administration made three crucial decisions as it sought to prevent Russia's newest invasion of Ukraine, Michael D. Shear, Julian E. Barnes and Eric Schmitt write.

Scott versus McConnell?

On Tuesday morning, Senator Rick Scott of Florida, the leader of the Republican Party's Senate campaign arm, did something unusual: He put out his own electoral platform.

The Senate minority leader, Mitch McConnell, had previously brushed off opportunities to define his agenda for the midterms, telling reporters, ''I'll let you know when we take it back.''

The logic of McConnell's position was obvious: Why give Democrats a set of policies to run against, when Republicans want to make the midterms a referendum on Biden?

Privately, Republicans said Scott's 11-point plan reads like a platform for a presidential run. It leans heavily on cultural wedge issues, such as requiring that children cite the Pledge of Allegiance and banning transgender athletes from women's sports. He would also finish building the border wall with Mexico and name it after Trump.

Scott, who insisted the platform was his and his alone, explained his reasoning in an interview with Politico.

''As a general rule, you know, probably this year's election is going to be a lot about the Biden agenda. But I do believe we're going to win,'' he said. ''We ought to have a plan and what we're trying to get done when we get the majority.''

Judging from the gleeful reaction of Senate Democrats, who have not had much to cheer about this year, Scott's move might have been a blunder. They're now attacking a provision in the plan that reads: ''All Americans should pay some income tax to have skin in the game, even if a small amount. Currently over half of Americans pay no income tax.''

David Bergstein, the communications director of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, emailed out a statement quoting critics of Scott's proposals.

''While Senate Democrats are fighting to lower costs and cut taxes, Senate GOP candidates have found their midterm bumper sticker: raising taxes on Americans, seniors and working families,'' Bergstein said in a statement.

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)

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/22/us/politics/republican-candidates-split-over-ukraine-russia-crisis.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/22/us/politics/republican-candidates-split-over-ukraine-russia-crisis.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: J.D. Vance, a Republican running for the U.S. Senate, speaking to voters in Boardman, Ohio, last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Gaelen Morse/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The G.O.P. Is Still the Party of Plutocrats; Paul Krugman***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6576-HCY1-JBG3-60XB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 14, 2022 Thursday 22:39 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 912 words

**Byline:** Paul Krugman

**Highlight:** Unlike Europe’s right, it won’t even gesture toward actual populism.

**Body**

I recently [*wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/11/opinion/germany-russia-ukraine-trade-gas.html) about how international trade has made some Western nations — Germany in particular — unwilling to confront autocracy. Germany hasn’t just been weak-kneed in its response to Vladimir Putin; it and other European nations have stood by and even continued to provide [*economic aid*](https://www.ft.com/content/3ca265c0-d1d1-4acf-bc9e-b208dab98293) to Hungary while Viktor Orban dismantles democracy.

In response, I received mail from Europeans to the effect that American democracy is also under threat and that some of our right-wing politicians are every bit as bad as Orban. Agreed! But that wasn’t the point of my argument. And while I’m quite willing to believe, for example, that Ron DeSantis would be Florida’s Orban if he could, state governors don’t have as much repressive power as rulers of sovereign nations.

Still, the comparison of European and U.S. ethnonationalists raises some interesting questions. In particular, as the G.O.P. has become a full-on antidemocratic party, why has it also remained the party of plutocrats and the enemy of any policy that might help its many ***working-class*** supporters?

To understand the puzzle, consider the policy positions of Marine Le Pen, who has a serious chance of becoming France’s next president. Her party, National Rally — previously called the National Front — is often described as right-wing. And on social issues it is; in particular, the party is largely defined by its [*hostility to immigrants*](https://www.ft.com/content/99f9e50b-1134-4af2-b85c-831c0e325157) and the alleged threat they pose to France’s national identity. On [*economic policy*](https://www.connexionfrance.com/article/French-news/Macron-Le-Pen-What-do-they-each-pledge-to-change-if-elected), however, Le Pen is if anything to the left of President Emmanuel Macron.

Now, it’s important to understand the context. France provides social benefits on a scale beyond the wildest dreams of U.S. progressives: universal health care, huge [*family benefits*](https://data.oecd.org/socialexp/family-benefits-public-spending.htm) and more. Macron isn’t challenging the fundamentals of that system. He is, however, trying to trim some benefits, notably by raising the retirement age. Le Pen, by contrast, actually wants to reduce the retirement age for some workers.

I am not making a case for Le Pen. If she wins, the consequences for France, Europe and the world will be terrifying. But there is some genuine populism — advocacy of policies that might actually help workers — in her platform.

Compare that with the positions taken by prominent U.S. Republicans. I can’t tell you what the official Republican economic program is, because the party doesn’t have one — in fact, it has made a point of not saying what it will do if it regains power.

We do, however, know what the party did when it was last in power: It gave huge [*tax cuts*](https://www.taxpolicycenter.org/feature/analysis-tax-cuts-and-jobs-act) to the wealthy, while almost succeeding in repealing the Affordable Care Act, which would have caused tens of millions of Americans to lose health insurance. There’s no reason to believe it won’t once again pursue anti-worker, pro-plutocrat policies if it regains control.

At the state level, the [*debacle in Kansas*](https://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/kansas-provides-compelling-evidence-of-failure-of-supply-side-tax) has apparently done nothing to shake Republicans’ faith in the magical power of tax cuts for the affluent. Mississippi — America’s [*poorest state*](https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/per-capita-income-by-state), with the [*lowest life expectancy*](https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/life-expectancy-by-state) and facing a collapse of its [*rural hospitals*](https://www.bloomberg.com/features/2022-covid-in-the-mississippi-delta/?sref=qzusa8bC) — is slashing [*income taxes*](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/mississippi-lawmakers-pass-largest-state-income-tax-cut-83704884).

And recently Senator Rick Scott of Florida, who heads the Republican senatorial campaign, released a “Rescue America” plan that [*called for*](https://rescueamerica.com/steps/5-economy-growth/) tax increases on the half of Americans whose incomes are low enough that they don’t pay income taxes (even though they pay payroll taxes, sales taxes and so on). He also warned, [*falsely*](https://www.factcheck.org/2022/03/examining-rick-scotts-claim-that-medicare-social-security-will-soon-go-bankrupt/), that Social Security and Medicare are headed for bankruptcy, without offering any suggestions about how to preserve them.

[*Senior Republicans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/us/politics/rick-scott.html) have said that they don’t support Scott’s agenda, but haven’t explained what their actual agenda is — and have left Scott in his key campaign position, suggesting that his views have wide support within the party.

So everything suggests that the Republican Party is as pro-wealthy, anti-worker as ever. Unlike right-wing European parties, it hasn’t made any gestures toward actual populism. Why?

The answer, presumably, is that the G.O.P. caters to plutocrats, even as it attacks “elites,” because it thinks it can. After all, being nice to plutocrats and crony capitalists can yield tangible rewards, not just in the form of campaign contributions but also in the form of personal enrichment.

And the Republican Party doesn’t believe that it will pay any price for pursuing these rewards. It believes that its supporters will focus on denunciations of critical race theory and buy into conspiracy theories — almost [*half of Republicans*](https://today.yougov.com/topics/politics/articles-reports/2022/03/30/which-groups-americans-believe-conspiracies) agree that top Democrats are involved in child sex-trafficking — while not even being aware of what the party is doing for the very rich. After The Times revealed Jared Kushner’s highly questionable [*$2 billion deal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/10/us/jared-kushner-saudi-investment-fund.html) with the Saudis, Fox News simply ignored the report, while harping endlessly on [*Hunter Biden*](https://twitter.com/atrupar/status/1513930056665608202).

I wish I could say with any confidence that this cynicism will backfire. But I can’t. In particular, Democrats who want to campaign on bread-and-butter issues are assuming that voters will understand who’s actually buttering their bread. And that doesn’t look at all like a safe assumption.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Mushroom Paintings, Reading Speeds and Other Letters to the Editor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64PF-XGR1-DXY4-X0RD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 4, 2022 Friday 15:05 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 746 words

**Highlight:** Readers respond to recent issues of the Sunday Book Review.

**Body**

Capping Off a Good Story

To the Editor:

Brian Blomerth’s back-page Sketchbook, “The Mushroom Painter” (Jan. 23), deserves a happy ending. Although Jean-Henri Fabre worried, as noted by Blomerth, about the future of his paintings of mushrooms, they are safe and well cared for at the Harmas de Fabre museum — Fabre’s longtime home in Sérignan-du-Comtat, France, which is now part of the Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle, and is operated as a museum, garden and study center. The paintings were also published as a limited-edition book in 1991 as “Les Champignons de Jean-Henri Fabre.” Neither rats nor a grandnephew has attacked these treasures, thanks to the work of his family and the museum.

Donald H. Pfister

Cambridge, Mass.

The writer is the Asa Gray research professor of systematic botany at Harvard University.

Crossed Paths

To the Editor:

Regarding Troy Jollimore’s review of “Jim Harrison: Complete Poems” (Jan. 16): For many years, beginning 40 years ago, we stayed at a resort on Lake Michigan in the Leelanau Peninsula owned by the Jolliffe family and called the Jolli-Lodge. One day, Mrs. Jolliffe was showing me around the main house, built for wealthy Chicago folks in the 1920s. When she opened the door to one bedroom, still furnished as the original owners had left it, I saw a huge bottle of Gallo wine on the rickety desk. Mrs. Jolliffe said: “Oh, that’s Jim Harrison’s. He comes here to write when he needs some quiet and privacy.” I almost genuflected in the doorway but restrained myself. I knew Harrison was living on the peninsula but this was the closest I ever got to a sighting despite many visits to the area. (We also have a poster created by the Leelanau Cellars with a bit of Harrison’s poetry in the guest bathroom.)

Judith K. Simonson

Grand Rapids, Mich.

An Uncomfortable Admission

To the Editor:

Your review of Kendra James’s “Admissions” (Jan. 23) brought back a flood of memories, including tragic ones. I’m white, but I too experienced the paradox of being an outsider in the insular world of an elite boarding school. Fifty years ago, I was a scholarship student at the Lawrenceville School, a prep school with classes of 12, teachers with Ivy League doctorates, and amenities like Black men serving food to white boys whose surnames revealed which corporation their families owned.

To get there, I dragged a trunk that weighed as much as I did through New York’s Port Authority Terminal. I’ll never forget the intellectual excitement I felt as a Yale-educated teacher had me reading and writing about books like “A Clockwork Orange.” I will also never forget a school official’s failure to do simple, obvious things when I struggled emotionally in my second year. My ***working-class*** background made me an outsider. Both my parents suffered from severe mental illness, putting me even more at risk than adolescent boys in a low-supervision setting already are.

Reading the review of Kendra James’s memoir was painful, even 50 years after my own experience. Eye-popping endowments create the conditions for superb education. Efforts to create racial and class diversity are laudable. But when elite schools bring outsiders to what can be a Lewis Carroll-novel scale of cultural change, they have a duty to reach those students as the young, vulnerable humans they are. For me, that didn’t happen.

David A. Scott

Columbus, Ohio

Slow Down

To the Editor:

In her By the Book interview (Jan. 16), Annie Leibovitz reports that Susan Sontag once told her that if she read as slowly as Leibovitz did, she wouldn’t read anything. Some adults are entirely capable of shaming children about their reading, but this is proof that anybody, regardless of age, can be subjected to this kind of patronizing remark. Maybe Sontag “inhaled books,” but I suspect it’s likely that Leibovitz, instead of inhaling books, savors them, and ultimately derives more from her reading than people who maintain an endless reading list, and who confuse book-consumption rate with comprehension.

David English

Acton, Mass.

[*books@nytimes.com*](mailto:books@nytimes.com)

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.

**Load-Date:** February 4, 2022

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[***Republican Candidates Split Over Ukraine-Russia Crisis***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VD-6NR1-JBG3-642T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 22, 2022 Tuesday 23:51 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

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**Byline:** Blake Hounshell and Leah Askarinam

**Highlight:** In Ohio, two Republicans running for Senate have taken sharply different positions, offering a clear view of the party’s rift over foreign policy.

**Body**

In Ohio, two Republicans running for Senate have taken sharply different positions, offering a clear view of the party’s rift over foreign policy.

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It’s a skirmish that pits Trump-style, “America First” isolationists against more traditional hawkish Republicans. And while strategists in both parties say voters are much more concerned about pocketbook issues like inflation than they are about national security, the contrasting messages reflect a Republican Party that remains deeply torn between a base still loyal to Donald Trump and [*an elite seeking to move beyond him*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/13/us/politics/mcconnell-trump-primaries-midterms.html).

On one side of the split is J.D. Vance, who has sought to parlay his celebrity as the author of “Hillbilly Elegy” into a Senate seat.

On the other is Jane Timken, a former state party chair who represents the closest thing in the race to an establishment candidate.

Timken has run a campaign focused on inflation, immigration, “parents’ rights” and crime. On Ukraine, she put out a [*statement*](https://twitter.com/JaneTimkenOH/status/1495904693440196620) Monday that was perfectly in tune with the Senate Republicans she hopes to join: supporting Ukraine’s sovereignty and calling for sanctions on Russia, while condemning Biden for what she called “weak and feckless leadership.”

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“I don’t really care what happens to Ukraine one way or another,” Vance said in a podcast interview.

A retired Army general, Barry R. McCaffrey, blasted those comments on Twitter. “JD Vance is a shameful person unsuitable for public office. His comments are those of a stooge for Russian aggression,” said McCaffrey, who led an infantry division during the Persian Gulf war of 1991 and has since become a television news analyst, [*defense consultant*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/30/washington/30general.html) and Trump critic.

[*To which Vance replied*](https://twitter.com/jdvance1/status/1495124288864665600): “Your entire time in military leadership we won zero wars. You drank fine wine at bullshit security conferences while thousands of ***working class*** kids died on the battlefield. Oh, by the way, how much do you stand to gain financially from a war with Russia, Barry?”

The exchange might as well have been ripped from Trump’s playbook. Trump, of course, famously derided John McCain’s war record during the 2016 presidential campaign.

At a candidate event in Iowa in July 2015, Trump dismissed the Arizona senator’s service in Vietnam, saying, [*“I like people who weren’t captured.”*](https://www.politico.com/story/2015/07/trump-attacks-mccain-i-like-people-who-werent-captured-120317)

At the time, his statement was widely seen as a fatal blunder. What politician in their right mind would attack a decorated war hero, a man who withstood torture in a Vietnamese prison for 5 years? And in a Republican primary, no less?

Defining ‘America First’

What many pundits didn’t recognize at the time was how many Republican voters harbored a deep antipathy to foreign entanglements after years of overseas interventions that they saw as a failure.

“The G.O.P. base were the ones who saw their kids from red states die and get wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan,” said Ryan James Girdusky, an adviser to a pro-Vance super PAC. “How many Ukrainians would lay their life down to protect the U.S.?”

Debate over whether the G.O.P. should cater to that sentiment raged throughout Trump’s presidency. Trump’s frequent praise of President Vladimir Putin of Russia alarmed and appalled Republican senators, who often found themselves at odds with their own party leader on how best to deal with Moscow. The investigation of the Trump campaign’s ties to Russia dominated his first year in office. And a phone call with the president of Ukraine caused his first impeachment.

[*Surveys in recent years*](https://today.yougov.com/topics/international/articles-reports/2022/02/11/americans-want-support-ukraine-not-us-troops) have shown that Republican voters are [*much less likely*](https://www.thechicagocouncil.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/ccs2021_fpmc.pdf) than Democrats to support an active U.S. leadership role in world affairs, and Trump’s pollsters have argued that the base is [*not interested in policing other countries*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/15/us/politics/republicans-afghanistan.html). At the same time, establishment Republicans venerate the party’s Cold War stance of “peace through strength,” a position best articulated by Ronald Reagan.

“I think Ohio Republicans are of the same two minds that national Republicans are when it comes to how aggressive they should be in defending Ukraine,” said Mark R. Weaver, a Republican strategist based in Columbus.

Ohio has large and politically active Eastern European communities, including some 80,000 Americans of Ukrainian descent. But the state also has a history of supporting isolationism, dating back to the days of Robert Taft Jr., the senator who opposed U.S. involvement in World War II.

The question in Ohio’s Senate primary is: Which faction is larger?

“Vance is clearly assuming he turns more voters on than he turns off with this America First isolationism,” said Jeff Sadosky, a former adviser to Senator Rob Portman of Ohio. Sadosky is currently neutral in the race.

Portman, a Republican who is retiring this year, has made his bet: Last week, he endorsed Timken, and three other senators followed. Portman, who heads the Ukraine caucus in the Senate, remains popular in Ohio, and his imprimatur is likely to carry weight with Republican donors.

Vance has made a different calculation.

He’s been peppering his Twitter feed with comments on Ukraine for several weeks now, hitting several themes at once. First, that the fate of Ukraine is none of America’s concern. Second, that he’s more concerned about illegal immigration. And third, that corrupt elites have conspired to embroil Americans in pointless wars.

“Worth repeating: our leaders care more about Ukraine’s border than they do our own,” Vance wrote [*on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/JDVance1/status/1485623630327431172).

“Billions spent on the Kennedy school, grand strategies seminars, and the Georgetown school of foreign service has bought us an elite that’s about to blunder us into a Ukraine war. Our country is broken, especially in how it trains its leaders,” he wrote [*in another*](https://twitter.com/jdvance1/status/1485619369631752194). Vance expanded on his comments in a [*statement*](https://twitter.com/JDVancePress/status/1496241237480849414) on Tuesday that took aim at Timken for “jumping on the America last bandwagon.”

Vance’s message is remarkably similar to the comments of Tucker Carlson, the Fox News host. In his hugely popular nightly broadcasts, [*Carlson has argued*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/26/us/politics/tucker-carlson-russia-ukraine.html) that Ukraine is of no consequence to the United States, that its government is corrupt and unworthy of U.S. support, and that Russia is not America’s enemy.

“He’s running for the Republican voters who listen to Tucker Carlson and Donald Trump,” Andrew Fedynsky, director of the Ukrainian Museum-Archives in Cleveland, said of Vance.

Russia divides, China unites

If Russia divides Republicans, two other issues bring them together.

There’s opposition to President Biden, whose handling of foreign policy [*has polled poorly*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/390086/biden-ratings-economy-foreign-affairs-russia-near.aspx?utm_source=twitter&amp;utm_term=gallupnews&amp;utm_content=d97cc046-ef61-4373-95b3-14e2a5d2ce0a&amp;utm_campaign=gallup_news) since the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Then there is China — a country seen on the right as responsible for everything from the coronavirus pandemic to the collapse of ***working-class*** jobs in states like Ohio.

“For all the left’s screaming about Russia, it’s China that sends fentanyl into their communities, buys up their farms, ships their jobs overseas, steals our technology, and poses the greatest long-term threat to the U.S.,” said Girdusky, the Vance super PAC adviser.

Trump has said little about the conflict in Ukraine, leaving many Republicans uncertain about what line to take. On Tuesday, he made remarks that suggested he was impressed by Putin’s move to back the independence of two pro-Russian enclaves within Ukraine, calling it “pretty savvy” during a cameo on [*“The Clay Travis &amp; Buck Sexton Show.”*](https://www.clayandbuck.com/president-trump-with-cb-from-mar-a-lago/)

[*Fox News’s coverage of his comments*](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/trump-china-taiwan-russia-ukraine) focused on the more unifying topic with Republican voters: the need to defend Taiwan from a hypothetical Chinese attack.

“China’s going to be next,” Trump said. “Not with me, they wouldn’t have.”

Timken seized the chance to agree with the former president — at least in part.

“President Trump is 100% right,” she wrote on Twitter. “1. This never would have happened under his leadership. 2. China is watching Biden’s weakness and licking its chops.”

What to read tonight

* Follow [*our live coverage*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/22/world/russia-ukraine-biden-putin) of the crisis in Ukraine and the Biden administration’s handling of it.

1. Danny Hakim and Jo Becker [*reveal new details*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/22/magazine/clarence-thomas-ginni-thomas.html) on the depths that Ginni Thomas, the wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, was willing to go to in supporting Trump’s effort to overturn the 2020 election results.
2. The Biden administration [*made three crucial decisions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/21/us/politics/biden-putin.html) as it sought to prevent Russia’s newest invasion of Ukraine, Michael D. Shear, Julian E. Barnes and Eric Schmitt write.

Scott versus McConnell?

On Tuesday morning, Senator Rick Scott of Florida, the leader of the Republican Party’s Senate campaign arm, did something unusual: He put out his own electoral platform.

The Senate minority leader, Mitch McConnell, had previously brushed off opportunities to define his agenda for the midterms, telling reporters, “I’ll let you know when we take it back.”

The logic of McConnell’s position was obvious: Why give Democrats a set of policies to run against, when Republicans want to make the midterms a referendum on Biden?

Privately, Republicans said [*Scott’s 11-point plan*](https://www.politico.com/f/?id=0000017f-1cf5-d281-a7ff-3ffd5f4a0000) reads like a platform for a presidential run. It leans heavily on cultural wedge issues, such as requiring that children cite the Pledge of Allegiance and banning transgender athletes from women’s sports. He would also finish building the border wall with Mexico and name it after Trump.

Scott, who insisted the platform was his and his alone, explained his reasoning in an [*interview with Politico*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/02/22/rick-scott-gop-agenda-00010431).

“As a general rule, you know, probably this year’s election is going to be a lot about the Biden agenda. But I do believe we’re going to win,” he said. “We ought to have a plan and what we’re trying to get done when we get the majority.”

Judging from the gleeful reaction of Senate Democrats, who have not had much to cheer about this year, Scott’s move might have been a blunder. They’re now attacking a provision in the plan that reads: “All Americans should pay some income tax to have skin in the game, even if a small amount. Currently over half of Americans pay no income tax.”

David Bergstein, the communications director of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, emailed out a statement quoting critics of Scott’s proposals.

“While Senate Democrats are fighting to lower costs and cut taxes, Senate GOP candidates have found their midterm bumper sticker: raising taxes on Americans, seniors and working families,” Bergstein said in a statement.

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: J.D. Vance, a Republican running for the U.S. Senate, speaking to voters in Boardman, Ohio, last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Gaelen Morse/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**Length:** 991 words

**Byline:** By Penelope Green

**Body**

SALTWATERBy Jessica Andrews

We first meet Lucy Bailey in a rough stone cottage on the northwest coast of Ireland, although we don't learn her last name until the final pages of this often gorgeous first novel by Jessica Andrews. Lucy's grandfather has died and left his house to Lucy and her mother, Susie, with whom she is newly estranged. Lucy is also newly graduated from a British university, too soon in her estimation. Her years in London have renovated her northern English vowels, taught her to push the '''ewk' out of 'bewk,''' but they've left her wobbly, untethered from her ***working-class*** beginnings. She feels shut out by the city's predacious, moneyed tribes, battered by its ''impenetrable shapes'' and ''fierce elbows.''

Mother and daughter scour the moldy, vermin-infested cottage together, singing songs by the Ronettes and the Shangri-Las, setting its rotting contents on fire in a spectacular three-day pyre. Then Lucy's mother flies home, ''even though things were still not right between us.'' Lucy is too broke to go anywhere else, and anyway the pace of this rural, clannish Donegal village and its raw, stinging climate (along with a salubrious affair) suit her purposes. It's the right spot from which to look back and interrogate her precarious upbringing, her tricky maternal and paternal legacies.

Broken, unreliable men are the family's inheritance. Lucy's grandfather liked to hit the pub after work and then rage once he got home, hurling gravy boats and cans of food while Lucy's grandmother locked her two daughters in the bathroom or whisked them out of the house to wait out the drink.

Lucy has grown up in the margins, in the taut silences between her mother and her drunken, hapless father, Tom, an erratic wreck of a man whom she nevertheless adores. When he came home in a good mood, singing songs and dancing as her mother worked, elbowing him out of the way as she tried to make tea, Lucy was elated, though it was her mother who, she admits, ''was left to tie our shoelaces and wash our dirty clothes, while he drifted in and out on the wind.''

But the catastrophically alcoholic Tom wasn't the only destabilizing force in the household. Lucy's brother, Josh, was born with holes in his heart. Mysteriously and magically, they disappeared after a visit to a faith healer, but then Josh was found to be deaf. Although Susie and Lucy learned sign language, Tom signed up for a computer course instead. Later, they used their signing skills to talk around him. Was it safe for Lucy to entreat her father to play or should she ''leave him be and let him crawl into bed with a stink in his hair?''

Lucy's brother was given a cochlear implant, but his disabilities frustrated and inflamed him; his tantrums were operatic and destructive. When he was sent to a special boarding school, he ran away. At home, he smashed his toys while Lucy and her mother hid in the kitchen. ''Lovely Lucy,'' her mother sighed, ''you're our hope.''

As a teenager, Lucy was precocious, sensuous and questing, shiny with lip gloss and hormones. She wore crop tops and sequined skirts, and loved the triple surges of drugs, drink and dancing, though she was determined to stay on track in school. (She always remembered to pack her sixth-form polo shirt in case a party lasted all night, already an outlier as she picked her way over empty beer bottles and sleeping bodies, ready to make her way to the two buses that would take her to class.)

Her school was another in-between place, stuck in a grim landscape of council houses and high-rise tower blocks with ''a big brutalist shopping center where mams pushed prams in velour tracksuits and babies with snotty noses and frilly socks clutched sausage rolls like pasty pastry angels.''

Andrews unspools Lucy's coming-of-age story in short numbered fragments, prose poems that at first seem random and out of order, but build in a logical sequence all their own. The technique isn't always successful and the flurry of pop cultural name checks can read like a confounding shorthand -- especially the overwhelming array of bands and singers. But more often Andrews's writing is transportingly voluptuous, conjuring tastes and smells and sounds like her literary godmother, Edna O'Brien. Lucy notes ''the wet sulk of chips'' in the school cafeteria; ''the sticky hoppy thrill'' of breaking open a stolen keg of beer; and how the ''posh girl skin'' of her university classmates is ''expensive and gold,'' making her ''dizzy with want.''

Adrift in London, Lucy finds herself ''full of ideas but they didn't seem to be the right ones.'' Her privileged classmates, with their expensive clothes and Moleskine notebooks, ''had quotations pursed between their lips like peregrine fruits.'' Inspired by a creative writing assignment, she turns in an essay on Ai Weiwei's millions of porcelain sunflower seeds, which she's seen at the Tate Modern, but the professor gives her an F, scrawling ''Your prose is purple'' at the top. What does it mean? she asks a new friend. ''Haven't a clue, mate,'' the friend replies, stung by her own bad grade.

Andrews, now in her late 20s, is a poet, a podcaster and co-editor of The Grapevine, a journal dedicated to publishing work by those who have been marginalized in the arts, particularly women, people of color, nonbinary artists and ''those who identify as ***working class***.'' Like Lucy, she grew up in northern England. She has a deaf brother. She studied English literature at King's College in London, and, like Lucy, struggled to connect with the experiences of her classmates. It's her mission, she has said, to tell the stories of ***working-class*** women. That's a fine undertaking, but what makes her novel sing is its universal themes: how a young woman tries to make sense of her world, and how she grows up.Penelope Green is a reporter for the Styles section of The Times.SALTWATERBy Jessica Andrews298 pp. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. $26.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/17/books/review/saltwater-jessica-andrews.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/17/books/review/saltwater-jessica-andrews.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Chloe Cushman FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Fall of Austrian Chancellor Muddies the Path Ahead For Europe's Conservatives***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63TN-8RF1-JBG3-60WB-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Chancellor Sebastian Kurz was young, adept at social media and unafraid to borrow from populists, but in his downfall, some see ''the collapse of a new narrative'' for European conservatives.

BERLIN -- When Sebastian Kurz first became chancellor of Austria the whole of Europe sat up. Only 31, he had turned around the fortunes of his ailing conservative party and almost overnight become a role model for struggling center-right leaders elsewhere on the Continent.

Four years later, Mr. Kurz has been forced to resign amid a criminal investigation into allegations that he used public money to manipulate opinion polls and that he paid off a tabloid newspaper for favorable coverage.

His downfall is unique to Austria but it could reverberate far across Europe.

It comes at a time when Europe's political landscape looks ever more fragmented and the once-mighty traditional parties of the center-left and center-right have lost ground to a host of new political actors, not least on the extremes.

Youthful and media-savvy, Mr. Kurz styled himself as someone who had a formula for how to preserve a capacious center amid the disruption. He adopted the anti-immigrant language of an ascendant far right and refashioned his traditionally staid People's Party into a political movement that attracted hundreds of thousands of new supporters.

''Why don't we have someone like that?'' lamented the German tabloid Bild in October 2017.

But the recent allegations against him and a trove of evidence that has already been released suggest that the very communication strategy that won him conservative votes at home and admiration in conservative circles abroad was at best ''deeply immoral'' and at worst illegal, said Thomas Hofer, a longtime observer of European politics and an independent political consultant in Vienna.

''What we're seeing in Austria is the collapse of a new narrative for conservative parties in Europe,'' said Mr. Hofer. ''Internationally, the Kurz model was something others looked at very closely as a possible answer to far-right populists.''

All around Europe, ailing traditional center-right parties have struggled to reinvent themselves, at times flirting with the temptation to tack further to the right.

In neighboring Germany, the Christian Democrats of Chancellor Angela Merkel, who have governed the country 52 of the last 72 years -- including the last 16 -- lost spectacularly in last month's election. It was their worst election result ever.

In France, where five of the eight presidents since the inception of the Fifth Republic in 1958 have been conservatives, the traditional center-right has not won any national elections since 2007.

And in Italy, Christian Democrats co-governed for nearly half a century after World War II, but over the past two decades the political right has increasingly radicalized and fragmented.

One of the few successful center-right leaders left in Western Europe is Prime Minister Boris Johnson in Britain -- and he, much like Mr. Kurz, co-opted not just the nationalist anti-immigrant rhetoric of populists but also their aggressively symbiotic relationship with tabloids.

Some analysts say that recent events in Austria suggest that Mr. Kurz's political strategy is not a viable long-term strategy to revive centrist conservatism.

''Kurz is someone who has taken a traditional center-right party, dragged it into populist mode and is now in big trouble,'' said Timothy Garton Ash, professor of European history at Oxford University.

One lesson, Mr. Garton Ash said, is that the decline of traditional catchall parties on both the right and the left is structural -- and probably irreversible.

''The big parties of the center-right and center-left which dominated in Western Europe after 1945 are not what they were and unlikely ever again to be what they were,'' he said.

Across Europe, elections have revealed a more fragmented society, one that increasingly defies traditional political labeling.

For much of the postwar era, European countries tended to have a large center-left party and a large center-right party. The center-left parties championed a ***working-class*** organized in powerful labor unions, while the center-right gathered up a broad array of middle- and upper-class voters, from conservative churchgoers to free-market business owners. It was not unusual for one camp to get 40 percent of the vote.

Social Democratic parties lost that status a while ago. With union membership declining and parts of the traditional ***working-class*** constituency abandoning the center-left, its share of the vote has shrunk since the early 2000s.

If the crisis of social democracy has been a familiar theme over the past decade, the crisis of conservatism is now on full display. Still, even if the conservative parties of old have shrunk, many of their policies remain dominant in Europe, analysts point out.

''If you look at Germany, France or Italy, it's not classic center-right conservatives that won elections or are in power, but the policies in place are traditionally center-right,'' said Dominique Moïsi, a political scientist and senior adviser at the Paris-based Institut Montaigne.

In France, President Emmanuel Macron blew up the French party system by winning elections with his En Marche movement, but the pro-European market liberal once considered center-left has recently tacked sharply right.

Mario Draghi, Italy's prime minister, has no party affiliation, but as a former president of the European Central Bank is seen as a centrist.

Even in Germany, where a Social Democrat narrowly won the recent election, the party's candidate for chancellor, Olaf Scholz, served as Ms. Merkel's finance minister and is in some ways more associated with her outgoing government than with his own party.

''The clear-cut division of left and right that dominated European politics has been blurred and no longer truly applies,'' Mr. Moïsi said. ''The extreme right is far more extreme. The center-right is moving even more so to the center, and the classical left has either completely imploded like in France or is fighting for survival with the Greens. And so you have a political landscape that is much more fragmented than it used to be.''

That has not stopped some leading politicians from looking for ways to resurrect the past -- and looking to Mr. Kurz as a model.

''You can see in Austria that Sebastian Kurz manages as a young conservative politician to be No. 1 with young people,'' Tilman Kuban, leader of the youth wing of Germany's conservatives, said days after his party's devastating election defeat.

Christoph Ploss, head of the Christian Democrats in Hamburg, also pointed to Austria as a ''good example'' of how to revive conservatism. ''Over there,'' he said, ''the partner party came back up with a clear direction.''

Both men declined to comment when asked last week whether the allegations against Mr. Kurz had changed their views.

What exactly Mr. Kurz's resignation means is hard to say. He resigned as chancellor on Saturday after his coalition partners, the Greens, said they could not continue governing with him in light of the current allegations, and threatened a vote of no confidence. But he remains party leader and a lawmaker in Parliament.

Some predict that even after his anointed successor and loyal ally, Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg, is sworn in as chancellor on Monday, Mr. Kurz will still hold the reins and may even stage a comeback at some point.

It would not be the first time he reinvented himself.

Once a conservative youth leader, who distributed branded condoms as a campaign gag and eventually earned a reputation as a liberal integration minister, Mr. Kurz veered sharply to the right, winning elections and entering into a coalition with the far-right Freedom Party.

After his first government imploded two years ago, he won re-election and increased his party's share of the vote even more. He then went into an unlikely coalition with the far smaller Green Party.

In many ways, Mr. Kurz is less representative of traditional conservatism and more typical of the political opportunism associated with a new strain of right-wing politics that has evolved in Europe in the space between the center-right of old and a crop of noisy far-right parties on the extreme.

''The new right-wing politics which is about immigration and identity -- that right-wing politics you see right across Europe,'' said Mr. Garton Ash.

The temptation to move right is unlikely to vanish entirely, even after the scandals engulfing Austria, he said.

''Arguably the most dangerous populists are the ones who look least like populists,'' Mr. Garton Ash said. ''That is true of Johnson, and that was true of Kurz.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/10/world/europe/austria-chancellor-european-right.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/10/world/europe/austria-chancellor-european-right.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Sebastian Kurz

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